

**LITERARY STYLE IN PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY’S
“SONG TO THE MEN OF ENGLAND”**

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ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini berfokus pada gaya penulisan sastra dalam puisi Percy Bysshe Shelley berjudul “Song to the Men of England”. Kajian penulis merupakan pengembangan dari penelitian sebelumnya tentang bagaimana Shelley menulis puisi tersebut. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan hubungan antar kata dalam puisi untuk membangun gaya penulisan sastra; untuk mendeskripsikan aspek linguistik dan fitur pribadi dalam puisi untuk membentuk gaya sastra; dan untuk mendeskripsikan aspek linguistik dan fitur personal untuk memperkuat hubungan antar kata menjadi gaya sastra, Penulis menggunakan studi pustaka dalam mendapatkan datanya dan menggunakan pendekatan stilistika untuk menganalisis data. Untuk mendeskripsikan gaya sastra dalam puisi, penulis menggunakan konsep dari Rene Wellek dan Austin Warren berjudul “Theory of Literature”, konsep dari M. H. Abrams berjudul “A Glossary of Literary Term”, dan konsep dari H. G. Widdowson berjudul “Stylistics and the Teaching of Literature”. Hasil dari skripsi ini adalah kesamaran atau *vagueness* menjadi gaya utama dalam penulisan puisi “Song to the Men of England” yang diindikasikan dengan ketidakjelasan, ketidakteraturan dan ambivalensi dalam diksi yang digunakan Shelley.

Kata Kunci: gaya sastra, diksi, pencitraan, symbol, skema rima, pola ritme dan meter.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

“Song to the Men of England” is a poem which Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote. Shelley has been regarded as a great English poet. The writer believes that the poem is stylish. According to the writer, this poem contains elements of style. In writing this final paper, the writer is interested in figuring out the literary style

in “Song to the Man of England”. So, this final paper is about how the literary style in the poem is deployed.

The study of this final paper develops from recent studies on Shelley’s “Song to the Men of England”. The recent studies include student’s final papers, journal articles, and anthology articles. The student’s final papers were conducted by students of English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University. Both of the studies are final papers that were written by Laili (2008) and Irawan (2012). Laili’s study focuses on the analysis of the figurative language and the condition of working class in England reflected in the poem. Whereas Irawan’s study focuses on the analysis of diction, figurative language and labor exploitation.

In addition to the two final papers above, the writer also read journal articles about Shelley’s poetic style. The journal articles reveal Shelley’s proficiency in using the figurative language in his poetry. One journal article, which O’Neill wrote, discusses the figurative language in Shelley’s poems. The other journal article, which Dawson wrote, discusses briefly irony in Shelley’s poem.

Moreover, the writer read an article from an anthology on Shelley which F. R Leavis wrote. In his article, Leavis expresses the beauty in the composition of imagery and metaphor in Shelley’s poems in conveying the message to his readers.

From the studies above, the writer infers that one of the beauties in the style in most of Shelley’s poems is on his usage of figurative language. So, the

writer decides to analyze the figurative language in “Song to The Men of England”. Besides that, the writer intends to analyze diction and metrics in the Shelley’s poem. The description of the figurative language, diction and the metrics as the elements of literary style in the poem becomes the discussion in this final paper.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The writer sets the objectives of her study as follows:

1. to describe the relations among words in the poem to construct the literary style;
2. to describe the linguistic aspect and the personal features in the poem to constitute the literary style;
3. to describe the relation between the linguistic aspects and the personal features to fortify the relation among words to become the literary style.

2. CONTENT

2.1 Research Method

The method of data collection which the writer used in this final paper is the library research. The writer sought information about the recent studies on Shelley’s “Song to the Men of England” and the concept of style from books, journal articles, student final papers and the internet source as her references to help analyze the poem. The library research “involve identifying and locating source that provide factual information or personal/expert opinion on a research question; necessary component of every other research method at some point”

(George, 2008: 6). The writer identified and located the references to answer the research problems.

2.2 Approach Method

The approach method which the writer applies in this final paper is stylistic approach. The writer infers the concept of stylistic approach from Rene Wellek and Austin Warren's concept of style and stylistics to figure out the style in the poem. To analyze the poem, the writer adopts the division of style which is stated by Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, the division of style itself consists of the relation of words to the object, relation among words, the relation of words to the total system of the language and the relation of the words to the author.

2.3 Discussion

2.3.1 Relation Among Words

The writer analyses to the relation among words in the poem through the diction. The writer initiates the analysis with the diction in the first stanza of the poem.

Men of England, wherefore plough
For the lords who lay ye low?
Wherefore weave with toil and care
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

In the first stanza the writer points out the relation between the word "lords" and "tyrants". According to its lexical meaning, "the lord" is defined as "a man of high rank in the nobility or people in high social class" (Hornby, 2010: 881), while "the tyrant" is "a person who has complete power in a country and uses it in a cruel and unfair way" (2010: 1612). From the definition of both words above, it is clear that the words "lords" and "tyrants" refer to the people who have

high position in the society, however both of them make different impression for the writer. The word “lords” have more positive impression than the word “tyrants”. The writer finds a sort of ambivalence which is deliberately shown by Shelley through the word “lords” and “tyrants” to convey a message in the poem. Although Shelley conceals the real message in the beginning of the poem by showing the word “lords”, Shelley then replaces the word “lords” with the word “tyrant” to suggest that the lords in time become the tyrants themselves.

From the relation among words, the writer conveys that Shelley shows ambivalence in his use of words. The ambivalence make Shelley’s diction on the poem discreetly contradiction. The writer needs to read between the lines what Shelley actually wants to speak in each of the stanza.

2.3.2 Nominal Group and Definite Articles

After analyzing the relation among words in the poem, the writer continues her analysis on nominal groups with their definite articles. The nominal groups and the definite articles are found in stanza one, two, three, five, six, and seven. The writer finds two nominal groups in the first stanza. It can be noticed from “for the lords who lay you low?” in line 2 and “the rich robes your tyrants wear?” in line 4. “The lords” and “the rich robes” are the nominal group which the writer finds from the first stanza. Based on the structure “the lord” is categorized as homophoric since after the definite article only followed by head-word “lords”, while “the rich robes” is categorized as cataphoric because the word “robes” has modifier “rich”. Based on the function of communication, “the lord” and “the rich

robes” are cataphoric since they do not have any relation to anything else in the poem, but they render the writer’s conception of the nominal group.

2.3.3 Rhyme

To figure out the rhyme scheme in the Shelley’s poem “Song to the Men of England”, the writer initiates the analysis by giving a marker in every line on the poem with corresponding sequence of repetitive alphabets to represent similar ending sounds as follow:

Men of England, wherefore plough	<i>a</i>
For the lords who lay ye low?	<i>a</i>
Wherefore weave with toil and care	<i>b</i>
The rich robes your tyrants wear?	<i>b</i>

From the marker in the poem above the writer figures out that the types of rhyme which Shelley used in his poem is the end-rhyme in which the sound repetitions occur at the end of the verse-line almost similarly. It can be seen from the words “plough-low” and “care-ware” in the first stanza above. it can be noticed that Shelley uses the same end-rhyme in every two line of each stanza, so that it form sequential pattern *aabb*. The ending sounds which are used to form the rhyme scheme in this poem can be categorized as perfect rhyme since the harmony of the rhymed sound is accurate. It can be seen from the words “plough-low”, “care-wear”.

2.3.4 Rhythm and Meter Pattern

From the analysis of meter and rhythm in Shelley’s “Song to the Men of England”, the writer discovers that there are two major patterns of meter and rhythm in this poem. The patterns are trochaic tetrameter in which a strong syllable is followed by an unstressed syllable (-**U**) and iambic tetrameter in which

an unstressed syllable is followed by a stressed syllable (**U-**). Shelley combines the pattern of trochaic tetrameter and iambic tetrameter. In the writer point of view, this combination is a symbol of the twist of faith. It shows Shelley's doubt about the ideas of struggle.

Irregularities in the rhyme schemes as well as in the rhythm and meter pattern, the writer notes indecision that Shelley is not completely convinced about his ideas and stance for the struggle of the men of England. The writer thinks that this stance is because Shelley is careful enough to consider the consequence which the men of England render from their struggle.

2.3.5 Diction

Men of England, wherefore plough
 For the lords who lay ye low?
 Wherefore weave with toil and care
 The rich robes your tyrants wear?

From the diction in the first stanza, Shelley tends to use the words which are easy to understand by the writer. The phrase "Men of England" in line 1 suggests the English people in general. If the phrase "Men of England" is connected with the verb "plough" and "weave", the phrase will have different implication. The word "plough" has lexical meaning as "to dig and turn over a field or other area of land with plough" (Hornby, 2010: 1124), while the word "weave" is an activity to make a cloth. So, the phrase "Men of England" might be associated to the word "farmer" or "person" who has to work in the farm area and to the dress maker. From the explanation above it can be said that "Men of England" are not the English people in common, it might be referred specifically

to the English people who have to work for the lords (line2). The word “the lords” itself from the analysis of the relation among words refers to “the tyrants” who humiliate the men of England. Shelley uses the general terms “Men of England” to suggest something which is more specific. By using the general terms to convey specific terms in this stanza shows Shelley seems to be uncertain in expressing his ideas. Shelley’s uncertainty can be also seen from the use of interrogative sentences, since in the writer’s points of view, the interrogative sentence is usually used to express something which is unclear.

Wherefore, Bees of England, forge
 Many a weapon, chain, and scourge,
 That these stingless drones may spoil
 The forced produce of your toil?

In the third stanza above the writer finds two symbols which are contradictory. Those symbols are “bees of England” and “stingless drones”. The lexical meaning of “bee” is an insect with four wings that can sting” (Hornby, 2010: 94), while “drone” is a male bee which does not work. From the definitions above, it is clear that “bees” and “drones” are of the same creatures, but Shelley describes “the bees” and “the drones” in different way. The word “bees” are described in a positive way, while the word “drones” is described in a negative way. The writer thinks that the “bees” and “drones” in this stanza used by Shelley to symbolize the relation among people in a particular group. The phrase “bees of England” refer to the majority of people in England who have to work just like a group of worker bee while “stingless drones” refer to the minorities but they do not need to work because they are “stingless”. The writer assumes that this condition is ambivalence. Usually in the social life the majority group always has

strong influence to the minority one. However, in this poem the minority group, the “stingless drones”, are described as a group of people who have strong influence upon the majority group, the “bees of England”.

2.3.6 Imagery

In the analysis of imagery the writer figures out that the dominant imagery in the poem are kinesthetic and visual imagery.

2.3.6.1 Kinesthetic Imagery

Shrink to your cellars, holes, and cells;
In halls ye deck another dwells.
Why shake the chains ye wrought? Ye see
The steel ye tempered glance on ye.

The image of movement can be seen through the words “shrink”, “deck”, “dwells”, “shake”, “wrought”, “tempered”, and “glance” in the seventh stanza above. follows: “shrink” means “become smaller”; “deck” means “to decorate something” (Hornby, 2010: 378); “dwell” means “live in”; “shake” means to make something move; “wrought” means “to make something change”; “tempered” means to make metal as hard as it need” (2010: 1538), and “glance” means “to hit somebody in an angle” (2010: 634). Although those words above are not contradictory one to another, the context of this stanza implicitly shows that every action in the stanza above is contradictory. The contradiction shows an ambivalent situation in this stanza. From the ambivalence which is shown in this stanza, the writer thinks that Shelley wants to show the real condition which is experienced by Men of England. On the one side, there are people who can live in pleasant situations, while on the other side there are people who have to live in miserable conditions.

4.4.3.2 Visual Imagery

Visual imagery can be seen in the first, second, seventh, and the eighth stanza of this poem. In the first stanza, the visual imagery can be seen through the word “lords” in the phrase “for the lords who lay you low” and the word “tyrants” in the phrase “the rich robes your tyrants wear?”. Besides kinesthetic imagery, the word “lord” and “tyrant” also suggest a strong visual imagery. The word “lords” and “tyrant” will make the readers visualize the figures of the “lords” and the “tyrant”. As the writer explained earlier, there is a sort of ambivalence between the words “lords” and “tyrants”. Although both of them refer to the people who have power and high social class in society, “lords” and “tyrants” have different impression for the readers. The word “lords” suggests to the people who have power, good personality and always love their people, whereas the word “tyrants” suggests to the people who have complete power but always act unjustly toward their people. The different images which are presented by Shelley in this stanza show Shelley’s uncertainty in revealing the truth that the “lords” at that time may become “tyrants” when they govern their people.

The analysis of imagery, both kinesthetic and visual has similar description to that of symbol. Both analyses reveal ambivalence which the poet deploys in his words.

3 CONCLUSION

In expressing the uncertainty in his poem, Shelley deployed the metrically words to relate to each other. The relation among the words shows that words

arrange to be musical. The musicality itself accompanies the uncertainty. Furthermore in order to form the total system of the language the accompaniment is expressed in written structure of eight stanzas.

In addition, the relation of the words to the author presents subjectivity in the choice of words. The usage of ambivalence in the diction of the poem indicates that this diction is Shelley's personal authorship. Lastly, the relation of words to the object puts forward vagueness in Shelley's decision making about his own struggle. The vagueness is indicated with the uncertainty and ambivalence in his diction. In all, the vagueness may become the poetic style of Shelley's "Song to the Men of England".

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