

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is a written work with the purposes to deliver informations and entertains the reader such as newspaper, magazine, comic, and other written materials. Literature is a kind of language in contrast to the daily language we used (Eagleton, 2003;4). There are two kinds of literature, we know about the facts, histories, explanations, realities etc, from the informative literature, and imaginative literature we will develop our thoughts and feelings to express our ideas, it has deeper sense than informative literature. The example of imaginative literature are fiction stories, novel, film's scripts, poetry etc.

Poetry is a literature that is expressed by the thought and the feeling of human and it is banded by rhythm, dimension, rhyme, and the composing of lyric and stanza. Poetry is any kind of verbal or written language that is structured rhythmically and is meant to tell a story, or express any kind of emotion, idea, or state of being (Ollila and Jantas, 2006;1). The main point of poetry is the deliver of sense, a good poetry has a beautiful sense that is delivered with accurate diction. The language used in a poetry is not same with the daily language used. Poetry uses summarized language but full of sense and the words have many meaning. Knowledge of the reader is very important, because to find the sense of a poetry, the reader has to read the poetry carefully and notices many factors in the poetry, such as the elements of poetry. There are some elements which construct a poetry, there are theme or sense, feeling, tone, intention, diction, imagination, concrete words, and figurative language.

Figure of speech is a way to express thought by using words, it is the way to improve the imagination of the poetry, to make abstract to be concrete and also makes poetry more touch the feeling. The Collins English Dictionary (2006) defined figure of speech as "an expression such as a simile, in which words do not have their literal meaning, but are categorized as

multi-word expressions that act in the text as units”(Alhasnawi,2007:3). The differences of figurative language in a poetry and in daily used is that figurative language we use usually is cliché or very often made, while in poetry the figurative language used is very fresh, new and original. Figurative language used because it usually give effective way about what do we mean than directly speech. There are many types of figurative language, there are metaphore, simile, personification, hyperbole, irony, antithesis, litotes, paradox, synecdoche, pun, oxymoron, understatement, parenthesis, apostrophe, onomatopoeia, symbol, etcbut this research is focuses on analyzing the symbol.

Symbol is a sign, shape or object which used to represent something, then symbol is the use of specific objects, characters, colours, or images to represent abstracts and ideas in an art or literature. Symbol is the use of a concrete object to stand or represent a concept, idea, or situation. Symbol can take in different forms. “Generally, it is an object representing another to give it an entirely different meaning that is much deeper and more significant”(RadikaBai, 1998;1). Many poets use the symbols to improve their written work to be more beautiful and meaningful. Whitman uses symbols and symbolisms as a major role in all his poetry, he get the symbols from objects around him like the sea, sky, birds and many others. Symbols makes the idea presented ambigiously, the poets does not describe their ideas and emotions directly, they describe it by using images things and other. When we get the symbol we can understand what the author’s mean.

Walt Whitman is an American poet who is well known as a writer and a journalist. Walt Whitman was born in 31st of may 1819 in West Hills, Huntington city, Long Island. He was the second from nine children from Mr.WalterHilmanSr and his wife Louisa Van Velsor. Walt Whitman’s family had financial problems, so he decided to stop his education and work as an office boy in a printing office, there he begin to learn about writing. In 1837 he was fired because his office was getting bankruptcy. A year later he was back to Huntington and work as a publisher, editor, journalist, and finally he works as a distributor and active to distributing his poetry and short

story. He is well known as a transition character who unify the transcendentalism and realism concept, and till now, he is known as a person who take a big role in the development of literature.

This research is focused on examining the symbols used in Walt Whitman's poems "*Beat! Beat! Drumms*", "*O Captain! My Captain!*", "*For Him I Sing*" for some reasons. The first, the writer is interested with the three poems that talking about the war, but in his three poems Whitman did not explain it clearly, he expressed the sense of the poetry through some symbols ambiguously but meaningful, that is why the writer choose to examine the symbols to reveal the truth sense of the poetry. The other reason is in his poem, Whitman breaks with the conventions of English verse in form of content. For instance, he is a symbolist though symbolism is a great movement of 20th century. Whitman treats his symbol flexible and ambiguously sometimes. Whitman has made many poems and most of them were in "free verse" where it was like an attacking of a structural poetry. He use a unique, unusual, and daringly original subject matter, to express his ideas, Whitman needed diction and technique equally daring and free from the chains of conventionaly. Therefore we know that Whitman uses innovative methods and techniques to build a poem, he use unusual methapors, imagery and symbols in an unpredictable ways.

1.2 Problem of the Study

From this research, the writer wants to analyze and explain about the sequestions:

1.2.1 What symbols does Whitman use for his poem "*Beat! Beat! Drums!*", "*O Captain! My Captain!*" and "*For him I Sing*"?

1.2.2 What ideas are described by Walt Whitman through the symbols in the three poems?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

Every study has specific purpose, the purpose of this research are:

- 1.3.1 To know what symbols does Whitman use for his poems “Beat! Beat! Drums!”, “O Captain! My Captain!”, and “For Him I Sing”
- 1.3.2 To know what ideas are described by Walt Whitman through the symbols in the three poems

1.4 The Scope and Limitation

The scope of the study symbol in the Walt Whitman’s poems is the three selected poems and the ideas described. The three selected poems are “Beat! Bat! Drums!”, “O Captain! My Captain!”, and “For Him I Sing”

The limitation of this research is focused on analyzing the symbols used in the three poems of Walt Whitman.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The significance of this research has academic and practical purposes:

1.5.1 Academic Significance

Theoretically this research significance for the students, especially for the process of learning the Department of English studies in Muhammadiyah University of Surabaya. This study is meant to encourage the students to study more about literature.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

This research expects that the study can contribute to the development of literature study, particularly among the people who are interested in literary study. This research also expects that the reader of Walt Whitman’s poems can understand the sense of the poems easier

1.6 The Definition of Key Terms

The writer have read some books or journals that are related with this research.

These books and journals gave or became reference about the explanation and the definitions of the subject, these are:

- 1.6.1 Poetry is a literature that is expressed by the thought and the feeling of human and it is banded by rhythm, dimension, rhyme, and the composing of lyric and stanza. There are some elements which constructing a poem, there are theme or sense, feeling, tone, intention, diction, imagination, concrete words, and figurative language.
- 1.6.2 Symbol is a sign, shape or object that used to represent something. A symbol defined most simply, is one thing used to stand for to represent another thing. According to Abrams (1999) in discussing literature, however the term “symbol” is applied only to a word or phrase that signifies an object or event which in its turn signifies something, or has a range of reference, beyond self. Many poets use the symbols to present their ideas. There are some types of symbol, based on Hurstik and Yarber (1971;143), they states that there are two types of symbol, there are traditional or conventional symbol and contextual symbol.