

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of study

Poetry is an imaginative awareness of experience expressed through meaning, sound, and rhythmic language choices so as to evoke an emotional response. Poetry has been known to employ meter and rhyme, but this is by no means necessary. Poetry is an ancient form that has gone through numerous and drastic reinvention over time. The very nature of poetry as an authentic and individual mode of expression makes it nearly impossible to define. Mark Flannagan (2014) stated that “poetry is an ancient form that has gone through numerous and drastic reinvention over time. The very nature of poetry as an authentic and individual mode of expression makes it nearly impossible to define”

The main generic of literature today is poetry, drama and novel. Roberts (1955) stated that “poetry describe poem as a wide variety of spoken and written forms, styles, and patterns, and also a wide variety of subjects. Because of the variety, it is not possible to make a single, comprehensive definition”. (p.547). The poem is arranged in lines, but does not follow measured rhythmical patterns, nor does it rhyme. The most important thing about it is that, as it engages us and amuses us, it also rings of truth.

Roberts Frost stated in Miller (1981) “Poetry is the kind of things poets writes” (p44). Defining poetry is not easy because not everything can be named or explained. So it is enough to sharpen your perception as a reader and to permit a

fuller understanding of what it is in a poem that gives pleasure and creates form and meaning.

Poem is an emotional feeling of human. Poetry will appear itself when human felt such as pressure in his soul. It has set free without stressed by any aspects. Poem is an individual process it means that nobody can changes, it just appears by himself. A cultured man and also a famous art critic of Indonesia: Ashadi Siregar in Muhsonati (2002) explained “An artist especially a scribe will only create his work of art if there is such a motivation and a pressure which comes from his soul and the characteristic of that motivation is very individual”., (p.14). It is conclude that the characteristic of poem is very personal.

Talking about poem there must be a substance concept to interpret it. Most people already hear or making a poem, but not all people really understands the idea or the meaning of the poem while they read, especially when the poem contents symbolic concept that difficult to understand. Symbolic concept is a form that almost found in human lives, but symbol presents another idea then what its form.

There is a lot of symbol found in human lives. Most of symbol is form as an object in daily lives that see as a real object material. It also comes in wider area such as act, word, and phrase. Sobur, 2004 stated Symbol envelop words (verbal message), behavior non verbal, and object that the meaning conventional (Sobur, 2004:157)

Symbol of dove that present as the holly things and symbol of sun is hope. It is also symbol of moon that represent as lonely. Almost symbol seen in object form, but it should be quiet different when symbol come in poem. Symbol can see in style

of word, phrase, action, stressed of sounds. The single definition of poem is something that stands for other thing.

Moreover poem is a unique thing to present idea. Poem contents a lot of symbol. So it makes the poem is quiet difficult to understand. This research see symbol as best way to present the writer idea, because the concept of symbol that has more than one meaning. It can be wider than the literal meaning or even be different between signifier and signified. According to Daniel.C (2014) defined “Symbol/symbolic: a mode in which the signifier does *not* resemble the signified but which is fundamentally *arbitrary* or purely conventional”

Luxemberg (1989) stated that “Remembering the characteristic of text interpreting it is may the literature seen as a symbol, but it might not, that is depend on the reader point of view” (p.69). Based on the stated above the reader is free to interpret the literature. It may one see it as a symbol or may one see it is not as syombol. Critical reader may found the symbol that might did not found to other one. So this research comes to sharpen the reader point of view about the existent of symbol in poem.

Almost all of poetry content symbol. It makes quiet difficult to describe its meaning. That is because symbol has an explicit meaning. Human believes if there are some ways to present their feelings into something unique. One of the best way is to present person idea into text of literature such as using symbols in poetry.

The definition of symbols is presented an imaginative expression. In the book of Dictionary of Theories (2002) “symbol refers to an expression which designates an

object which stands for something else” (p515). Concept of symbols is very abstract. It brings another idea of words or phrase. It can be say that symbolic form is a thing that stands for other thing. There always be as a symbol whenever is something presents another thing.

Symbol is a branch of sign. According to Peirce in Sariban (2001), there are 2 kinds of signs depending on the relationship between signified and signifier and the degree of motivation that links the two. All of them, however, involve some degree of social convention (not just a purely natural relationship) in order to be "readable." (p.44-45)

Pierce divide the sign into some categories, those are:

1. Symbolic: a purely arbitrary relationship (examples: language, pink = girl)
2. Iconic: a relationship based upon resemblance (examples: maps, pictures)
3. Indexical: an existential or causal relationship based on the occurrence of co-presence within a particular context (examples: thermometer means to count warm, smoke means fire)

Considering the three kinds of signs divided by pierce, but this research limited the study to be a part that has symbols only. Symbol is selected because it has a lot of imagination. It does not only a part of quiet definition but it need more understanding in poetry such as giving the real definition and then connected to the rhyme of poetry. Symbol becomes a powerful of idea to satire in social life issue. That’s why symbol is very important thing to know that there must be a hidden meaning in a piece of poem that reflects by symbol.

The reason of chosen symbol in this research is because that is the progressive of poem to be powerful concept. So what is the different between a news papers to literature work is. Literature has a least aim without contenting symbol and symbol is the main important of work. It gives the reader imagination while found a symbol, but how do the reader knows that is a symbol is and how they can interpret the symbol based and the writer purpose. This research tries to bring a lot of symbol and the way they were interpreting. This research might sharpen the reader perception about how is symbol appear in poem and how to give it meaning.

Langston Hughes was known as a leader of Harlem renaissance. Langston Hughes was really influential in the time of era Harlem renaissance. He tried to bring the equality in social live balance skin color. He tries to accost people especially white skin to stop discrimination live. Langston tries many ways to make his dream comes true. He does not only fight in real life, but he also made his literary work.

This is a sample of Langston Hughes works tittle *Theme For English B*. It was the most crucial work of Langston Hughes in his poems. These poems Langston Hughes often wrote about how the Afro- American people were treated in a different way or how they were humiliated. The Afro-American people are usually described in situations in which they think of themselves as nothing. This fact has its roots in the behavior of white people who felt that they are superior. This problem can be seen in the lines of a poem *In Explanation of Our times*:

*“You say you thought everybody was called Mister?
No, son, not everybody.*

In Dixie, often they won't call Negroes Mister".

The sample above brings the human discrimination lives. There is a word 'mister' means that a title of courtesy prefixed to the name of man. Hughes tries to take the meaning of real word into a symbol. The first stanza Huges used word 'Mister' it is a term for a man in every countries for a respect. The word mister reflects for the balance and courtesy of people. White people called mister, but neither Negro. He brings the human balance from the word Mister on that cited as a representative trough the discrimination. The last rhyme wrote '*they won't call Negro Mister*' mister is symbolizing the balance a respect and courtesy but nor to afro American, because they were slave.

Another sample of this case found in a piece of poem by Langston Hughes tittle *Negro Mother "I was the seed of the coming Free"*. Hughes put in the stress of sound the symbol of freedom and by capitalizing the word *Free* he wanted to stress the importance of freedom which the Afro-American loses. The Free above symbolize of freedom by giving capital word its stressed by Hughes for the balance and freedom.

Based on the background above the writer is interested to do a research. This research title is '*Symbolism in Langston Hughes*'. Slavery was a problem of world in past years ago. The topic of slavery is considered to be one of the most crucial themes in Langston Hughes poetry. Franklin (1947) stated "The twenty Negroes that were left at Jamestown in 1616 by the captain of a Dutch frigate were the beginning of the involuntary importation of human beings into the mainland." (p. 71).

This research chose to bring the theme of segregation from Langston Hughes poem to find the symbol because it suppose that the segregation considered could happen again. Even today that is not only happen to black but it can be happen to every kind of live around the world. All the Woodward (1960) stated “Northeastern states had abolished or taken steps for the gradual abolition of slavery within their own borders by 1804, but racial discrimination, segregation and injustice still flourished and often proliferated in those regions” (p.153). No people will take responsibility if the segregation cleans forever in the world. I supposed that it could be happen again.

Research question

There are some marks of questions that help the writer to develop this analysis.

1. What kinds of symbol that used in Langston Hughes poem?
2. What is the meanings of symbols that used in Hughes poem poem?

Research Objective

1. To find some kinds of symbols based on niversal and personal symbol
2. To interpreted and describe the symbols based on of the author ideas and the background of the poem..

Limitations

The limitation of this research is limit to selected poem that showed a period of time from slave to seeking freedom by using semiotic analysis. Those poems are: *Negro, Me and the mule, Mother to son, negro mother, island, not a movie,*

Democracy. The object analysis is focused on symbol and kinds of symbol such as:
universal and personal symbol.