

SYMBOLISM IN EDGAR ALLEN POE'S
THE RAVEN



RESEARCH PAPER

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Literature is a piece of writing which expresses and communicates thoughts, feeling and attitude toward life. Burto (1903: 1), stated that literature is a performance in a word. It has to be entertaining to afford pleasure. Most people have sense that cannot be expressed directly, that is why they need a tool to express it. One of the ways to express and explore their desire such as: experience, imagination and feeling is using literature. According to Jones (1968: 1), literature is simply another way we can experience the world around us through our imagination. Hudson (1965: 10) adds that literature is the vital record of what men have in life; of they have experience in life, of what they have thought and felt about these aspect of it.

Identifying the work of literature, one will also be able to understand who is called the man of literature (the author). Both the author and work of literature cannot be separated from each other, and both of them will clearly appear in the words creator and creation especially in the term of literature.

There are two kinds of literature; literature of power and literature of knowledge. Literature of power or imaginative literature, such as poems, short stories, novel and plays, is able to move or to beat the hearth, while literature of knowledge, such as school text book, history book and dictionary, functions to teach.

Edgar Allan Poe, son of Actress Eliza Poe and Actor David Poe Jr., born 19th of January 1809, was mostly known for his poems and short tales and his literary criticism. He has been given credit for inventing the detective story and his psychological thrillers have been influences for many writers worldwide. One of his works was "The Raven". It was mournful and never ending remembrance which is not only a good description for "The Raven" but could be applied to almost all of his work. In January 1847 Virginia Died and Edgar took this very hard but he kept on writing until the day he died in Baltimore October 7, 1849.

Through this poem, Poe has taken his favorite theme, that of the untimely death of a beautiful woman, and made that theme universally understandable and fascinating, earning himself literary immortality in the process. There is no doubt that "The Raven" takes direct influence from Poe's life experiences. Poe was a moody bookworm, and Virginia Poe's health had been declining since 1842. Poe's friend, R.H. Horne, wrote of "The Raven", "the poet intends to represent very painful condition of mind, as of an imagination that was liable to topple over into some delirium or an abyss of melancholy, from the continuity of one unvaried emotion." Poe's life was varied in experience, but, as Horne's letter said of Poe's poetry, static in outlook, and his life's entire tone is perfectly encapsulated in "The Raven". Poe, like the persona, caught "balm in Gilead," but was, according to Hammond, "doomed to be frustrated in his quest for a perfect emotional response." Through "The Raven," Poe makes his personal, introverted hell

strangely mesmerizing and attractive to all, and as result, “The Raven” is better known than any of Poe’s other poems, and even more well known than some of his greatest shortstories, [\(<http://www.nadn.navy.mil/Englishdept/poeperplex/raven.htm>\)](http://www.nadn.navy.mil/Englishdept/poeperplex/raven.htm)

From the description and consideration of the above reason, the writer is interested in conducting an analysis of Poe’s “The Raven”, which will be analyzed by using Structural Element, entitled Symbolism in Edgar Allen Poe’s “*The Raven*”.

B. Literary Review

The study on Edgar Allen Poe *The Raven* has not been done yet at least in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta as far as the writer knows, This poem has not been analyze before. This is the first study on the poem Edgar Allen Poe *The Raven*. The writer is interested this poem because the other researcher has not analyzed it yet.

C. Problem Statement

The writer focused the study on one problem in order to get focused and deeper analysis. The problem Statement of the study is “ How is symbolism reflected in Edgar Allen Poe’s “*The Raven*” ?

D. Limitation of the Study

The researcher considers some aspects as the limitation of the study. They are, literature, approach and problem of the study. As the study uses symbolism approach, it should have more literature about the life of Poe. But this study only presents it lees. It is very difficult to find more about Poe’s life. If does not

because of these limitation, the researcher may conduct deeper analysis on it although in more narrow space.

E. Objective of the Study

Dealing with the problem statement above. The objectives of the study are follows:

1. To analyze the narrative poem based on structural elements.
2. To analyze the narrative poem "*The Raven*" based on symbolism.

F. Benefit of the Study

The benefits of the study are as follow:

1. Theoretical Benefit

To give contribution to the body of knowledge, particularly studies on poem "*The Raven*" by using structural elements.

2. Practical Benefit

In this research, the writer wants to give some contributions to the development of literary study. In addition, it would help researchers who want to examine poetry especially "*The Raven*".

G. Research Methodology

1. Type of the Study

In this study the writer uses qualitative research

2. Object of the Study

In this research, the writer takes the data from the text of the work "The Raven" by Edgar Allen Poe. It consists 108 of lines and in 18 stanzas.

3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

There are two types of data source namely:

a. Primary Data Source

The Primary Data source are taken from “The Raven” by Edgar Allen Poe and its narrative poem.

b. Secondary Data Source

The secondary data are taken from other source, which are related to the primary data that support the analysis. There are books, articles, and virtual references.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The writer follows the following steps:

1. Reading and understanding the poem
2. Identifying the data in the form of sentence dialogues that describe the answer of the problem.
3. Finding the answer of the problem
4. Drawing a conclusion based on analysis result.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The Technique of data analysis in this research is descriptive. This is an interpretation of the poem analysis to get the symbol in “*The Raven*”

H. Research Paper Organization

To report this research, the writer divides the research into five chapters, namely: Chapter 1 is the introduction consisting of the background of the study, literature review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of the study, the benefit of the study, research methodology, research paper organization. In chapter 2 comprises the underlying theory and present theory of Literature. In Chapter 3, Structure Element. Chapter 4 analysis and Discussion of the poem. A chapter 5 is conclusion and suggestion.