

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, the statements of the research problem, the objectives of the study, the significances of the study, and the scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

All that written language by using expressions and beautiful words are called by literature. It usually presents the writers or authors feeling, thought, imagination and perception. The writing product or literary works should give an overview of the event, condition and situation of certain society or period so that the reader can understand and feel the condition although they do not live in that society or period. Wellek and Warren (1997: 3030) states that literature is the mirror of human life that portrays human feeling, thought, imagination, and perception which can be viewed based on personal judgment. All of the literature's genres consist of narrative element of plot, theme, setting, character, characterization and point of view which are used to make the reader gains the message or aim of authors in their literary works.

One of literary genre is poetry. The difference between poetry and other genres is poetry achieves its effects with fewer words, compresses details into carefully organized forms in which each sound, word, and image must work together to create a single intense experience. Poetry uses language in ways that communicate experience rather than simply giving information (Hirschberg, Stuart and Terry, 2004: 33). Therefore, a word in poem can mean anything through the interpretation of the reader related to the theme of the poem itself. The poet puts and shows his experience in his poem by the chosen dictions which can represent his idea. In addition, poem can be a media to understand the style of poet himself

whether the poet usually uses a similar sound for his poem or whether he is a unique person that usually uses a unique style on his poem, and so on.

Since poets have their own style to their poem, poem can be seen as a mysterious one. It means that the meaning or representation of the poem cannot be described easily and explicitly as the other literature's genre, like novel, prose, and drama. This case often makes the readers face some difficulties to get the meaning of the poem. Especially, for the poem that contains myth or supernatural experience. However, there are many ways for readers to understand and gain the meaning of the poem that contains some myths and this phenomenon is going to be studied in this study.

Every poem is a representation of a single human voice with unifying properties that hold it together. The speaker's relationship with the events and scenes described in the poem may be of several kinds (Hirschberg, Stuart and Terry, 2004: 34). The poems are created from the speaker's sight, feeling, experience, and everything that speaker hears or understands from one society. It can be the habitual activity, important event, society's culture, social, economic and politic side, history of some places, private experiences, or it can be the speaker's imagination and fantasy or the speaker's way to show his love for someone. In fact, the poems have their own meaning that contain of speaker's experience, feeling and point of view.

This study attempts to analyze the myths that appear in the poem entitled "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe. The poem tells about the visit of a mysterious raven to the desperate lover who is drowning in his sorrow and mourning the loss of Lenore, the girl that he loves very much. The lover tries to give some questions to the mysterious raven, but the raven's answer only "Nevermore". The raven's answer finally makes the distraught lover going to loss his sanity and slowly going to insane.

“The Raven” poem is a metaphysical and supernatural poem since it talks about the speaker’s love, the use of paradox, symbols and rigidity of expression frequently. This poem tells about the supernatural experience of the speaker who is visited by a mysterious raven in a mysterious night. Sometimes, the story is called a myth when an entire story is symbolic. Whereas a symbolic story may be personal or private, a myth relates to a communal, cultural, or group experience that aims at providing explanations or interpretations of nature, the universe, and humanity (Hirschberg, Stuart and Terry, 2004: 75).

The poem entitled “The Raven” by American writer Edgar Allan Poe was published in 1845. It has 18 stanzas which in each stanza consists of 6 lines. There are many myths appear in this poem that can be analyzed through its symbols and its stylized language which creates a supernatural atmosphere. For those explanations, it is important to analyze this poem due to the content and meaning that try to extend by the writer, especially for the myths. Apart from that, this poem is one of the most famous poems that are ever written by the father of modern mystery, Edgar Allan Poe.

Furthermore, myths become the one of important aspects in society’s life around the world. There are many cultures, histories, and stories that are created in the society due to the myths. Myths have many values which become the basic needs of human being and their life in their society, such as religion, cultural, and social values. Human can use a myth as their orientation and their escort when they are in the society in order to make socialization and communication. This study analyzes the myths in the poem due to the position of myths itself in a human’s life which are very important since myths satisfy a basic need to organize, explain, and humanize events or conditions that might otherwise remain mysterious. For this reason, myths are often associated with religion because they attempt to explain aspects of life that are complex and not easily understood. Myths also embody the cultural and social values of the civilizations in which they are created (Hirschberg, Stuart and Terry, 2004: 76).

“The Raven” poem is an interesting poem to be analyzed. Therefore, there have been some studies which use “The Raven” poem from Edgar Allan Poe as the source of data. The studies are conducted by John Peter Luke Saunders (2010) which uses a postmodern theory and Evie Hemerijckx (2009) which focuses on the musical element of the poem itself. Otherwise, this study analyzes the myths which appear in “The Raven” poem that are quietly different from those two studies.

This study uses an archetype theory from Northrop Frye to analyzing the poem since Frye’s archetype has clear division to his archetype into the cycle of four seasons. Moreover, the archetype of Frye is the most suitable theory to analyze myth and mystery in supernatural poem like “The Raven” poem by Edgar Allan Poe. Kennedy and Gioia (2007: 642) state that an important concept in understanding myth is the archetype, a basic image, character, situation, or symbol that appears so often in literature and legend that it creates a deep universal response. The Greek root of *archetype* means “original patterns”. It means that the myths in the poem can be analyzed through the image, character, situation, and symbol that appear in the poem itself. That is the important point that becomes the reason of the using archetype theory to elaborate the explanation of the topic of the study.

1.2 Statements of The Research Problem

The problems that are analyzed in this study related to the appearance of the myths and its functions to convey the meaning of the poem entitled “The Raven” by Edgar Allan Poe. In line with the background of the study, the problems of this study are formulated into the questions below:

1. What are the myths appear in Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Raven”?
2. How do the myths appear in Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Raven” and convey the meaning of the poem?

1.3 Objectives of The Study

This study is intended to give more explanation about the poem and the topic, such as:

1. To find out and describe the myths which appear in Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven".
2. To explain the way which is used by Edgar Allan Poe to show the myths in the poem entitled "The Raven" and convey the meaning of this poem.

1.4 Significances of The Study

Dealing with the previous discussion, this study has some benefits and gives significance in both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study gives better understanding about the analysis of myths by using archetypal approach, particularly in a poem as in "The Raven", in order to convey the meaning of a poem. Practically, this present study becomes the foundation or reference for the next studies.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of The Study

This study discusses the kinds of myth and the functions of the myths themselves in order to convey the meaning of the poem entitled "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe. The scope of this study is the using of archetype theory from Northrop Frye to obtain the analysis of the appearance and the function of the myths in the poem. In addition, the analysis is limited to only on the words or symbols which show the myths and have a relation with myths.