SYNOPSIS
of
SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS ON EDGAR ALLAN POE’S POEMS

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JAKARTA
2009
A. Background of the Research

The writer would like to analyze some poems of Edgar Alan Poe because it is a beautiful literary work. The writer knows that literature is the beauty of language. It can give satisfaction to the reader and especially to the writer, because literature is a performance in words. It strongly holds our intention, and it is not primarily regarded as a source of factual information and offers a unique delight of satisfaction.

Poetry is an important kind of literary work and rather difficult to divine. Yet it has some characteristic that may form it definition. Poetry is the most compressed form of literature (1). It is composed of carefully chosen words expressing great depth of meaning (2). It uses specific devices such as connotation, sound, and rhythm to express the appropriate combination of meaning and emotion (3).

Reading Poetry is an experience that increases richness of meaning and emotion as it is repeated. A poem may be enjoyed on the first sight, for its brilliant imagery, perhaps, or it satisfying sound relationship, the appeal of wit or an intellectual concept pointed with subtlety or for all these together, flashing upon the mind with a shock of delight.

Edgar Alan Poe is the most well known names in literature. He is a known short story writer, poet, critic, journalist, editor, essayist, and novelist. Baudelaire says of him that he is “regarded by literary historians as the architect of modern short story.” Poe also created many new writing genres such as the modern horror tale, science fiction story, and the detective story. Thousands have analyzed the works of Poe and these critics have concluded that he has a concise and concrete writing style.
To make this research focus, the writer limits the research on Edgar Alan’s poems in several aspects. First of all is concerned with Edgar Alan’s poems selected for this research. The writer focuses in three poems: Alone, To Helen, and The Valley of Unrest.

**B. Method of the Research**

The writer focuses in symbolizing or meaning construction Edgar Alan did for his poems. For this purpose, the writer uses semiotic analysis. Semiotic analysis is kind of linguistic method that focuses in analyzing and searching the meaning of symbols. Therefore, the reader can get poems analyze and get more understanding of the poems.

**C. Unit of Analysis**

Object of this research is three chapters of Edgar Alan’s poems, they are: *Alone* (1829), *To Helen* (1831), and *The Valley of Unrest* (1845). These chapters are poems that were composed during the range between 1829 and 1845 (16 years).

**D. Research Finding**

The writer would like to descript some of many symbols analyzing of Edgar Alan Poe’s poems in his thesis.

**First Description**

*Once it smiled a silent dell*

*Where the people did not dwell;*
Through the valley of unrest the poet tries to describe the loneliness and the unrest of the valley at once. The poet uses various kinds of symbols to share his ideas. Nevertheless, the symbols cannot be easily interpreted without adequate understanding on the life of the poet or the true event that brought about the composition of the poetry.

The dell where the dwellers of it are away for battle is described as smiling with silence. It is interested to recognize that smiling and silence are two contradictory ideas. Usually, smiling symbolizes happiness, but in this case, it represents the solitude of the valley.

Poe, of course, understands what smiling always means. But by means of using this word to show solitude, he wants the readers to know even the valley seems alive and smiles because none of human beings there were alive and smile. The smiling dead thing (i.e. a silent dell) then means the solitude. The valley doesn’t sound nor is alive; the valley is just able to smile like a sad man’s smiling in the street looking at a prosperous wealthy man; smiling that means sadness and regret, not happiness. This explanation can be described as follows:

1. The Meaning of Silent Dell

Linguistic sign
(silent dell)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound (Signifier)</th>
<th>Meaning (signified)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S-i-l-e-n-t d-e-l-l</td>
<td>Valley that has little or no sound</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, silent dell can be the symbol of solitude and quiet in the heart, as if there is nothing Alive, like the valley that has little or no sound.
Second Description

“Ah, by no wind those clouds are driven
That rustles through the unquiet Heaven.

What Poe wants to convey to the reader is that the heavens of the valley was full of motion clouds and they move back and forth above the earth making the heavens look like unquiet. The words “unquiet heavens” symbolizes the unrest of the valley, because it is commonly considered that Heaven is an unquiet place where the souls take rest for good. So when Poe mentioned “unquiet heaven”, he actually is stressing on the unrest of what happen in that place. This explanation can be easily understood as bellow:

2. The Meaning of Unquiet Heaven

Linguistic sign
(Unquiet heaven)

Sound (Signifier)
U-n-q-u-i-e-t –H-e-a-v-e-n

Meaning (signified)
Unquiet place where the souls take rest for good

So, unquiet heaven can be the symbol of unquiet place where the souls take rest for good.
D. Conclusion

Edgar Allan Poe is one of American poets that had written so many mystery works in the form of short stories, essays, and poetries. His early life was colored by so many tragedies that influenced to his thought and action later.

The poetries he composed in actuality reflect the atmosphere of his true heart. He was sorrowful all his life and disappointed of what had happened on him along his childhood. Therefore, everyone can find that most of his poetries depicted sadness, sorrow, tragedy, anger, disappointment, distrustfulness, and death.

In *The Valley of Unrest*, in actuality he depicted the circumstance in his heart. This poetry was written after his journey to Innis Island with his foster father, John Allan. He was a teenage boy by then and wasn’t considered as if he was the child of his father. He used symbols such as *silent dell*, *unquiet heavens*, *lilies*, and *unnamed graves* to describe his emotion. When he used the symbol *silent dell* he would like to convey to the reader how lonely and empty his life was. He felt that even the sky rumble showing its anger and it’s implicitly conveyed through *unquiet heavens*. Lilies that wave among plants and the dews that fell down again and again shows how quiet the situation was for there had just happened a tragedy that led to death and sorrow, something that required the existence of tears. Therefore, Poe used the *unnamed graves* that perfectly depict tragedy, death, and sorrow. The motivation that had driven him to compose this poetry was the feeling of out of love and affection from his parents.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

Literature is the beauty of the language. It can give satisfaction to the reader because literature is a performance in words. It strongly holds our intention, and it is not primarily regarded as a source of factual information and offers a unique delight of satisfaction.\(^1\) Many people spend their time only for reading literary-works, such as novel, drama, poetry, short story, etc.

Literature also has common written characterization. This is the reason why a reader not only comprehends and understands the text of literary-work, but also can get benefit from the literature if they analyze as far as possible. A reader can overcome the obstacles in his life after reading it, because, most of literary works reflects the real life in society, as Kate Anstrom said in *Responding to Literature Stories, Poems, Plays, And Essays*:\(^2\) “Literature to me has always mean a place to find someone else who goes through the same things I do. But seeing them and their problems or situations more in an objective way”

The literary language also creates deviations and distortion in order to urge the reader observes and realize the diction in poem. Many poets create the

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deviation and distorting with greater awareness, greater sensitivity, and greater artistry on purpose to get the intended effects.

Understanding a literary work—such as poems—equals to infiltrating into its composer’s life, crosses the limit of space and time toward the past, and struggles with the ideology he or she believed. Elayne Mercier reported: “We read literature to find the beauty of words of great writers. Literature teaches us the truth about our lives. We learned good values from literature like Shakespeare.”

Poetry is an important kind of literary work and rather difficult to divine. Yet it has some characteristic that may form it definition. Poetry is the most compressed form of literature (1). It is composed of carefully chosen words expressing great depth of meaning (2). It uses specific devices such as connotation, sound, and rhythm to express the appropriate combination of meaning and emotion (3).

Reading Poetry is an experience that increases richness of meaning and emotion as it is repeated. A poem may be enjoyed on the first sight, for its brilliant imagery, perhaps, or it satisfying sound relationship, the appeal of wit or an intellectual concept pointed with subtlety or for all these together, flashing upon the mind with a shock of delight.

There are many reasons why poetry has been becoming the rich and precise literature to express experience: First of all, poetry—or poem—can provide intense enjoyment the other kinds of literature can not do. It provides

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3 Ibid
5 Stanley B. Greenfield and A. Kingsley Weather head, the experience of a poem p.xxii
multi-interpretation through universal words and prepares particular meaning through specific ones at the same time. The breaking common rule of grammar attracts more attention to the reader so that the enjoyment increases up to the level of unimaginable. It reaches pleasure, not measure. Max Beerohm said: “Not philosophy, after all, not humanity, just the sheer joyous power of song, is the primal thing in poetry.”

The second—apart from enjoyment, poetry expresses idea and experience by means of compressed words that are colorful and emotional. The words are called compressed because they are able to represent colossal event even in several lines. They describe deep pleasure, dark sorrow, with few words. In the words of Kahlil Gibran, it is “a deal of joy and pain and wonder, with a dash of the dictionary.” The words are colorful because they rather communicate specific things than general ones. Emotional, because they are based on human’s honest feeling. Muriel Rukeyser said, poetry is, above all, an approach to the truth of feeling…

Finally, poetry extends the territory of our perceptions, enlarges and refines our emotional sensibilities and our capacity to feel. Therefore, we will be more sensitive, responsive, and sympathetic human beings. Those things indeed will be most important contribution to our lives.

The poetry is a universal literary-work all over the civilization of human life. No civilization or culture had ever arisen without its poets described and

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7 http://www.educationoasis.com/curriculum/Lang_Arts/quotes_about_poetry.htm accessed on December 27 2008
8 Ibid
expressed the situation occurred. For example, in the former culture of Arabian pre-Muhammad that was famed with immorality and illiteracy, the people used to express their poetry to remind their victory in the battles they had undergone. This is the real proof that poetry is the symptom and occurs even in the—to some extent—old and illiterate culture.

Since the source of poetry is human inner need, poetry must not morally-be discarded, as what happens today, in the modern word. In the words of Octavio Paz, “Poetry, in the past, was the center of our society, but with modernity it has retreated to the outskirts. I think the exile of poetry is also the exile of the best of the best of humankind.”

Understanding poetry equals to grasping experience. Understanding poetry equals to comprehending the world. This is why, the research on Edgar Alan Poem is important to conduct.

As the growing of art and science in 19th century, Edgar Alan grew with unique talent to create a rhymed form of poetry. Like the common poets—and philosophers, Alan became orphan when he was a baby. He grew in a cheerful sadness without a father which where he could lean on. Therefore, he had much more sensitive feeling and deep contemplation about things around him, and he expressed them in the form of poetry.

Edgar Alan Poe is the most well known names in literature. He is a known short story writer, poet, critic, journalist, editor, essayist, and novelist. Baudelaire says of him that he is “regarded by literary historians as the architect of modern

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9 *Ibid*
short story.” Poe also created many new writing genres such as the modern horror tale, science fiction story, and the detective story. Thousands have analyzed the works of Poe and these critics have concluded that he has a concise and concrete writing style.\footnote{C. Baines, “Edgar Alan Poe”\url{http://www.ncteamericancollection.org/itmap/poe_edgar_allan_md.htm} downloaded on December 31 2008 M}

In addition, this poet was born in the artist family. Apparently, he had parents that–both—used to play in theatre.\footnote{James Southwall Wilson, “Poe’s Life”\url{http://www.poemuseum.org/poes_life/index.html} downloaded on December 31 2008 M} This likely is the genetic drive that had formed him a poet. And in a broader consideration, this poet had given much contribution to western literature so that people around the world can study how a western in common views the world. Through universal and specific meanings, such view may be interpreted in rich meanings. A modern communication maxim may say: a picture can describe thousands of word. Nevertheless, through poetry, we can say: \textit{a word can describe thousands of pictures}. This is why this research entitled “Semiotic Analysis on Edgar Alan’s Poems” is significant to conduct.

B. Limitation of The Problem

To make this research focus, the writer limits the research on Edgar Alan’s poems in several aspects. First of all is concerned with Edgar Alan’s poems selected for this research. The writer focuses in five poems: Romance, Alone, To Helen, The Valley of Unrest, and Silence. The second, the writer focuses in symbolizing or meaning construction Edgar Alan did for his poems. For this purpose, the writer uses semiotic analysis.
C. Questions of The Research

According to the background of the study and the limitation of problem, the writer formulates the questions of research as below:

1. What symbols does Edgar Alan utilize in his three poems?
2. What do the symbols in Edgar Alan Poems mean?

D. The Objective of Research

The objective of this research is to find out the meanings of symbols Edgar Alan used in *The Valley of Unrest, Alone, and To Helen.*

E. The Significance of The Research

This research may help people in general or poetry-lover specifically to understand the meanings—or even values—that are revealed in a western poet like Edgar Alan. As mentioned above, poetry is a kind of literature that may contain rich and multi-interpretation meanings. It is recommended to understand the context and background where and when the poet composed it. Therefore, this semiotic research must contribute much advantage for many people.

F. The Research Methodology

1. Method of the Research

The writer uses semiotic research to analyze Edgar Alan’s poems, the method of qualitative paradigm which is distinct principally to quantitative paradigm. The semiotic analysis is based on an assumption that a text is constructed and represents certain values of the composer—it is contrary basically
to quantitative methods that are based on an assumption that a text is a part of a broader trend, so that the text is believed free from ideology, meaning construction, and values. For this research is the qualitative, therefore, this research is aimed at finding symbols, the meanings they reveal implicitly.

2. Unit of Analysis

Object of this research is three chapters of Edgar Alan’s poems, they are: *Alone* (1829), *To Helen* (1831), and *The Valley of Unrest* (1845). These chapters are poems that were composed during the range between 1829 and 1845 (16 years).

3. Data Collection Method

The data of this research are collected by content analysis, a technique which is “potentially one of the most important research techniques in the social science.”¹² This technique is aimed at collection of symbols that occurred in Edgar Alan Poe’s poem.

4. Data Analysis Method

The symbols collected through the previous technique are, then, analyzed using the theory of Ferdinand de Saussure, i.e. by exploring the meanings of the symbols. Hence, then, the theory of semiotics plays an important role on such of poems analyzing.

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CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Definition of Poetry

Poetry is usually defined as “a kind of language that says more and says it more intensely than doe’s ordinary language.”\(^{13}\) It is a form of artistic writing in which few lines run to the edge of the page.

Poetry has been written everywhere for centuries, and eagerly read or listened to by all distinct people: by kings, queens, soldiers, state-men, scientists, philosophers, lawyers, and even farmers. It is as ancient as human civilization. The most primitive people has used it, and the most civilized have cultivated it.\(^{14}\) Edmond Jacob reported that Bible, which was compiled hundreds of year before Christ, was inherited in the middle of Christian society from generation to generation through song and poetry.\(^{15}\) Quran, the holy book for Moslem, which arranged in literary words, has been read and studied by billions of Moslem around the world.

Besides, poetry also can be defined as a kind of composition that describes a long event in a short word. The language of poetry is artistic and extraordinary—i.e. specific, colorful, universal, and strong.

\(^{13}\) Laurence Perrine, *sound and sense: An introduction to poe ry* (New York: Harcourt Brace college Publisher, 1992), p. 3

\(^{14}\) *Ibid*

\(^{15}\) Maurice Bucaille, *Bibel, Al-Quran, dan Sains Modern* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1978) h. 18
Poetry is primarily concerned with human feelings and attitudes. Therefore, the source of poetry must be the frankness and honesty of the state of spirit. It is best based by true experience, feeling, and attitude. Therefore, the poor can describe sorrow much deeper than the rich can do. Those who used to undergo hardships along his life might comprehend this world in the way many people in pleasure can not do, because naturally, hardships function as the hammer to form people’s spirit. And the spiritual feeling that can create delicate and meaningful poetry only comes from sadness, hardships, obstacles, poorness, and difficulties.

Jalaluddin Rumi in his masterpiece, *Matsnawi* said:

*Before the cloud has cried, how can gardens smile?*

*Before babies have cried, how can milks spurt out of breasts?*

*Even first year baby know, “If I cry, the kind nurse will come”*

*Don’t you know that The Nurse of all nurses won’t give you any milk unless you cry?*¹⁶

Indeed, through those words, Rumi would say that suffering is the way to understand the truth and link us to spiritual understanding. Someone who had suffered bitter life may produce stronger words and emotion in his poetry. Iqbal, the greatest poet of India was a figure that lived in a conflict between Moslem and Hindus; he lived in colonization. Khalil Gibran, the greatest poet of Lebanon was left by his lovely sister and run his life without getting married: he was alone. Fredrick Nietzsche, the famous philosopher of existentialism, the author of *Thus

¹⁶ Jalaluddin Rakhmat, *Reformasi Sufistik* (Bandung: Pustaka Hidayah, 1998) h. 175
Spoke Zarastuthra was a weak person physically. Many great poets had undergone sorrow in their life and consequently, they composed their great work. Charles Simic said, “Poetry is an orphan silence. The words never quite equal the experience behind them.”\(^{17}\) The break-down of live often makes people aware of their lives and expresses their silence through poetry. A saying says: “A poet’s autobiography is his poetry. Anything else is just a footnote.”\(^{18}\)

Centuries earlier, the roman poet Horace had already pronounced that poetry should be useful and sweet.\(^{19}\) Useful that poetry should give lesson the readers. Sweet, that is must be joyous and beautiful.

Aristotle clearly linked mankind’s enjoyment of poetry with our innate love of imitation and our sense of harmony and rhythm, he concluded that the reader’s pleasure is largely governed by the relationship between the subject of the poem and the way in which that subject is treated. Hence Plato, one of the great philosophers of the west, said: “At the touch of love, everyone becomes a poet”\(^{20}\)

Poetry, like all works, attempts to communicate an author’s emotional and philosophical responses to his or her own existence and to the surrounding world. Ralf Waldo Emerson said: “The true philosopher and the true poet are one, and beauty. Which is truth, and a truth, which is beauty, is the aim of both.”\(^{21}\) It


\(^{18}\) Ibid


\(^{20}\) Michael P. Garofalo, op.cit.

means, as for Emerson, the poet and the philosopher are doing the same. They apply themselves to searching what life is, what death is, what love is, what sorrow is, what religion is, what honor is, what power is, and so on. Both are concerned with the existence question; the question that come from human soul.

There are four kinds of poetry: *epithalamium*, a poem that celebrates the wedding; *elegy*, a poem that remembers the death; *pastoral*, a poem describing the joys or sorrow of living close to nature and away from the city; *love*, a poem filled with expression of joy, despair, passion, romance, spiritually, religion or unrequited love.22

Each kind of poetry above consists of several parts: speaker, audience, subject, tone, theme, diction, imagery, figure of speech, sound and rhythm. The speaker is the person the reader is supposed to imagine is talking. The speaker is not necessarily the poet. The poet often invents a speaker for the poem in order to give him or her self more freedom to compose the poem-while the character the poet creates to be the speaker is called the *persona*-and enter to the other personality he creates. The poem in which the poet uses a persona or a narrative voice of other than his own, to tell the entire poem, is called *dramatic monologue*.

Audience is the person or people to whom the speaker is speaking. Understanding the audience within a poem might help everyone to understand the poem better. There are several kinds of audience to whom the poem addresses the poetry: the first is another character in the poem; the second is a character is not present or is dead, which is called *apostrophe*; the third, the reader.

22 http://depts.gallaudet.edu/english works/literature/poetry.html#basic. downloaded on december 27 2008
Subject is concerned with what the poem is about while tone is the poet’s attitude toward the subject of the poem. This attitude can be identified by analyzing the uses of poetic devices such as diction, rhythm, and syntax.

Theme is the statement the poet makes about its subject while diction is the poet’s choice of words. The poet chooses each word carefully so that both its meaning and sound contribute to the tone and feeling of the poem. In relation to this, the poet usually considers denotation and connotation. The first is the definition of words according to the dictionary while the second is the definition of words according to the emotions, thoughts, and ideas, associated with and evoked by the words.

Imagery is words and phrases used specifically to help the reader to imagine each of the senses: smell, touch, sight, hearing, and taste. There are several types of imagery—according to the type of sense:

1. Olfactory, imagery stimulates the sense of smell
2. Tactile, imagery stimulates the sense of touch
3. Visual, imagery stimulates the sense of sight
4. Auditory, imagery stimulates the sense of hearing
5. Gustatory, imagery stimulates the sense of taste
6. Kinesthesia, imagery that recreates a feeling of physical action or natural bodily function
7. Synaesthesia, imagery that involves the use of one sense to evoke another (e.g. loud color, warm gesture)
Figure of speech is poetic devices in which two images or subjects are compared to make language interesting and meaningful. There are several kinds of figures of speech: simile, metaphor, personification, anthropomorphism, synecdoche, metonymy, allusion, symbolism, verbal irony, overstatement, understatement, paradox, and oxymoron.

B. Definition Of Semiotic

Semiotic is derived from Greek, *semeiotikos*, “observant of signs.” It is an adjective form of *semeiosis* means “indication”; from *semeioun* means “to signal”; from *sema* means “sign.” In modern usage, it refers to a theory of signification.

Barthes, as reported by Alex Sobur, said the semiotic basically applies itself to discuss how human signify things. The scientific disciplines concerned with different aspects of culture(s) (linguistics, literary science, musicology, art history, archeology, history, sociology, political science, religious studies etc.), nature (chemistry, biology, physics etc.) and technology are integrated in semiotics by exploring the sign character of the cultural, natural and technological phenomena examined.

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25 Alex Sobur, *Semiotika Komunikasi* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2003), p.15
26 [http://ling.kgw.tu-berlin.de/semiotik/english/info/defin_e.htm](http://ling.kgw.tu-berlin.de/semiotik/english/info/defin_e.htm) accessed on December 27 2008
Semiotic can mean as bellow:

1. The study of signs and symbols as elements of communicative behavior; the analysis of systems of communication, as language, gestures, or clothing.\(^{27}\)

2. A general theory of signs and symbolism, usually divided into the branches of pragmatics, semantics, and syntactic.\(^{28}\)

3. The study of signs and symbols, especially the relationship between written and spoken signs. *Semiology* draws attention to the layers of meaning which maybe embodied in a simple set of representations, such as the five interlocking rings of the Olympic flag. It is concerned with the meaning invested in the sign and the signifier (the physical representation of the sign).\(^{29}\)

4. The scientific study of the signs and symptoms of disease.\(^{30}\)

Syntactic is the branch of semiotics that deals with the formal properties of sign and symbol. More precisely, syntactic deals with the “rules that govern how words are combined to form phrases and sentences… Charles Morris add that semantics deals with the relation of signs their *designata* and so the objects which they made or do denote; and, pragmatics deals with the biotic aspects of semiosis, that is, with all the psychological, biological, and sociological phenomena which occur in functioning of signs.\(^{31}\)

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\(^{27}\) Douglas Harper, *op.cit.*  
\(^{28}\) Ibid  
\(^{30}\) Ibid  
The importance of signs and signification has been recognized throughout the history of philosophy, and in psychology as well. Plato and Aristotle both explored the relationship between signs and the world, and Augustine considered the nature of the sign within a conventional system, creating a body of theories that had a lasting effect in western philosophy, especially through the works of the scholastics philosophers. More recently, Umberto Eco, in his “semiotics and philosophy of language” has argued the necessity to uncover the implicit semiotic theories in all the history of thought.32

Semiotics is concerned with how minds produce, communicate and codify meaning. It applies to any kind of signs or symbols, not just words (as in semantics), and anything representative—a word, a gesture, a sound—is a sign. Even concepts, thoughts and ideas can be symbols for something else. Semiotics provides insights and tools for critically examining symbols and information in a variety of fields.33

It is human beings’ ability to manipulate symbols that allows them to explore the relationships between ideas, things, concepts, and qualities—far beyond the explorations of which any other species on earth is capable.

Semiotic was originally spelled “smeiotics” by John Locke (1632-1704), who, in An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690), first coined the term “smeiotike” from Greek word “smeion”, meaning “mark” or “sign”.34 The word is concerned with how minds produce, communicate and codify meaning. It applies to any kind of signs or symbols, not just words (as in semantics), and

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32 http://en.freepedia.org/Smiotics.html. accessed on December 27 2008
33 http://www.gurupedia.com/s/se/semiotics.htm accessed on December 27 2008
34 Ibid
anything representative—a word, a gesture, a sound—is a sign. Even concepts, thoughts and ideas can be symbols for critically examining symbols for something else. Semiotics provides insights and tools for critically examining symbols and information in a variety of fields.\(^{35}\)

There are, at least, two persons who have deserved well of the emerging of this subject: Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) and Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913). Pierce, the founder of the philosophical school of pragmatism, invented semiotics as a discipline, terming it “semeiotic”. This form of semiotics is based on the notion of sign as triadic relations between an object, its representation, and an interpretant. On the other hand, Saussure, the “father” of modern linguistics, invented, at about the same time as Pierce, a subject he called “semiology.” Saussure established a dyadic notion of signs relating the signifier to the signified.\(^ {36}\)

In semiotics, ‘sign’ may be anything from which meanings may be generated (such as words, images, sounds, gestures and objects). For the analytical purposes of semiotics (in the tradition of Saussure), every sign is composed of:

1. A ‘signifier’—the form which the sign takes
2. The ‘signified’—the concept it represents.\(^ {37}\)

Nowadays, the ‘signifier’ is commonly interpreted as the material form of the sign. For example:

Sign: The written word ‘tree’

Signifier: The letter ‘t-r-e-e’

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\(^{35}\) [http://www.gurupedia.com/s/se/semiotics.htm](http://www.gurupedia.com/s/se/semiotics.htm) accessed on December 27 2008

\(^{36}\) Ibid

\(^{37}\) Daniel Chandler, *op.cit.*
Signifier concept: The category ‘tree’. The distinction between signifier and signified has sometimes been equated to the familiar dualism of ‘form and content’. Within such a framework the signifier is seen as the form of the sign and the signified as the content. However, such a formulation could misleadingly suggest the equivalence of content and meaning.

This life is full of signs. The signs are socially constructed by human beings for the process of communication. The signs can simply refer to anything that represent something. The signs have a certain structure that Saussure first defined as the association between a signifier and signified. The letter A may represent an ox. The signified is the ox, what the letter A signifies. The signifier is the letter A. the sign requires the presence of both A and the ox. The absence of one of them brings about the absence of sign.

In addition, Saussure emphasized the arbitrariness of the sign (though he was focusing on linguistic signs, seeing language as the most important sign system). In the context of the natural language, he stressed that there is no necessary connection between the signifier and the signified: the relationship is purely conventional and arbitrary. Each language involves different distinctions between one signifier and another (e.g. ‘tree’ and ‘free’) and between one signified and another (e.g. ‘tree’ and ‘bush’).

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38 Ibid
39 Ibid
40 http://www.cedarseed.com/air/semiotics.html accessed on December 27 2008
CHAPTER III

SYMBOL ANALYSIS OF THE POEMS

A. The analysis of the Valley of Unrest

Once it smiled a silent dell
Where the people did not dwell;
They had gone unto the wars,
Trusting to the mild-eyed stars;
Nightly, from their azure towers
To keep watch above the flowers,
In the midst of which all day
The red sunlight lazily lay;

Now each visitor shall confess
The sad valley’s restlessness;
Nothing there is motionless;
Nothing saves the airs that brood
Over the magic solitude
Ah, by no wind are stirred those trees
That palpitates like the chill seas
Around the misty Hebrides!

Ah, by no wind those clouds are driven
That rustles through the unquiet Heaven
Uneasily, from morn till even,
Over the violets there that lie

In myriad types of human eye
Over the lilies there that wave
And weep above a nameless grave!
They wave—from out their fragrant tops

Eternal dews come down in drops.
They weep—from off their delicate stems
Perennial tears descend in gems

Through the valley of unrest the poet tries to describe the loneliness and the unrest of the valley at once. The poet uses various kinds of symbols to share his ideas. Nevertheless, the symbols cannot be easily interpreted without adequate
understanding on the life of the poet or the true event that brought about the composition of the poetry.

There are various symbols used to describe the unrest of the valley, such as:

1. a smiled silent dell,
2. unquiet heaven
3. unknown graves
4. palpitating tree like chill seas,
5. rustling clouds,
6. waving and weeping lilies above a nameless grave, and

These are the six points that will be analyzed using the semiotic approach.

Edgar Allan Poe used the nature of the valley to describe the loneliness of the valley. He uses personification in the line below:

“Once it smiled a silent dell” (line 1)

The dell of Nis where the dwellers of it are away for battle is described as smiling with silence. It is interesting to recognize that smiling and silence are two contradictory ideas. Usually, smiling symbolizes happiness, but in this case, it represents the solitude of the valley.

Poe, of course, understands what smiling always means. But by means of using this word to show solitude, he wants the readers to know even the valley seems alive and smiles because none of human beings there were alive and smile. The smiling dead thing (i.e. a silent dell) then means the solitude. The valley
doesn’t sound nor is alive; the valley is just able to smile like a sad man’s smiling in the street looking at a prosperous wealthy man; smiling that means sadness and regret, not happiness. This explanation can be described as follows:

1. The Meaning of Silent Dell

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic sign</th>
<th>Meaning (signified)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(silent dell)</td>
<td>Valley that has little or no sound</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, *silent dell* can be the symbol of solitude and quiet in the heart, as if there is nothing Alive, like the valley that has little or no sound.

Next, when Poe described how the sun lazily lay light on flowers (line 6 and 8), he actually depends on aid of nature to tell the reader how the terrible event in this valley impacts on the solitude of this valley. Then, the lazy sun actually signifies disparateness, hopelessness, and unsolved unrest. By all means, everyone knows sun must not be lazy. If it were lazy—through these words, Poe suggested with metaphor, it would because of the nature in that valleys is hopeless and left unrest. Therefore, it will be found in the next line that:

“*Each visitor shall confess the sad valley’s restlessness*” (line 9 and 10)
The state of quiet can be symbolized by means of various signs. Nevertheless, Poe, in this poetry, uses natural symbols to convey it. He says, “Nothing there is motionless” which means that nothing there is alive.

Besides, Poe compares the palpitating tree with chill seas that indicates very deep quiet and solitude. When he uses the word “chill”, everyone must imagine how cold the situation was. The word “chill” that means very cold of course in this poetry symbolizes that there is no life there. There is no life but the dead.

In the line 17-18 Poe writes as below:

The last four lines cover the important meanings that Poe would like to convey to the reader and consist of symbols that describe sorrow. The lines sound as bellow:

“Ah, by no wind those clouds are driven
That rustles through the unquiet Heaven.

What Poe wants to convey to the reader is that the heavens of the valley was full of motion clouds and they move back and fort above the earth making the heavens look like unquiet. The words “unquiet heavens” symbolizes the unrest of the valley, because it is commonly considered that Heaven is an unquiet place where the souls take rest for good. So when Poe mentioned “unquiet heaven”, he actually is stressing on the unrest of what happen in that place. This explanation can be easily understood as bellow:
2. The Meaning of Unquiet Heaven

So, *unquiet heaven* can be the symbol of unquiet place where the souls take rest for good.

Next, Poe, through his words in line 22-23, seems to express his idea more explicitly—to some extent. He wrote as bellow:

*Over the lilies there that wave*
*And weep above a nameless grave!*

When Poe stressed on waving and weeping lilies, he actually was conveying to ideas. The first is that, again, the solitude, loneliness, and sorrow. There is none in that valley, therefore wind blows and make lilies wave, as if through that, the lilies say goodbye to those who had died in that place. The second is that death and sorrow. Most weeping means sorrow for the death of some one—despite the other meanings—as well as graves. Graves are the terminal of human life where their bodies are usually buried. People usually are afraid of graves. Most of them believe that graves are homes for ghosts and devil. This kind of assumption is spread worldwide and creates a special meaning of
grave. It deals very much with death of the dead, sorrow of those who are left behind, and fear to spiritual devil.

Next, the most interesting is that the graves are unnamed, a kind of situation that symbolizes old age of the graves. Naming grave is a custom in any kind of civilization, so that when the graves are unnamed they actually have their names wiped by time. The other meaning that occurred in the symbol of unnamed graves is the carelessness. Everyone is dead then none of human being takes care of the graves. They are left unrest and untidy; just lilies, sky, clouds, and trees that moves, waves and weeps.

On the other hand, unnamed graves may refer to the great amount of the unrecognized dead. When the great amounts of dead in a tragedy are buried together, they usually are recognized and their graves are unnamed. This explanation would be more clearly understood by examining the following figure:

3. The Meaning of Nameless Grave

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic sign</th>
<th>Meaning (signified)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N-a-m-e-l-e-s-s –G-r-a-v-e-s</td>
<td>Grave without names</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, *Nameless Graves* can be the symbol of death, sorrow, carelessness, old age and tragedy.
The last four lines cover the important meanings that Poe would like to convey to the reader and consist of symbols that describe sorrow. The lines sound as bellow:

They wave—from out their fragrant tops
Eternal dews come down in drops
They weep—from off their delicate stems
Perennial tears descend in gems.

Through those lines Poe conveyed how lilies were the symbol of sorrow. It differs from roses, for instance. Roses particularly the read ones, symbolizes love, lust, or elegance. On the other hand, lilies symbolize sorrow, and pain. The explanation would be simpler by examining the figure below:

So, the flower lilies here also can symbolizes sadness and sorrow

In actuality, this poetry is based on Poe’s journey in 1815, when he visited a place where there had ever happened a tragedy. He wrote poetry chaptered “The Valley of Nis” for the first time. Then he developed It and wrote this poetry. The
word Nis is assumed as the Scottish that refers to “Innis” (the name of an island). Then, it can be said that the word “Nis” is the word of the misheard sound.

However, *The Valley of Unrest* refers to *The Valley of Nis* and what is depicted in the poem of *The Valley of Unrest* by all means depicted the tragedy ever hit the island of Innis. He visited the place with his foster father, *John Allan*, when he was six. When he depicted the disaster of the valley, he may be was talking about him self. Loneliness, sorrow, are parts of his life. He was abandoned by his father when he was two and left by his mother for good when he was in the same year. He lived just with a family he did not recognize and grew without true affection of his parents. Then he probable felt unrest of his soul and composed *The Valley of Unrest*.

So, it can be concluded that *The Valley of Unrest* is a real tragedy that depicted the sorrow, solitude, and unrest in Poe’s self. Poe felt in him self there were unnamed graves, the symbol he used to explain the mystery of his life, the disorder of his mind, and the hurt of his sorrow.

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B. **Analysis of Alone**

From childhood's hour I have not been
As others were; I have not seen
As others saw; I could not bring
My passions from a common spring.
From the same source I have not taken
My sorrow; I could not awaken
My heart to joy at the same tone;
And all I loved, I loved alone.
Then- in my childhood, in the dawn
Of a most stormy life- was drawn
From every depth of good and ill
The mystery which binds me still:
From the torrent, or the fountain,
From the red cliff of the mountain,
From the sun that round me rolled
In its autumn tint of gold,
From the lightning in the sky
As it passed me flying by,
From the thunder and the storm,
And the cloud that took the form
(When the rest of Heaven was blue)
Of a demon in my view.

Through *Alone*, Edgar Allan Poe indeed would like to convey another side of human life that is loneliness. He actually talked about him self—as in *The Valley of Unrest*, about a conflict within him self that could not be solved so easily and— potentially—could not be wiped for good. The life he lived since he was a child was full of loneliness; he was orphan—left by his parents since his early childhood, and such an experience had driven his mind to explore the world of loneliness.

What happened on Poe since he was a child was the same as what happened on many poets and philosophers. This poet underwent a complex of
anxiety that might bring him to contemplation of existential questions. By all means he asked the role of God while he experienced miserable misfortune, when he was left behind by his parents, when he had to live with strangers and had to make decisions of his life—in the ages other boys were guided by their parents—by his own consideration. Such a situation might drive him to conclude human being with his reason is responsible for his life, neither his parents, nor God.

This poetry is in actuality the fundamental background of why Poe was an atheist—like philosophers Jean P. Sartre or Fredriech Nietzsche. It’s why he wrote,

“The idea of God, infinity, or spirit stands for the possible attempt at an impossible conception.”

And in the other place he reduced the idea of religion to the effects of fantasy, fear, and poetry:

“No man whoever lived knows any more about the hereafter...than you and I; and all religion...is simply evolved out of chicanery, fear, greed, imagination, and poetry.”

This belief has so much impact on the other Poe’s view of this life. Therefore, the tragedy in the next stage of his life, he thought, is caused by the early tragedy in his life. He expressed such a tragedy as below (line 1-3):

From childhood’s hour I have not been  
As others were; I have not seen  
As others saw
He indeed expressed his disparateness. He felt he was not as lucky as other children. It is questioned why Poe wrote such lines. The answer is sourced in his sorrow childhood.

He was just an innocent baby when his father abandoned the family when he was two and his mother died of Tuberculosis in the same year.

The little Poe then adopted by John Allan, a successful tobacco merchant in Richmond, Virginia. Despite the richness, Poe lived without true love from his parents. This poor situation contributed such psychological depression into himself. He felt not as the other children did. Children play and have not responsibility to think their life and thus how they should do. Many experts theorized that what become adults’ habit were originally caused by what had ever happened in the early times of childhood, and one of those in those who believe in psychoanalysis.

Sigmund Freud, the Father of Psychoanalysis, was the first psychologist that has paid attention to personality growing, particularly, to first decisive years of babies and children. He argued that what happened at childhood might cause something in the future. Because, he said, human thought can be compared with Ice Mountain. The larger part beneath the surface of water describes unconsciousness—the storage of impulses, lust, unreached memory that influence humans’ mind and action.\(^{42}\)

In relation to what happened on Poe, this poetry can be the cause of why Poe was so much skeptical to religion and God. His childhood was really made

\(^{42}\)Rita L. Atkinson, et.al. Pengantar Psikologi (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2001) h. 163
him self alone as he wrote. He underwent such a bitter experience when he lost his parent’s attention and when they passed away. He wrote (line 3 and 4)

*I could not bring*

*My passions from a common spring*

Poe compared the joy of childhood with spring that usually symbolizes life and happiness. And when he said “I could not bring my passion from a common spring”, he in actuality had things he really wanted. Being in a home had to be his dream. Being with true father and mother must be his desire. Because, in such a condition of his childhood he felt he was not *at home*; just felt *at house*. Of course he wanted to undergo what other normal children do; he wanted to be taken to somewhere pleasing, or to be spoilt by asking something he wanted.

The children with such a pleasure of childhood are, as Poe described, in a common spring as the time when they grow and exploring their potency. In addition, by means of their parents’ support they might possess self-confidence and positive self esteem, because they can lean their selves on their lovely and supportive parents. The symbolization in these lines can be explained such a way:

**The Meaning of Spring**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic sign</th>
<th>Meaning (Signified)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Name of Season when plants begin to grow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-p-r-i-n-g</td>
<td>Sound (Signifier)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Diagram:**

- **Linguistic sign**: Spring
- **Sound (Signifier)**: S-p-r-i-n-g
- **Meaning (Signified)**: Name of Season when plants begin to grow
So, the word spring can be the symbol of happiness in the childhood like plants when they begin to grow.

On the other hand, Poe lost these times and could not lean his complicated problem—like running out of attention—to his true parents. He lost significant persons to whom he could ask questions of his life. Therefore he felt this life was uneasy and threatening; hard and boring. He said (line 6 and 7)

\[
I \text{ could not awaken}
\]
\[
My \text{ heart to joy at the same tone}
\]

These lines explicitly show how Poe was so alone. He lived at the same tone—or it can be said, he lived in a repeating hard situation—when he had to depend everything on his own decision. And the worst is that he could not recover himself so easily. Here, Poe used “the same tone” to indicate the hard and boring situation. Such a comparison is a common for “tone” is usually understood as the rhyme of life. People who get to work regularly in the morning and back home in the evening might feel so much bored and say: “I live at the same tone”. The symbolization using “tone” can be seen through this figure:

The Meaning of The Same Tone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic sign</th>
<th>Meaning (Signified)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The same tone</td>
<td>Sound in the same volume and type/monotone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sound (Signifier)
T-h-e s-a-m-e t-o-n-e
So, the word “the same tone” can be the symbol of hard and boring situation.

When people live at the same tone, they in actuality lose their direction of life because they just have to do what is available ahead. They have their own choice and afar from God.

Such a situation might not be a hurt for someone who enjoys his life, but this is not for Poe. Poe seemed to feel uncomfortable of his life and tried to rebel, but he could not. Then what he finally decided to do is to accept his life and gaze into this life with pessimistic. Consequently, he realized, like Sartre do, that he just had to depend himself on himself, neither on parents nor God in the Heaven, just himself alone; and he said (in line 8-10):

\begin{quote}
And all I loved, I loved alone
Then in my childhood, in the dawn
Of a most stormy life was drown
\end{quote}

Such a bitter life living with foster parents had driven Poe to symbolize his early childhood as a storm. Storm, of course, means and indicates to violent show of feeling. And in another meaning, it refers to period of time where wind and rain work strongly. Hence, with the symbol of storm he tried to describe how disordered and saddening his life is. Then such an experience took him to gaze this life in a view of victim and criminal. He created many works that related to mystery. This is why Poe was claimed as the originator of the detective fiction genre. If he had never undergone such a life, Sherlock Holmes of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle might have never come up.
The Meaning of Storm

Linguistic sign

Storm

Sound (signifier)  Meaning (Signified)
s-t-o-r-m The period of time where wind and rain work strongly

So, storm can be the symbol of disordered and saddening life

However, the most interesting fact of Poe’s loneliness is that he compared his mysterious and depressed life to a demon. Of course he is really hat demon forms the symbol of evil. It denies the existence of God—either in Bible or in Quran—declares His sovereignty beyond human; declares human’s sovereignty beyond God. Such a belief had driven jean P. Sartre, Fredriech Nietzsche, and other atheists, to declare the death of God as Edgar Allah Poe did implicitly. Poe felt that he should have not been a man as he was if he had undergone a happier experience of his childhood. The life he lived with loneliness, without father and mother, had created him a man that believers in him self only—as human being, not God. He may be thought that God is just busy when he created the universe for the first time. And the rest, this universe works mechanically by it self. Such a reduction of God’s role in the life shows the view of demon that historically—or symbolically—appeared in the story of Adam in the Heaven. In the story, God asked his creatures’ surrender and submission to be loyal to his command,
whatever it was. Apparently, the command was to bow to Adam. Demon refuse to
do it. He felt he had greater right to bowed to than Adam, because he was created
from fire while Adam from clay. This arrogance and rationality were the
composition of what now is said is ego and humanity, a kind of believe in the
superiority of human being in this universe. Then, when Poe mentioned ‘demon’,
he actually declared his rebellion to God’s doctrines like submission, faith to
hereafter, angels, prophets, or destiny. This is why he declared,

“The idea of God, infinity, or spirit
Stands for the possible attempt
At an impossible conception.”

The poetry “Alone” in actually is the good source to understand Poe’s life,
ideology, and view. Atheism, mystery, alcohol and drug problems, rationality, can
really be explained by the deep meaning of this poetry. Using “demon” in this
poetry can be explained as below:

The Meaning of Demon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic sign</th>
<th>Sound (Signifier)</th>
<th>Meaning (Signified)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demon</td>
<td>D-e-m-o-n</td>
<td>Evil spirit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, Demon can be the symbol of atheism, sovereignty of Human beyond
God, mystery, crime, and opposition to God
C. Analysis of *To Helen*

Helen, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicean barks of yore,
That gently, o’er a perfumed sea,
The weary, way worn wanderer bore
To his own native shore

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome

Lo! In yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the region which
Are holy Land!

*To Helen* is one of Poe’s complicated problems. Among literature lovers and researchers, Helen refers to an anonymous person. According to a national AP exam, this poem is about Helen of Troy, a Grecian (beautiful) woman carried off by Trojan prince Paris.\(^{43}\)

Meanwhile, the other observer—In *pambytes.Com*—argued that Helen refers to his friend’s mother. About 1823 he became intimate in the home of a schoolmate, Robert Stanard, whose mother, Jane Stith Stanard, took a tender interest in the brilliant young boy, an affection which was ardently and romantically returned. It was to this lady that Poe afterwards addressed his poem “To Helen,” beginning.\(^{44}\)


\(^{44}\) *Ibid*
In *To Helen*, Poe sees pure idealize beauty, both physically and spiritually. He thinks that she is so beautiful that it is a relief to just be with her and you are clamed by her extraordinary beauty. She has beautiful hair and a classic face, and her inner beauty is also tremendous. The speaker sees Helen as very poised and perfect and ideal. The words that characterize the beauty most clearly are ‘gently’ (stanza 1, line 3), ‘perfumed’ (stanza 2, line 3), ‘hyacinth hair’ (stanza 2, line 2), ‘classic face’ (stanza 2, line 2), ‘statue-like’ (stanza 3, line 2), and ‘brilliant’ (stanza 3, line 1). In his life time in 19th century, such characteristic were the criteria of beauty.

The speaker says that Helen’s beauty has ‘brought me home/ To the glory that was Greece/ And the grandeur that was Rome’ because Poe had opened the poem with the smile “Helen, thy beauty is to me / like those Nicean barks of yore” and this compares the beauty of Helen, with small sailing both (barks) that took travelers home in ancient times. He extends this boat imagery in to the lines above, when he says Helen brought him home to the shores of these great civilization, classical Greece and Rome. Helen beauty inspires the speaker and calms him to a great extent. Just her presence is a blessing to him being with her gives the speaker relief.45

It is important to note that the grandeur of “Rome” and “Greece” were used by Poe to symbolize of the woman; the woman of statue-like, gently, and classic face.

45 Margaret Fuller, *Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism*. Ed. Cherie Abbey and Janet Mullane. (New York: Gale Research Company), 1987
In actually, the message that is conveyed through this symbol is conveyed explicitly, that Rome and Greece are symbol of grandeur and glory. The explanation can be easily understood through the figure below:

The Meaning of Rome and Greece

![Diagram of the Meaning of Rome and Greece]

Nevertheless, such meanings give the readers nothing except if they understand that based on the background of this poem, Poe connected the beauty with the glory of old empire. Of course, 19th century was colored by rationalism by then and it was a custom to reduce the value of works and arts to the bottom of commerce only. Through the symbol of beauty used by Poe it’s understood that Poe didn’t see beauty as cheap as the people commonly do. Beauty was not equal to commerce. Instead, it’s sourced in the true nature, in the honor, virtue, glory, and grandeur.

When Poe connected beauty with glory and grandeur, he actually believed in the influence of elegance and luxury, the beauty that is able to command all people to surrender and submit. Of course, if the context of this poetry is
reviewed, such a taste of beauty might be Poe’s typical and this related to a woman named Jane Smith Stanard, The why Helen is mentioned?

Hellen is an allusion to either the Greek goddess of light or Helen of Troy who is considered the most beautiful woman ever. So, “Helen” in this poetry is the symbol of beauty to name Miss Stanard, who went mad and died after knowing Poe’s feeling. The explanation of the symbol can be easily understood through the figure below:

So, the word “Helen” can be the symbol of beauty.

Poe seemed to believe in romanticism. He was connected to the glory and mythology of the past. Why didn’t he compare Miss Stanard’s beauty with the girl of that time instead of Helen of Greek Goddess of Light? In the last stanza (line 4) he, again, quoted Psyche. Psyche, in fact, wasn’t a real woman, but from Greek mythology. Both Psyche and Helen are symbols of beauty, honor, holy, and elegance.
This poetry actually describes one of historical episodes that formed the atheist Allan Poe. Through the two previous poetry it is understood that Poe had undergone a bitter life. During his childhood, he didn’t obtain affection from his parents. He was adopted by John Allan, the rich merchant of that time, but he was not considered as his own skill. He felt alienated of this life and began to refuse God. The next tragedy of his life happened again when the woman he loved died. She died for knowing her boy’s friend fell in love with her, something unusual at that time. This tragedy by all means influenced Poe’s life and made him so much depressed, sad, disappointed, and regret. This happening was just the part of the other bitter experience, notably, his marriage with his own cousin that was thirteen and her death not long after that.

Table 1

The Meaning of Symbols in Edgar Allan Poe’s Poems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Symbols</th>
<th>Denotative Meanings</th>
<th>Meanings of Symbols</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Silent dell</td>
<td>Valley that has little or no sound</td>
<td>The symbol of solitude and quiet in the heart, as if there is nothing alive, as if there happened something like tragedy and really influenced to the someone’s life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Unquiet Heavens</td>
<td>Heaven that contains of moving clouds</td>
<td>Symbol of disorder situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lilies</td>
<td>Plants that grow from a bulb and has large (usually) white flowers</td>
<td>Sadness and sorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Unnamed Graves</td>
<td>Graves without names</td>
<td>Death, sorrow, carelessness, old age, and tragedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Name of season when the plants begin to grow</td>
<td>Happiness in the childhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The same tone</td>
<td>Sound in the same volume and type</td>
<td>Hard and boring situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Storm</td>
<td>The period of time where wind and rain work strongly</td>
<td>Disordered and saddening life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Demon</td>
<td>Evil spirit/ the creature that opposes God and like to do evil</td>
<td>Atheism, sovereignty of human beyond God, mystery, crime, and opposition to God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Rome and Greece</td>
<td>The name of Great civilization in the past</td>
<td>Glory, grandeur, beauty, that is proper to be considered as the ideal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Helen</td>
<td>The name of Greek Goddess of Light/ Helen of Troy who is considered the most beautiful woman</td>
<td>The beauty of someone that cannot be compared with anyone else in this world.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

Edgar Allan Poe is one of American poets that had written so many mystery works in the form of short stories, essays, and poetries. His early life was colored by so many tragedies that influenced to his thought and action later.

The poetries he composed in actuality reflect the atmosphere of his true heart. He was sorrowful all his life and disappointed of what had happened on him along his childhood. Therefore, everyone can find that most of his poetries depicted sadness, sorrow, tragedy, anger, disappointment, distrustfulness, and death.

In The Valley of Unrest, in actuality he depicted the circumstance in his heart. This poetry was written after his journey to Innis Island with his foster father, John Allan. He was a teenage boy by then and wasn’t considered as if he was the child of his father. He used symbols such as silent dell, unquiet heavens, lilies, and unnamed graves to describe his emotion. When he used the symbol silent dell he would like to convey to the reader how lonely and empty his life was. He felt that even the sky rumble showing its anger and it’s implicitly conveyed through unquiet heavens. Lilies that wave among plants and the dews that fell down again and again shows how quiet the situation was for there had just happened a tragedy that led to death and sorrow, something that required the existence of tears. Therefore, Poe used the unnamed graves that perfectly depict
tragedy, death, and sorrow. The motivation that had driven him to compose this poetry was the feeling of out of love and affection from his parents.

Besides, in *Alone*, again Poe expresses his loneliness to the readers. He used symbols such as *spring*, *the same tone*, *storm*, and *demon* to show his personality. This poetry in deed discovers the true of his life and is the explanation of why he chose to be an atheist in the next time. *Spring* symbolizes the happiness in the childhood, something that is missed by Poe. Therefore, he used to be sorrowful and he couldn’t change the situation to be happier. This situation appears in the words *the same tone*, and *storm*. Finally, Poe used the word *demon* to say his view. *Demon* always mean evil, or at least, opposing God. This is very accurate to describe Poe’s view for he was an atheist that had undergone so much difficulties that had taught him how independent him self is from the God’s determination. The motivation that had driven him to write *Alone* is the disappointment of the childhood.

In *To Helen*, Poe used symbols such as *Rome*, *Greece*, and *Helen*. The first two are symbols of grandeur and glory—that are mentioned explicitly in the poetry. Poe considered glory and grandeur as the supreme level of beauty, the beauty that deals with luxury and glamour, the beauty that deals with honor and civilized values, the values that cannot again be found in the modern age for rationalism and modernism has reduced art and beauty into the bottom of commerce. The values he praised were rooted in the past time when Rome and Greece were the Greet Civilization. Therefore, in the poetry, he used the name of
the famous past, Helen, the Greek mythology that represents the most beautiful woman at that time.

B. Suggestion

This research of semiotic has substracted the meanings of symbols and signs that reveal in Edgar Allan Poe’s poem. However, this research focused on the poetries that were composed after the sadness of the author. Therefore, it is suggested that the next research can discover the meanings of symbols and signs in this poetries under another feeling—in another words, under another theme—like anger, disappointment, hope, or sadness.

This research of semiotic can be the bridge to the research of other disciplines, such as history and cultural studies that need data related with various meanings in different culture.
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APPENDIX I