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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to analyze the characterization of Captain William Kidd as an anti-hero figure in Richard Zacks' historical narrative *The Pirate Hunter: The True Story of Captain Kidd*. Rather than depicting Kidd as a conventional villain or heroic protagonist, Zacks constructs him as a morally conflicted character shaped by political power, legal ambiguity, and personal flaws. The purpose of this research is to identify how Kidd's actions, motivations, and moral dilemmas align with the literary characteristics of the anti-hero archetype. This research applies a qualitative descriptive method supported by literary theory, particularly character and characterization analysis, to examine Kidd's portrayal. The analysis focuses on narrative descriptions, behavior, dialogue, and contextual events that reveal Kidd's internal and external conflicts. The study finds that Kidd embodies key anti-hero traits, including moral ambiguity, resistance to corruption, flawed decision-making, and an ultimate downfall influenced by betrayal and systemic injustice. His role as a privateer commissioned by the English Crown positions him between legality and criminality, which becomes central to his identity and eventual misrepresentation as a pirate. The findings conclude that Captain Kidd's characterization reflects the complexity and nuance typical of anti-hero narratives. His actions cannot be fully categorized as heroic or villainous; instead, they demonstrate the influence of environmental pressure, shifting loyalty, and personal conviction. Through Kidd's journey, the novel challenges traditional historical interpretations and invites readers to question dominant narratives about power, justice, and morality.

Keywords: anti-hero, characterization, narrative analysis