

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE

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L1 Background of the Study

Literature study is an interesting activity but only few students can appreciate it. Most of them think that literature is only a subject they have to learn in college. They have no impression to the work and consider the works boring. They do not realize that literature is the only subject which engages intellect and emotion and it is the only subject which people can express their feelings, thoughts and emotion exactly. While in the English Department of Widya Mandala University, the students are prepared to become teachers. As teachers, the students should master various kinds of English skills, such as teaching method, English skill, linguistics, and literature. Literature is important to be learnt by the teacher candidates because by reading literary works, they can learn ideas, experiences and situation in the past. As Little (1966: 2) states, wherever there is education, there is the study of literature. Literature is important to be learnt in schools and colleges because it is an important element of people's culture and contains the record of people's values, thoughts, problems and conflicts. It helps us to grow both personally and intellectually. It helps us to gain understanding on the events that occur around us and in the world at large.

Literature is a verbal artifact that offers experiences and entertainment. As Kennedy (1991: xxxix) states that literature serves pleasure and illumination.

Literature involves the student's imagination and feelings so that they feel as if they become the part of literary work that they read. This opinion is supported by Brooks, Purser and Warren (1946: 1) who states that there are certain pleasures to be had from reading literature which may be obtained in no other way.

According to Roberts and Jacobs (1989: 1) literature refers to written (and also spoken) compositions designed to tell stories, dramatize situations and reveal thoughts and emotions and also more importantly, to interest, entertain, stimulate, broaden and ennoble readers. The composition, itself, is not regarded as a source of factual information but offers a unique delight and satisfaction to the readers. Through literature, each generation will learn to judge the composition personally or subjectively.

The writer, herself, has been interesting in studying literature since she took Introduction to Literature lesson at the English Department of Widya Mandala University. According to her literature can broaden and stimulate her mind in the human sympathy, human problems, the meaning of words and symbols. She will learn ideas, experiences, situations in the past; culture and many more which can broaden her knowledge.

There are three main forms of literature namely drama, poetry and prose (Bently, 1962: 1). In this study, the writer will analyze a poetic drama. A poetic drama is a combination between poetry and drama and it is a form of drama not poetry. In the poetic drama, the poetry is the mother not the handmaid of the drama. According to the DeLisle, Parker, Ridlon and Yokelson (1971: 269) a poetic drama illuminates a world

of human emotional interaction, vigorously ornamented with the music and adorned with dance. It has served as a model of tragic intensity, vitalized by poetic language as a vehicle for communicating the most complex and intimate of human experiences.

The writer chooses poetic drama as the subject of her study since it represents a special situation in life in form of dialogues, containing element of conflict and many symbols to express the writer's point of view. It contains a deeper meaning in every line of the play. The dialogues carry meanings, describing the setting and imply the action. And also a poetic drama consists of many symbols, which carries a deeper meaning and poetic language. While poetic language has been used for many years as a vehicle for the writer to convey his most complex and intimate thoughts of human experiences.

There are many great writers in the literary world but the writer choose William Buttler Yeats because his lyrics are among the most beautiful and the most powerful ever written. He is known by his ability to communicate the power of his symbols and he also created his own symbolic system. According to Larrisy, E. (1994: 1) *Yeats was a leader of the Irish Renaissance. His many poems and plays were an important part of the revival of the Irish arts after centuries of dominance by the English. His works show remarkable capacity for change and improvement. Yeats created his own symbolic system, based on a variety of sources, which enabled him to strengthen his poetic imagery. For all his life, he searched for a private religion and this search led him to create kinds of mysticism symbols.*

William Butler Yeats was seventy-two when he created this play. The idea of this play was about death, redemption and internal repetition. Purgatory is considered as a tragedy drama since it discovers significance of a spiritual and more nature in life. According to Sterling (1963: 15) Aristotle once said that a tragedy drama is a serious drama, which arouses 'pity' and 'fear'. Pity for the misfortune and fear that we may be overcome by the same evils as the characters. The plot of purgatory is very simple, involving only an old man and a boy, father and son. The old man was haunted by his mother's soul, the curse of violence and sin. He had lived so long with the extreme fear from his own past that he must share to his son. According to DeLisle, Parker, Ridlon and Yokelson (1971: 273) in this play Yeats used the Catholic Doctrine joined with the Pagan Concept. Further more they explained that in the Catholic Doctrine, the punishment for someone's sins is not fully paid in his life. It needs a purgatory by the fire to clean the sins. While in the Pagan Concept, the penalty for the 'sinful' actions is not only to the sinners but also to their family and sometimes it continues for generations.

When the writer read this play for the first time, she was interested in the story and in the simpleness of the plot. When she tried to reach out the meaning, she found many symbols that Yeats used to convey his spiritual ideas about sins, curse, violence and dead. This challenged the writer to conduct this study especially because she was interested in Christianity and she wanted to know what the symbols were being used and what the symbols stood for in Purgatory.

I.2 Statement of the Problems

In line with the background of the study, the questions investigated by the writer are formulated as follow:

1. What are the symbols being used in *Purgatory*?
2. What do the symbols stand for?

I.3 Objective of the Study

In line with the problem stated, the objectives of this study are to find out the symbols and the meanings in William Buttler Yeats' poetic drama entitled *Purgatory*.

I.4 The Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that the result of this study is able to give contribution to the study of literature, especially to the study of drama in general and the study of Yeats' play *Purgatory* in terms of symbols and its meaning in particular. Hopefully, it could be useful for the teaching of literature at the English Department in Widya Mandala University.

I.5 Scope of the Study

The writer will focus her study only on symbols and meanings. The discussion in this thesis is analyzing the symbols and the meaning of each symbol.

L.6 Theoretical Framework

In studying this poetic drama, the writer deals with some theories concerning the symbols analysis.

1. Theory of Imagery

An image is literal and particular representation of an experience or object perceived through the sense. It is presented in language in such a way that we can see, hear, smell, taste, touch it or feel it, move it in our imagery. An image may occur in a single word, a phrase, a sentence or an entire short poem. As Kennedy (1991: 570) stated that the image asks to be seen with the mind's eyes. Since one of the most appealing aspects of reading literary work is its calling upon our imagination to experience the sensation with the writer, we must open our 'reading eye' to the writer's images. So the writer's experience will be our experience too.

2. Theory of Figures of Speech

Reading poetry, we often meet comparisons between two things whose similarity we have noticed before, such comparisons are called figures of speech (Kennedy, 1991: 584). A figure of speech may be said to occur whenever a speaker or writer, for the sake of freshness or emphasis, departs from the usual denotation of words. Figures of speech are not devices to state what is demonstrably untrue. Indeed, they often state truths that literal

language cannot communicate. They call attention to such truths; they lead them emphasis (Kennedy, 1991: 585)

3. Theory of Symbol

Symbolism is one of the modes of literary expression that are designed to extend meaning. In literature, a symbol pulls or draws together a specific thing with ideas, values, persons or ways of life, in a direct relationship that otherwise would not be apparent. A symbol signifies a specific combination of attitudes, a sustained constancy of meaning and the potential for wide ranging application (Roberts and Jacobs, 1989: 326). A symbol may appear over and over again in the same story and possesses the same meaning.

4. Theory of Semiotics

According to the linguistics and phonetics dictionary the theory of semiotics is the theory of linguistic and non-linguistic signs and signing processes to which the study of natural languages, as the most comprehensive system, is central. (Crystal. 1997; 346)

5. The Theory of Pragmatics

The theory of Pragmatics is also known as the theory of language use. According to Muma Pragmatics is the set of sociolinguistic rules one knows and uses in determining *who says what to whom how why when and*

in what situations. (1978; 137) Pragmatics refers to the relationship of the sign to the sign users. It deals with the function of linguistic utterances and the propositions that are expressed by them depending upon their use in specific situations (1997; 374)

L7 The Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding, it is necessary to define some key terms used in this study.

1. A poetic drama illuminates a world of human emotional interaction, vigorously ornamented with music and adorned with dance. It has served as a model of tragic intensity, vitalized by poetic language as a vehicle to communicate the most complex and intimate of human experiences. (DeLisle, Parker, Ridlon and Yokelson, 1971: 269)
2. Image is a literal and particular representation of an experience or object perceived through the sense. (Annas, Rosen, 1990: 1410)
3. Figures of speech is a form of speech artfully varied from common usage (Corbett, 1971: 461)
4. Symbol is an object (or person, setting, event) that suggests meaning beyond its literal meaning in a work of literature (Annas, Rosen, 1990: 1410)
5. Character is a person (or personified or anthropomorphized animal, object or deity) who acts, appeared, or is referred to in a work. (Bain, Baty and Hunter, 1997: 500)

6. Semiotics is the scientific study of the properties of signalling systems, whether natural or artificial. It refers to the study within philosophy of sign and symbol systems in general (Crystal, D 1997: 346)
7. Pragmatics is the set of sociolinguistic rules one knows and uses in determining *who says what to whom how why when and in what situations*. (Muma, 1978; 137)

I.8 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five elements. Chapter I deal with the introduction of the thesis and Chapter II will discuss the related literature and related study used to support the thesis. The following chapter will discuss the methodology of the study. The discussion of the findings will be discussed in Chapter IV. Finally the last chapter, Chapter V, concludes the whole discussion.