PREFACE

Be grateful to God Almighty for the opportunity and ability so I can finish this thesis after all. Also shalawat and salam to our prophet Muhammad SAW for his knowledge and his struggle as being the biggest inspiration for all Moslem in the world.

The writer realizes that this research is by no means as a complete analysis. It is far from being perfect. The writer has to learn and undergo further study in order to make the research more detail and more comprehensive. The writer, however, does hard to finish this paper and eventually feels so glad having this paper done.

The thesis is titled *Death Symbols on Dylan Thomas’ Poems: Heuristic and Hermeneutic Analysis* which tells about symbols of death and its role in Dylan Thomas’ poems. This paper is about a study of symbol using heuristic and hermeneutic analysis.

Overall, I hope it will give benefits to any students who interested in Dylan Thomas’ poems.

Bandung, April 2007

Cecep Saepudin
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ABSTRACT

Cecep Saepudin, 200101384: Death Symbols on Dylan Thomas’ Poems: Heuristic and Hermeneutic Analysis

In the history of poetry’s development, poetry has become a part of human life that could be a bridge between reality and imaginary world. In this imaginary world, a work of art especially poetry has a great role in improving human’s creativity. In poetry every body may express all his ideas, opinions, feeling, and emotion in denotation or connotation’s way. Because words in poetry should be simple, rich and beautiful, many poets put connotative images in their poems. Symbol which is a central theme of this research included in figurative convention. Because symbol is always connotative then it should be found and recovered to reach the meaning of the poem. Therefore, this present study uses descriptive analysis which refers to structuralism-semiotic approach. It is a text analysis based on heuristic and hermeneutic analysis.

Heuristic analysis is structural analysis focus on the structure of the text. Heuristic analysis is to put appropriate words among words in order to get totality in meaning. This analysis is to paraphrase a poem so it could be understandable. Then, those words are given brief explanation through hermeneutic analysis which looks another possible meaning that is suitable for this research. Those two analyses are practiced to ten poems of Dylan Thomas, Collected Poems: 1934-1952, which becomes an object of this research. Those ten poems are I dreamed my genesis, Now, And death shall have no dominion, The tombstone told when she died, The conversation of prayers, A refusal to mourn the death, by fire, of a child in London, This side of truth, Deaths and Entrances, Do not go gentle into that good night, Elegy. Through these poems, the poet put many images relate to symbol of death. In understanding how an image becomes a symbol, Pierce and Frye’s theory are presented here. They said a symbol is an image that represents abstract idea and arbitrary based on poetry convention. Symbol is simply an image that appears continuously in a work of art.

Death’ symbols in Thomas’ poems are a power to understand the whole poems. In I dreamed my genesis, Deaths and Entrances, Do not go gentle into that good night and Elegy, the poet use an image of night as a symbol of death. Night is something that should be struggled and faced without being calm. Another death symbols are dust, grave, sea, bone, stairs, ghost, grass, land, snow, fire and blood. Obviously, these symbols strengthen the atmosphere of death in the poems.

Those symbols also help the poet in making statements as the concept of his life. The statements are “now say nay, sir no say, death to the yes” (Now), “do not go gentle into that good night” (Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night), “until I die he will not leave my side” (Elegy) and so on. And these statements would be understandable through heuristic and hermeneutic analysis. So this analysis method provides spacious scope particularly for student of letter department who want to make a research about sign and its variants or any elements of literary convention in any work of art.
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