

Backpackers' Utopianism in Alex Garland's "THE BEACH"

Irma Windy Astuti
English Study Program Diploma 3,
Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences
Islamic University of Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on analyzing the backpackers' utopianism in Alex Garland's *The Beach* and the problem presented in this study is, how is the backpackers' utopianism presented in the novel. The study intends to identify utopianism that exists in the backpackers' community. The writer hopes that this study can give contribution to those interested in further analyzing the novel. In this case, the library research is used and the objective theory is employed as the basic principal of the analysis.

Having a desire to find and experience something unusual and different through travel is what drives many young western backpackers to Thailand with adventure on their mind. Unfortunately, what they find is no more than just a dirty reality of many overrun tourist resorts instead of a tourist-free tropical paradise they long. Existing among those popularized tourist resorts is apparently, the beach, known for its beauty and natural purity. The beach happens to be an improbable tale among backpackers and travelers. However, for some other backpackers, this beach does exist. Guided by quite a top secret map, three backpackers find their pristine beach on an unspoiled island of Thailand. Once there, they are convinced that they have discovered Eden, or at least their very own version of it. Wearied by many overrun tourist spots and impressed by the beauty of the beach, those backpackers decide to live on the beach area eternally and secretly. In this secret community, those backpackers adapt to the needs and pleasures of alternatives. Unfortunately, those backpackers' supposedly ideal beach life is unable to be perfectly realize due to the imperfections that they find there, or more to the point, the imperfections they find within themselves.

After studying the backpackers' utopianism, the writer can conclude that the backpackers' notion of perfection upon an ideal place is in fact normal for it suggests the nature of humans as imaginative creatures endowed with desires for perfection, especially in reaction to their imperfect world. Aside from that, humans are, at the same time, likely to be considered absurd for being utopians; those appear to be too exigent in demanding their particular version of ideal; and thus, being less aware of the impracticability of his ideal. It is therefore to say that humans need to be sensible in idealizing their dreams. They must have complete knowledge and awareness of their own capability instead of blind faith.

Key words: backpacker, utopianism

A. Background of the Study

It is truly the nature of every human being to have a vision of perfection upon things in his life. The existence of such vision is somehow due to the fact that human is a creature endowed with imaginative power. The power which enables human to grow within himself

a vision of perfection which has inspired human of all times in striving for a betterment (Kristol 1). In addition, human is also one creature recognized for his effort to bring about his idea of perfection into realization.

In the mean time, it also seems quite obvious that each person, each group or each community would have his or its very own notion of perfection, what he or it considers as ideal. Theoretically, a variety of possible utopias, any number of them could be thought up (Hutchinson, 1987 : 177). However, it is also possible that some people, a group of people or a community share one common vision of perfection.

A common vision of perfection that can be mentioned and put as an example of the above case is a vision of a perfect place and existence. As a matter of fact, it is since the beginning of time that men have always dreamed of a better place and condition. For many people, heaven embodies that perfect world while many others also believe that they can create their own version of it here, on earth. In this case, those people are considered as utopian. *The Second College Edition of New World Dictionary* defines utopian as a dweller in utopia; having a nature of or inclined to draw up schemes for a utopia; idealistic (Guralnik, 1974: 1565).

The presence of one's thought upon an ideal place implies and suggests his/her yet unfulfilled desire for it. Blessed isles and paradises are part of the dream world of savage everywhere (E. Manuel & P. Manuel, 1979: 1).

Utopia may offer an irresistibly ideal condition; its prospect is, however, indefinite since it appears to be flawless for people to be able to reach its distant horizon of perfection as well as its optimal form. In the word of Jörn Munker, as stated in his book *Iceberg : Utopia, Dystopia, and Myopia, in the Late 19th century*, "Utopia, however, turns out to be synonymous with impossible, too. It is wanted because, it is supposed to be perfect but it appears to be out of reach" [[http://home pages. Munkerphilosophy/ iceberg/shmtl](http://home.pages.Munkerphilosophy/iceberg/shmtl)]. And consequently, one is called a utopian for being too exigent in demanding his perfect place and society. As Irving Kristol states in *Utopianism : Ancient and Modern* :

"This conception of utopia is so familiar to us, and so congenial to us, that we can call someone "utopian" when we mean no more than that he is unduly optimistic about the time necessary to achieve the ideal, or perhaps unduly enthusiastic about his particular version of the ideal " [[http://www. Libertyhaven.com/theoretical or philosophicalissues/ libertarianism/utopianism.shmtl](http://www.Libertyhaven.com/theoretical_or_philosophicalissues/libertarianism/utopianism.shmtl)].

In accordance to the above issue, Alex Garland's first novel, *The Beach* seems to portray the above phenomenon. As the story describes, its characters, the backpackers, are curious about finding a perfect and an unspoiled tourist destination in the tropical island of Thailand. Their set-off journey in search for the place finally leads them to a glorious beach in a secret island of Thailand remains an existing legend among travelers. Those young western travelers find the beach so impressive that they are convinced about spending the rest of their lives there. Their excitement about living on the beach has stopped them of all will to return to the world they knew before. Having decided to settle on the island, those backpackers set up many things necessary to keep running their lives. However, on their attempts to fit in and realize their idealistic place, they cannot help worrying the fact that to live and to live up their dreams there is not an easy thing to do. Until they finally learn that their seemingly perfect world and their supposedly perfect life at the beach are unable to be realized.

Due to the above explanation, it is the backpackers' strong sense of utopian vision which is embodied in their attempts of searching and creating the beach as their ideal living place which becomes this study's main interest. Additionally, through this study, the writer is also interested in showing the characters' final achievements upon their utopian projects which strongly portrays and indicates the sense of utopianism.

In line with the background of the study, the problem of the study is ; how is backpackers' utopianism presented in *The Beach* ?

B. Methodology

1. Object, Scope and Limitation of the Study. This study is intended to analyze backpackers' utopianism in the novel, entitled *The Beach*. The discussion of the thesis is focused on analyzing the theme of the story. In that regards, the writer will concentrate on elaborating the presentation of backpackers' utopianism in *The Beach* as it is considered as the central thought of the story. Hence, the analysis will present and cover aspects encompassing the idea of utopianism found in those backpackers such as their utopian vision, dwelling, and their failing utopian projects.

2. Sources. This study uses both primary and secondary sources. Alex Garland's novel, *The Beach* serves as the primary source of data. Meanwhile, the secondary sources are books, articles and other textual sources concern with theories of literature such as theme, and utopianism-related theories.

3. The Approach of Study. This study applies both intrinsic and extrinsic approaches. The intrinsic approach is applied since the study focuses on one of the elements of fiction, that is theme - the central insight of the literary work. Hence, the theory used in this study is the objective theory that is used to analyze a literary work focusing on the element of the work itself (Abrams, 1978 : 26). As with theme itself, it is the central and domination idea in literary work, it is the message or moral implicit of any work of art (Robert, 1977 : 8). The purpose of the theme in a story is hence, to reveal some messages to the reader about the way of life such as social criticism, social relationship, the element of people culture, the record of people's value, their thought, problem and conflicts. A philosophical approach is also used to interpret the novel since utopia is seen as here as the ideological machine which controls and shapes the progression of the story and the characters in the novel. Moreover, the philosophical interpretation of the novel has, at the same time, shown the inseparability of literary works from other contexts, such as social, cultural, and philosophical. Hartman (1997) maintains that the separation of philosophy from literary study has not worked to the benefit of either, without the pressure of philosophy on literary text or the reciprocal pressure of literary analyses on philosophical writing, each discipline becomes impoverished (12).

Procedures. This study applies a library research. As the first step, the writer conducted a thorough and responsive reading to the novel. The next step was locating some related references. The third step was analyzing the novel and then, followed by making and deriving to the conclusion of the study.

As the initial step of conducting this study, the writer had read the novel several times and learned that the idea of utopianism seemed to be the underlying thought of the story as it was suggested by and made concrete through the representation of the characters, actions, and images in *The Beach*.

In the next step, having suspected the theme of the story, the writer then tried to take some references concerning with the theories of literature and utopianism which best support the study.

C. Analysis

1. Backpackers Utopian Thought and Projects

Arguably, men are always looking to fulfill whatever their dreams have which is likely to involve some sense of a 'utopian' ideal. In another word, it has been a human's nature to always long and yearn for finding the path to his ideal world. And a notion of perfection or idealism upon something can almost always be found in almost every human being no matter who they are regardless its variety.

As in the story of *The Beach*, many backpackers, young western travelers, are spotted rambling around Thailand with adventure on their mind hoping to fulfill their dreams of finding an ideal world through travel. Their travel is their medium to experience and find the best of the world they long.

Hoping to experience a perfect kind of travel journey is what bring Richard, a British backpacker and his other fellow backpackers to Thailand:

"... I want to do something different, and everybody wants to do something different. But, we all do the same thing. There is no ...ah...! 'adventure.' 'I think it is why we come here.' He pointed round the corner of the police station toward the Khao San Road. 'We come, for an adventure,...'" (Garland, 1996: 19).

In fact, it is on Khao San Road, usually the first destination of western backpackers in Thailand, where Richard first learns about the beach. The beach, as Richard has come to learn, is the subject of a legend among young travelers in Asia. It is believed that the beach which is located in one of a secret and hidden islands of Thailand is a glorious place, still untouched by tourists, which travelers would refer to it as their paradise on earth:

"... You heard it?" I shook my head, 'About a beach. This amazing beach hidden somewhere, but no one knows where it is.' Think about a lagoon hidden from the sea and passing boats by, a high curving wall of rock. Then imagine white sand and coral gardens never damaged by dynamite fishing or trawling nets. Fresh waterfall scatter the island, - surrounded by jungle ...canopies three levels deep, plants untouched for a thousand years, strangely coloured birds and monkeys in the trees... 'it's paradise,' Sammy murmured. 'It's eden.' 'eden.' Zeph agreed, 'is how it sounds'" (Garland, 1996: 58).

The backpackers are amazed by the condition of the rumoured beach for its purity and its interesting physical landscape and are quite assured that it is a place where they could experience their moment of pure bliss as travelers.

As for Richard, the way his fellow backpackers talk and describe the beach has increased his level of curiosity and at the same time made him feel so lucky. It is since a day before, a strange-deranged man who stayed in a room next door to Richard's had left him a hand-drawn map to the secret island before the man ended his own life.

Richard and his fellow backpackers soon find it difficult to resist the temptation of not finding the secret beach for the prospect of finding the beach would surely lead them to experiencing a perfect getaway travel they have always wanted:

"You know Richard, I think I want to find this beach, 'Really,' said Etienne... I imagined, hearing the sound of the hidden beach or hiding from the marine park... Abstract thought suddenly flipped into thought about reality. Following the path of the map had become something that could happen" (Garland, 1996: 25-26).

What follows is then, series of tropical adventures as the trio backpackers : Richard, Etienne, and Etienne's girlfriend, Francoise decide to reach their destination, the beach. Leaving Bangkok, they take train, bus, ferry, and jeep to Chaweng beach resort from where they begin their real adventure to the secret beach in Thai marine national park. To get to the beach, they must risk their lives by swimming across an open sea from one island to another, crawling and hiding from the armed guards and jumping from the top of a 120 foot waterfall.

Soon, after their terrifying leap off the waterfall, they eventually get to the hidden beach where they discover not only a piece of impressive land and an interesting beach but also, quite surprisingly, a community of travelers living off the land secretly

It seems obvious for the three newly-come backpackers that those travelers do not stay on the beach area temporarily. Richards could see from his further exploration that some permanent set up being deliberately established there:

"I counted nine tents in the clearing and five huts, not including the long house. The tents were only used for sleeping- inside the flaps I could see backpacks and clothes... - but the hut all seemed to have functional uses. Apart from the toilet, there was a kitchen and a washing area, also fed by tributaries. The other huts were for storage. One contained carpentry tools and another boxes of tinned food. It made me wonder how long the camp had existed...

The more I saw, the more I marveled. It wasn't just how much the camp had been organized, it was how it had been organized. None of the huts looked newer than the others. The tents' guy lines were held with rocks, and the rocks were molded into the ground. Nothing seemed random, everything seemed calculated : designed as opposed to evolved" (Garland, 1996 : 100).

Aside from Richard and his fellow backpackers' amazement to what they have found on the beach area, they are welcomed by the community and its leader, Sal, from whom he got the answers for all his wonderings:

"Ok, uh, well first I'd just like to know something about the set up. I mean, what is this place?..."

'What did you think this place was?' Sal asked. 'I don't know. I didn't think anything really.' I exhaled slowly. 'But I certainly didn't think of a beach resort.' She waved a chubby hand in the air. 'OK I'm kind of teasing you, Richard. Of course this is more than a beach resort. But at the same time, it is just a beach resort. We come to relax by a beautiful beach, but it isn't a beach resort because we're trying to get away from beach resorts. Or we're trying to make a place that won't turn into a beach resort. See?' "...

'I mean, this longhouse and the trees outside... It's all amazing.' I laughed. 'It's silly really. I think I was expecting an ...an ideology or something. A purpose'" (Garland, 1996 : 95-96).

The above quotation shows the community's thought of and endeavor to establishing an idealistic place which parallels to the ideology of utopia. Such assumption is based on the community's decision and commitment to keep the secrecy of the beach from the rest of the world and to settle there for the rest of their lives.

It, therefore, suits David Roseman's statement in *Nusquamus* that there had to be some agencies whereby the realization of utopia occurred (1999 : 7).

One example of agencies that signifies the commune's effort in realizing and

maintaining its utopian resort is the presence of the community's working divisions. Since, the beach is valued for being in its natural purity, the community and its members make no attempt to change the place significantly to suit their needs. They would instead try to fit themselves into it. As a result, it makes them live a traditional way of life:

"There were four main areas of work : fishing, gardening, cooking and carpentry...Etienne, Francoise and I were on the fishing detail. Before we'd arrived there'd been two fishing groups, but we made it three...

Keaty was on the gardening detail ... The head of the gardener was Jean, a farmer's son from south-western France...

Aside from the hellish chore of cooking dinner for thirty people every day, the three cooks all carried a lingering odor of fish innards around with them...

The carpenters were run by Bugs. Bugs was Sal's boyfriend, and he was a carpenter by trade. He'd been responsible for the longhouse and all the huts, and he'd had the idea of tying the branches together to make the canopy ceiling " (Garland, 1996: 118-119).

Besides the establishment of the permanent camp and all the working arrangements, it is the presence and the role of the community's leader which can also be considered as another significant example of utopian agency in utopian. It is Sal whom the community consider as their leader. As a matter of fact, it is Sal who seems to care more about all of the arrangements than anyone else. She is also the one who keeps everything in check and make sure that everything is fine:

"If there was a leader, it was Sal. When she talked, people listened. She spent her days wandering around the lagoon, checking on the different work details and making sure things were running smoothly " (Garland, 1996: 119).

As a leader, Sal has always attempted to be sensible and fair to maintain the good atmosphere of the beach which often results in ignoring her very own personal pleasure:

"You know why? 'No.' 'Because tonight is Tet, and Sal will only smoke and drink on Tet. The rest of the year, her mind is always clear, all hours in the day. We get high, but she keeps her mind clear for us.' She cares very much about the beach.' 'Very much, 'Greg echoed " (Garland, 1996: 414).

In the mean time, similarly to any other forms of community which wish of having a harmonic life within its days, the members of the backpackers community are also bonded together with similar sentiment which is to maintain the commune's harmonic life. This is reflected in some of the commune's rituals:

" On the morning of my fourth Sunday, all the camp were down on the beach. Nobody worked on Sundays. The tide was out so there was forty feet of the sand between the three lines and the sea. Sal had organized a huge game of football and just about everyone was taking part " (Garland, 1996: 122).

" That night, just as the light was starting to fade, we were given our sea-shell necklaces. It wasn't a big deal, there was no ceremony or anything. Sal and Bugs just wandered over to where we were sitting and handed them over. Still, it was quite a big deal for me. However friendly everyone was, being the only ones without necklaces drew attention to our new-arrival status. Now that we'd got them, it was like our acceptance had been made official " (Garland, 1996: 129).

It appears somewhat obvious that those rituals are intentionally and regularly conducted as parts of creating good atmosphere, a strong sense of belonging and coherence among the community members.

Life on the beach has surely created an amnesiac effect for the community of backpackers. After spending many years camping out on the beach area, they do not seem to lose any interest for it. As for Richard and his two French friends who are considered new on the beach and have settled less long than the others, the amnesiac effect of the beach life also seems to shade them. The remote and isolated location of the beach as well as its peaceful existence have evoked distance feeling and have made them less thoughtful about the world they once belong:

"Ko Samui became a hazy, dream-like place, and Bangkok became little more than a familiar word. On the third or fourth day, I realized I couldn't quite recall Zeph and Samy's faces... There is this saying: in all-blue world, colour doesn't exist. It makes a lot of sense to me: If something seems strange, you question it; but if the outside world is too distant to use as a comparison then nothing seems strange...It doesn't matter why I found it easy to assimilate myself into the beach life. The question is why the beach life found it so easy to assimilate me" (Garland, 1996:116).

The amusing life on the beach has given those backpackers including Richard, the main character, no option to leave. To this point, the beach is no longer those backpackers' sojourn within their travel conduct, but it has been perpetuated as their eternal home:

"Oh...I was just thinking...' My mind run through a quick list of options: return of the sunshine, the stillness of the lagoon, the whiteness of the sand...'...how easy it would be to stay here. 'Ah yes,' Francoise nodded. 'To stay on the beach forever. Very easy...'

'Do you ever think about home, Francoise?' 'Paris?' 'Paris, family, friends... All that.' 'Uh... No Richard. I do not.' 'Yeah. I don't either. But don't you think that's a bit strange? I mean, I've got a whole life back in England that I can hardly remember, let alone miss. I haven't telephoned or written to my parents since arriving in Thailand, and I sort of know they'll be worried about me, but I don't feel the urge to do anything about it...' I wondered where the effect came from, and whether it was to do with the beach itself or the people on it" (Garland, 1996:207).

At this point, those backpackers seem to be quite content with their lives on the beach since everything looks perfect. It serves them with conviction that life is perfect on the beach and the beach is indeed their paradise.

2. The Impracticability of the Backpackers' Utopian Project

Yet, the beach is only those backpackers' paradise on earth. It gives them no more than just beautiful and peaceful yet superficial existence. Apart from being a beautiful and peaceful place, the beach has in fact no ability to guarantee that nothing can go wrong. In other words, similarly to any other places and communities in the world, the beach and its backpackers

community have the possibility of facing and experiencing troubled situations. The problems threatening their existence occur as a result of all of their failure in handling the potential troubles.

As with the backpackers' beach community, their chance of facing potential problems is somewhat bigger. For once, the community members, as they've previously described, are utopians - those willing to go just about any length to preserve their ideal. In fact, those backpackers' unduly enthusiastic quality upon their utopian project may be viewed as a potential notion of threat. As we have probably known all too well that too much love will in fact kill.

In accordance to that, it is described that later in the story, those backpackers have to deal with some problems mainly caused by their being blindly idealistic. One example is when they think that they can live a traditional life in such a primitive and isolated world as the beach when in fact, they cannot. Those backpackers actually found it hard to give up all the comforts of modern life. As one can see from the following situation, Richard and two other members of the commune are ordered to visit Ko Pha-ngan to generate food supply for the rest of the camp. While in Ko Pha-ngan, Richard do some shopping, buying out things to be brought back to the camp.:

" In any case, I had my own shopping to do. I wanted to restock my supply of cigarettes and get more batteries for Keaty's Gameboy...

-and after buying the batteries and cigarettes it turned out I still had plenty of money to get a few presents. First of all I bought some soap for Unhygienix..., knowing how important this was to him. Then I bought a load of razors, which I thought I'd share out between me, Etienne, Gregorio and Keaty. Then I bought a tube of Colgate for Françoise. Nobody used toothpaste on the beach; there were ten toothbrushes which were shared by everyone,... Françoise didn't mind sharing a toothbrush but she did miss the toothpaste,... The next purchase was several packets of boiled sweets- and finally I bought a pair of shorts. Mine were getting ragged and I couldn't see them lasting more than a month or two." (Garland, 1996 : 174).

The above quotation shows the community's dependence toward the outside world despite its denial to it. It further suggests the community's inability to willingly and totally accept the primitive life of the beach.

Another problem faced by the backpackers community, which exemplifies its significant dependence toward the outside world is its inability to produce its own main food. The commune has no knowledge to produce the food itself. Consequently, the community conducts a regular rice run, an activity to get food supply from the inhabited mainland nearby:

" Sal clapped her hands and stood up. 'Ok,' she said briskly. 'as everyone knows, we've got a problem.' 'Too funk' right,' drawled an Australian voice from the other side of the circle. 'We thought we had another seven weeks of rice, but it turns out we've only got enough for two days. Now, this isn't a major catastrophe, nobody is going to be starving to death, but it is a minor one.' Sal paused. 'Well, you know what's coming. We need to go on a Rice Run!'" (Garland, 1996 : 145).

Aside from the above problems, community still has to deal with another unexpected problem which the community finds it hard to deal with. It is when the community is unable to provide medical help for its wounded members who are attacked by a shark. As a result, the incident brings a total confusion to the community for it is not possible to take the wounded

members to the main island for medical help. Some community members fear that the decision to take those victims to the main island for medical help would mean uncovering their secret beach life to the world:

" 'But he must know we can't take him to Ko Pha-Ngan. What would we say ?
"Here's a friend of ours who's been attacked by a shark and had a nervous
breakdown on our secret beach. Well, we'll be off then. See you..... That
nuts..."

I smiled in disbelief. 'Yeah, and meanwhile we'd get discovered. We'd be
finished. It's the worst idea...'" (Garland, 1996 : 310).

However, few members of the community seem to disagree with the idea of ignoring their wounded friends instead. Unfortunately, they find it difficult to convince the rest of the community members since their plan is completely opposed by Sal, the community leader:

"...And Etienne," she said as an afterthought. 'I've been thinking about your
suggestion to take Karl to Kho Pha-Ngan, but for the reasons we discussed I
simply don't think it's possible'" (Garland" 1996 : 319).

Unfortunately, as the story further describes, one of the shark victims eventually dies following the community ignorance toward his condition. Most community members simply do not want to deal with their dying friends for they do not want to spoil their supposedly perfect lives on the beach:

'Nothing is good about his condition. Karl should not be here. This is obvious to
me, and I cannot believe it is not obvious for everybody else.' 'Give it a fucking
rest, Etienne. We've been over this a hundred of time ...'

Does that mean you do not care about his problem?' 'Sure I do. I just care about the
beach more. And you should too. OK. Now this time I'm going to the record, so I don't want any
more of these bullshit distractions.' 'Remember what Sal was saying at the funeral. We've got to
get over all the difficulties we've had.' 'Difficulties,' he echoed coldly. 'Everyone else is
making an effort.' 'Really? I am surprised to hear that you find it an effort' " (Garland, 1996 :
341 - 342).

From the above quotation, it is quite clear that most members of the backpackers' community have shown their quality of being utopians - those willing to go just about any length to preserve their ideal, which is obviously seen from their attempt to secure their notion of ideal even at cost of others' lives. Meanwhile, few members start to feel distraught and dissatisfied with such troubled condition. They begin to realize that their community has no sense of crisis which explains its narcissistic and abusive way of handling problem.

For few members of the community, it becomes questionable the extent to which their ideal place and lives can be desirable when abuse has become a solution for life problems. Dissatisfied and distraught with the condition of the beach backpackers' community, Richard, the main character, along with his two fellow backpackers finally decide to leave the beach despite their risky escape:

" 'Etienne,' I said, hearing my voice from far away. 'Would you like to go home ?
' He didn't seem to reply for a long time. 'You mean ...the camp?' 'I mean home.'

'...Not the camp? 'Not the camp.' 'No...' 'Leaving the beach. France, for you and Françoise, England for me.' I turned to face him, and was immediately hit by a second rush of sickness. It was the expression on his face, hiding his hope so badly. 'It's all right,' I murmured and reached out, intending to pat his shoulder for reassurance... 'Don't worry,' I said 'Everything will be OK. We're going to leave tonight' " (Garland, 1996 : 391 - 392).

"...over the months of my beach life. I'd done enough to keep me in nightmares for the next twenty years. I didn't want to add to my sentence now. Jed and Keaty had been my best friends on the beach, and even if it was risky ... I couldn't disappear without offering them the chance to come to" (Garland 1996: 394).

As the story further describes. Richard finds it easy to convince his friends to leave the beach. Yet, Richard finds it difficult to execute their getaway since they have to keep it secret from the rest of the camp

" I looked around and saw Jed standing beside me. And beside him, Keaty, Etienne and Françoise. The four of them carried fishing spears, points fanning outwards...

'*You all keep back!*' Jed yelled. He reached down, lifted my arm over his shoulders, and dragged me up. '*Keep back!*' Bug slumped forwards. 'But,' said Sal. 'But...' She took a step in our direction, and Jed pushed his spear into the folds of her shirt. Immediately he pulled it back. Sal remained standing, swaying at the point exited. '*Back!*' Jed yelled again. '*All of you keep back!*' And amazingly, they all did. Though we were outnumbered and they could have easily prevented us if they'd wanted to, they let us go. I don't think it was because of Sal, who had closed her eyes and couldn't seem to catch her breath. It was because they were tired. Their slack arms and glazed eyes told me as much. Tired of everything" (Garland, 1996 : 343 -344).

The above quotation shows how the backpackers' utopian community on the beach falls apart, as the fight which results on the death of the commune's leader seems to remark the climax of the community actual yet long-denied disorganization

At last, it is told that Richard and his group manage to free themselves from the beach, their once-said paradise on earth turning into an ultimate hell.

D. Conclusion

After analyzing the backpackers' idea, deeds, and final achievement related to their attempts in creating and maintaining their ideal living place, the writer concludes that there seems to be a strong indication of utopianism that exists within the community of backpackers living on the beach.

At first, the writer concludes that the backpackers' sense of utopianism is measured from their being utopians. Those backpackers have a very strong desire to find an ideal tourist spot, a perfect form of tourist-free tropical resort, which they praise for its natural purity in where they can enjoy all trapping of paradise on earth. Additionally, those backpackers' efforts in trying To make the beach as their ideal and eternal living place have involved the

establishment certain agencies' which indicates another important signifier of their being utopians.

In addition to that, the backpackers' unsuccessful efforts of bringing about their idea of perfection into being is considered as a portrayal of utopianism - in which one's idea of perfection is proved to be impractical and impossibly idealized.

In general, the writer concludes that the impracticability of those backpackers' supposedly ideal life on the beach is due to their exaggerate desire and their unduly enthusiastic efforts in trying to make it come true. Those backpackers' exigency in demanding their particular version of ideal has made them anything but insensible.

Those backpackers finally realize that their lives on the beach which at first appears to be ideal have ended up to be the opposite of it as the they find things on the beach gone awry, following series of unresolved problems and tragic events.

At last, after analyzing this novel, the writer can conclude that it is quite human to have and to grow within oneself a vision of perfection. However, having such vision and wanting to make it happen such as in the case of backpackers community in *The Beach* without adequate knowledge and sensibility upon what determine its possible and impossible realization has made it anything but absurd.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abrams, M.H. (1979). *The Mirror and The Lamps*. New York: W.W. Norton And Company.
- Garland, Alex. (1996). *The Beach*. England: Penguin Book.
- Gluckman, Ron. " on " The Beach " with Alex Garland " ASIA WALL STREET JOURNAL, Feb. 1997 :19-20
- Guralnik, David B. (1974). *Second College edition of New World Dictionary* : The American Language. New York: William Collins and World Publishing Co. Inc
- Hutchinson, Steven. (1987). *Mapping Utopia*. University of Chicago press.
- Kenney, William. (1996). *How To Analyze Fiction*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Kristol, Irving. " IMPRIMIS : The Monthly Journal of Hillsdale College." 1973. <http://www.Libertyhaven.com/theoreticalorphilosophicalissues/libertarianism/utopianism.shtml>. (3 March 2003)
- Lawrence, Perine.(1996). *Story and Structure* : 2nd edition. Atlanta: Harcourt Brace & World, Inc.
- Manuel, E. Frank, and Fritzie P. Manuel. (1979). *Utopian Thought in The Western World*. Cambridge, Massachusetts : the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- McMahon, Elizabeth. (1989). *Literature and The Writing Process*. New York: Macmillan University Press.
- Munker, Jorn. " Iceberg : Utopia, Dystopia, and Myopia : in the late 19th Centuw " <http://www.georgetown.edu/faculty/bassr/exhibition/utopialutopia.htm/>(25 May 2001)

- Robert, Edgar V. (1977). Writing Themes About Literature. New York: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Roseman, David. Nusquamus " 1999. [http://homepages which net/~davidkinlg D/utopia/nusquamus.html](http://homepages.which.net/~davidkinlg/D/utopia/nusquamus.html) (25 May 2001)
- Roth, J Audrey. (1986). The Research Paper: Process, Form, and Content. California: Wadsworth, Inc.
- "Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary." <http://dictionary.reference.com/search?q=utopianism> (18 July 2003)
- Wellek, Rene and Austin, Waren.(1956). The Theory of Literature. USA: Harcourt Brace and World Inc.

3100 1000 1000