CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Indonesian flag, “Merah Putih,” reflects a sovereignty of the nation, red color means brave and white color means pure or sacred. Another example, “crocodile bread” in Betawi culture is a symbol of loyalty for the couples in a marriage ceremony. We, therefore, encounter many kinds of symbols in our daily lives.

In *Oxford Dictionary*, symbol means: “sign, mark, object, etc that represent something.” It has a universal or domestic characteristic, as mentioned in the paragraph above. Symbolism, as stated by T. T. Eiland (in www.citruscollege.com) is an object or action that has both literal and figurative meaning; it is often a concrete object that represents a concept. For example, a tree represents a concept of life. There are five types of symbols, they are object, person, situation, action, and miscellaneous (spoken word, brainstorming) (T. T. Eiland, in www.citruscollege.com).

In poetry or prose, there are abundant uses of symbols. For example, in a story of “Hansel and Gretel”, candy or sweets described as a temptation to trap children. According to Waluyo (2003: 83), in W. S. Rendra’s *Surat Cinta* (or *Love Letter*), there is a verse: “Kaki-kaki cinta yang tegas bagi logam berat gemerlapan” (or “The feet of love which are distinct like sparkling heavy metal”) which symbolizes a power of love, “Kekuatan cinta itu lebih kuat dibandingkan halangan-halangannya” (or “The power of love is stronger than its
obstacles”). We might consider a symbol in a poem as the theme of the poem itself, because it embeds a concept that represents some moral messages from the author to the reader.

In March 2003, Dan Brown released a very controversial novel, *The Da Vinci Code*. It has some controversial issues related to Christianity, Church, and Vatican (the Pope). The most controversial is a new concept of Holy Grail symbolism. In the novel, Brown claims that Holy Grail is actually Mary Magdalene or “someone” that represents a concept of sacred feminine as similar as the Goddess’s existence in Paganism. In contrast, the original concept of Holy Grail in many tales is “something,” a sacred material grail or vessel. Originally, the development of Holy Grail legend began in 12th century. Some famous tales inspired by Holy Grail are: Chretién de Troyes’s *Perceval, ou le conte du Graal* (1180-1190), Wolfram Von Eschenbach’s *Parzival* (1210), Sir Thomas Malory’s *Le Morte d’Arthur* (1469-1470) (*The Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 1997*).

The new concept of Holy Grail in *The Da Vinci Code* inspired the writer to find out the original concept behind Holy Grail in a Holy Grail-themed poem. The writer tried to find out the concept of Holy Grail symbol which is embedded in *The Cross and the Grail*, a poem written by Lucy Larcom. This research investigated the type of unidirectional expression, the representation of Holy Grail, and the context of Holy Grail. The investigation employed Semiotics-Structuralism theory which is developed by Michael Riffaterre in his *Semiotics of Poetry* (1978).
1.2 Theoretical Framework

1.2.1 Poetry

Firstly, it is important to know the difference between poetry and poem. Poetry is a literary term of poem. Poem is a work of poetry. Poetry equals to prose which is a literary term of novel (Pradopo, 2005: 10). The definition of poetry can be more understandable if we compare it to prose, because they both have differences in characteristics and mental activities. As stated by Pradopo (2005: 12): “prose has a characteristic to tell or to describe and poetry is a conciseness of mental expression (lyrical and expressive in expression). The differences between prose and poetry in mental activities are shown in a condensation activity in poetry and a dispersion activity in prose.”

Poetry always changes and transforms every time. But there is one thing that always stays or exists in poem that it tells something indirectly or has unidirectional expression. It caused by displacing of meaning, distorting of meaning, and creating of meaning (Riffaterre 1978: 1, in Pradopo 2005: 12).

Herrig, Meller, and Suhnél (Jahn, in www.uni-koeln.de) included several types of poem, they are: Ballads, Narrative Poems, Dramatic Monologues, Short Lyrics and Songs, Pastoral, Sonnets, Elegies, Odes, Reflective Verse and Verse Essays, Epigram, and Nursery Rhymes. Regarding the type of discourse presented by a poem, the most useful distinction is that between lyrical poems and narrative poems. Many poems have lyrical and narrative features or lyrical and narrative passages (Jahn, in www.uni-koeln.de).

1.2.2 Poetical Elements in Poem
As a literary work, poem has poetical elements that can be divided into three types (Pradopo, 2005: 13), they are: visual, sound, and word element.

A. Visual Elements

Composition of stanzas in a poem (typography) is one of some characteristics that differentiate poem from other literary works (for example, prose). Typography means: 1) the composition of material from movable type, 2) the arrangement and appearance of printed matter; and stanza means one of the divisions of a poem, composed of two or more lines (The Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 1997 Dictionary).

B. Sound Elements

It includes four elements; they are sound orchestration (euphony and cacophony), phonological figures (alliteration, assonance, consonance, and onomatopoeia), rhyme (alternate rhyme and embracing rhyme), and rhythm.

C. Word Elements

An author should have a good knowledge in language, for example in vocabulary, to represent his/her idea by using words (diction) with their both literal meaning (denotation) and their figurative meaning (connotation) appropriately. The word element included few points, such as: diction, imagery, and figures of speech (Pradopo, 2005: 13). They are described as follows:

1. Diction
Diction means choice and use of words in speech or writing, clarity and distinctness of pronunciation (*The Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 1997 Dictionary*). A poet can choose title or words to make the meaning clearer or even to hide its true meaning. For example, Pradopo (2005: 54) comprises a famous poem from Chairil Anwar, *Aku*, originally titled as *Semangat*. The title might have been transformed to avoid censorship of Japanese government in Indonesia at that time. In the second line ‘Ku tahu’ (in *Semangat*) transformed to be ‘Ku mau’ (in *Aku*). ‘Ku tahu’ the first one is considered to be more appropriate to express stronger willingness than the second one.

2. Imagery

Imagery is the use of vivid or figurative language to represent object, actions, or ideas (*The Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 1997 Dictionary*). Object (*n*) is something perceptible by the senses or a material thing; action (*n*) is the state or process of acting or doing; a movement or a series of movements; and idea (*n*) is something, such as a thought, that exists in the mind as a product of mental activities.

The author uses imagery to describe many things through her/his words. The representation performs in various kinds, such as: visual, auditory, tactile/thermal, movement/kinetic sense of smell, taste, etc. They combined in a poem in order to get its poetical strength (Pradopo, 2005: 79). The examples of imageries in poems will be illustrated as follows.

3. Figures of speech
It is an expression that uses words in a non-literal way or that changes normal word order to heighten rhetorical effect (*The Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 1997*). Yandianto (2004: 141) divides figures of speech into four types; they are *comparison figures* (i.e. personification, metaphor, and metonymy), *contradiction figures* (i.e. paradox, antithesis), *allusion/satire figures* (i.e. irony and sarcasm), and *distinctive figures* (i.e. pleonasm, repetition, and parallelism).

Jahn (in [www.uni-koeln.de.htm](http://www.uni-koeln.de.htm)) mentions some figures of speech used in a poem, they are:

- **Simile**: A comparison of things or actions introduced by “like” or “as”
  
  → My luv is like a red red rose (Burns)

- **Metaphor**: A comparison of things or actions not introduced by “like” or “as”
  
  → You are a machine. (Shaw)

- **Personification**: Attribution of human qualities to a thing or an abstraction
  
  → Fortune is blind.

- **Metonymy**: Substitution of a word by a spatially or causally related term
  
  → To read Shakespeare (= Shakespeare works)

- **Synecdoche**: Substitution of a part for the whole or the whole for a part; use of a narrower or wider concept (*pars pro toto* or *totum pro parte*)
  
  → Let’s count noses; there were many new faces. (= people)
▪ Pleonasm: (Unnecessary) accumulation of expressions that mean the same thing.

→ I have a daughter, have while she is mine (Hamlet)

▪ Paradox: Seemingly nonsensical or illogical statement; resolvable contradiction.

→ The child is father of the man. (Wordsworth)

▪ Hyperbole: Use of an exaggerated expression

→ An hundred years should go to praise. (Marvell)

▪ Litotes: Ironical understatement; often expressed by a double negation

→ He is not a bad sort

▪ Irony: A statement that expresses the opposite of what is literally stated

→ Wonderful day, isn’t it? (It’s really raining outside)

▪ Exclamation: sudden outcry or interjection expressing violent emotion, such as fright, grief, or hatred

→ “O villain, villain, smiling damned villain!” (Hamlet, Shakespeare)

1.2.3 Literariness and Significance

According to Michael Riffaterre, the process of communication that unfolds between a text and its reader is not the same as that involved in so-called normal communication. The reader’s encounter with the literary text is an experience of something unique, for which the main corollary is its style. The style becomes evident to the reader through the presence in the text of
ungrammaticalities, those incongruous elements that disrupt the textual grammar.

A. Literary Communication

Riffaterre claims that “Reality and the author are substitutes for the text” (Riffaterre, 1983: 4, in Prud’homme and Guilbert, 2006). The following diagram, based on Jakobson’s communication model, illustrates the unusual relationships between the various elements involved in literary communication.

B. Literariness and the Literary Text

According to Michael Riffaterre, the uniqueness of each literary text is indisputable: “The text is always one of a kind, unique, and it seems to me that this uniqueness is the simplest definition of literariness that we can find” (Riffaterre, 1983: 2, in Prud’homme and Guilbert, 2006). The uniqueness is what we call style, as stated by Riffaterre: “Style is the text itself” (Riffaterre, 1983: 2, in Prud’homme and Guilbert, 2006).
C. Significance

Prud’homme and Guilbert (2006) explain how the text is organized and how it makes its mechanisms and significance apparent to the reader, they are found in the concept of stylistic units. Riffaterre defines the stylistic unit as “a dyad made up of inseparable poles, the first of which creates probability and the second of which frustrates that probability, the contrast between the two results in a stylistic effect” (Riffaterre, 1983: 7).

D. Ungrammaticality and Perceptibility

Prud’homme and Guilbert (2006) comprise that the primary feature of ungrammaticality is undoubtedly its ambiguity: the reader, confronted with an obvious distortion of mimesis, has the impression that since the text now refers no nothing, it loses its meaning temporarily. The reader then tries to superimpose his own interpretation on the text, an interpretation that will change as he progresses, as we will see. One of the characteristics of ungrammaticality is that it must be perceptible; if it harbors a hidden meaning,
the text will give two formal indices or features to the reader, who will furnish
the key to interpretation, they are:

- **A deictic feature**

  It perceived as a distortion of mimesis, “encoded in such a way that,
  first, it reveals that it is hiding something” (Riffaterre, 1983: 12, in
  Prud’homme and Guilbert, 2006).

- **A hermeneutic feature**

  It is the sort of distortion of mimesis that “indicates how we can find that
  something” (Riffaterre, 1983: 12, in Prud’homme and Guilbert, 2006).

The following diagram illustrates how the reader is forced to hurdle
the linearity of mimesis by recognizing the indices of ungrammaticality.

![Diagram](image)

By identifying the various stylistic units and finding their common
structure, the reader manages to decipher the text’s mechanisms and grasp its
significance. Through this effort of decoding the structures, the reader accomplishes what is called a hermeneutic reading.

1.2.4 A Semiotics-Structuralism Theory

The Structuralism-Semiotics Theory, a theory developed by Michael Riffaterre in his *Semiotics of Poetry* (1978), combines Structuralism and Semiotics in application. Riffaterre proposes four basic elements to find the significance (the concretization) of a poem (Pradopo, 2005: 281); they are Unidirectional Expression, Heuristic and Hermeneutic (Retroactive) Reading, Matrix (Keyword), and Hypogram (Principle of Intertextual).

A. Unidirectional Expression

According to Riffaterre, poetry is unidirectional expression from its author and caused by displacing of meaning, distorting of meaning, and creating of meaning (Pradopo, 2005: 281), the illustration are as follows:

- Displacing of meaning

   It means that a word means something different from its original meaning and this can be found in the use of simile, personification,
synecdoche, metonymy, and metaphor in a poem. Pradopo (2005: 212) analyses that in Chairil Anwar’s “Sajak Putih,” *mawar* and *melati* are metaphors. They mean love in the girl’s eyes which are beautiful, passionate, and pure as beauty as red rose and white jasmine.

- **Distorting of meaning**
  
  It happens in ambiguity, contradiction (irony), or nonsense in a poem. Pradopo (2005: 217) analyses that Subagio Sastrowardoyo’s “Afrika Selatan” shows irony. It criticizes white people who introduced Christian (a belief with a lot of love and mercy to others) do lots of discrimination, insolence and assassination to black people in South Africa.

- **Creating of meaning:**
  
  It happens in the organization of symmetry, rhyme, enjambment, or homologues in a poem. Pradopo (2005: 210) analyses that Sutardji Calzoum Bachri’s *Tragedi Winka & Sihka* (which has zigzag lines) creates an interpretation of a dangerously winding road in a marriage, the poem is an example of creating of meaning based on its typography, usually called iconic or indexes significance.

B. **Heuristic and Hermeneutic (Retroactive) Reading**

Heuristic reading is a reading based on the first level of semiotics sign system. Here, a literary work is read linearly or normatively. If needed, the sentence added by conjunctions or synonymy to get clearer in its meaning.
(Pradopo, 2005: 269). And hermeneutic (retroactive) reading is a re-reading by giving interpretation based on the second level of semiotics sign system. We can see them in Pradopo’s analysis on Subagio Sastrowardojo’s “Dewa Telah Mati” (Jabrohim, 2003: 80).

C. Matrix (Keyword)

It is the word that becomes the key interpretation of a poem which is concretized. It used to ‘open’ the poem and makes it easy to understand. Pradopo (2005: 299) analyses that Chairil Anwar’s “Sebuah Kamar” has “Kamar” as the matrix and it becomes the centre point and closely related to the other words which are describing the situation inside the room: a room (3x4 m) with only a window lived by five children with their mother and father.

D. Hypogram (Principle of Intertextual)

It is a principle of intertextual or relation between poems. Riffaterre purposes that a poem is actually a response of its previous work (Pradopo, 2005: 300). The response-text appears as contradiction or transformation and becomes the background for the previous work. A poem often gets its true meaning by comparing it to its hypogram. Therefore, a poem cannot be separated from its historical relation from the previous works.

1.2.5 Symbol and Symbolism

A. Symbol

In *Oxford Dictionary*, symbol means: “sign, mark, object, etc that represent something.” Semiotics is the science of signs, taken from the Greek word *semeion*, meaning "sign." It stresses that "meaning" is always the result of social conventions; also, it analyzes culture as a series of sign systems.

Three types of sign (Fiske, in www.cultsock.ndirect.co.uk) are icon, index, and symbol. **Icon** is a sign whose signifier bears a close resemblance to the thing they refer to. **Index** is a sign whose signifier we have learnt to associate with a particular signified, it lay between icon and symbol. And **symbol** shall mean what it means and there is no natural relationship between them and their meanings, between the signifier and the signified.

B. Symbolism


As stated by T. T. Eiland (in www.citruscollege.com): “Symbol is an object or action that has both literal and figurative meaning; it is often a concrete object that represents a concept. For example, a tree represents a concept of life.” Five types of symbols are: object, person, situation, action, and miscellaneous (spoken word, brainstorming). For example, in *Hansel and Gretel* story (www.lochnet.com), Children represent innocence; Witch/hag represents embodiment of pure evil; Candy/sweets/jewel represents temptation; and Forest represents danger.
1.3 Research Questions

The variables to investigate what is the embedded meaning behind “Holy Grail” symbol by analyzing a poem *The Cross and the Grail* written by Lucy Larcom, they are as follows:

- What is the type of unidirectional expression in the poem?
- What does Holy Grail represent?
- In what context does Holy Grail make sense?

1.4 Aims of the Research

The aims of the study are to find out the embedded meaning behind “Holy Grail” symbol by analyzing a poem *The Cross and the Grail* written by Lucy Larcom, they are:

- To find out the type of unidirectional expression in the poem
- To find out the representation of Holy Grail
- To find out the context Holy Grail makes sense

1.5 Significance of the Research

This research sought the significance of Holy Grail symbol which is embedded in a Holy Grail-themed poem, *The Cross and the Grail*, written by Lucy Larcom. Analyzing a poem is an attempt to catch the significance of the poem itself (Pradopo, 2005: 123). A poem has more than literal meaning but also figurative meaning. In order to find the significance of a poem, the reader should read a poem literally and figuratively because an author uses language as
a media to express his/her idea. Sometimes, the idea in a poem is contrast to its literal meaning.

1.6 Scope of the Research

To find or produce the significance of a poem, we need to investigate poetical elements or figures in the poem. There are three types of poetical elements in a poem, i.e., visual, sound, and word (Pradopo, 2005: 13). This research will limit the investigation to the word element only. The word element includes diction, imagery, and figures of speech.

1.7 Research Methodology

This research used qualitative method and descriptive analysis. It described and illustrated systematically, factually, and accurately. As stated by Fraenkel and Wallen (1993, in Riyandini: 2004): “The research investigated the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or material, in order to achieve the research goals a descriptive method is used.”

“Descriptive analysis is defined as a method for observing a status of group, an object, a set of condition, a system of thought, or a class of events in the present“(Nazir: 1983, in Anggraeni: 2004).

As conveyed by Leedy (1980, in Suhartini: 2005) descriptive analysis will have an observation to process the data. Due to the research, the writer will observe, classify, and analyze all verses in the poem, since poem is a composition of systematical elements which are related and cannot be separated one to another (Pradopo 2005: 118).
The writer used Semiotics-Structuralism theory in analyzing *The Cross and the Grail*. The theory is a combination of Structuralism and Semiotics methods, developed by Michael Riffaterre in his *Semiotics of Poetry* (1978). This paper used two basic elements only, the first (Unidirectional Expression) and the second (Heuristic and Hermeneutic Reading). *The Cross and the Grail* poem is analyzed for its unidirectional expression, to see if it has a displacing, distorting, or creating of meaning. Heuristic and Hermeneutic (Retroactive) Reading analyzed the poem thoroughly, verse by verse. If the procedures applied successfully, all questions which are purposed in this research: the type of unidirectional expression, the representation of Holy Grail, and the context of Holy Grail in the poem will be answered.

1.8 Subject of the Research

This research explored a Holy Grail-themed poem taken from http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/grlmenu.htm. The poem is *The Cross and the Grail*, written by Lucy Larcom in 1887, has 102 verses: 17 stanzas with 6 verses of each. Lucy Larcom was born in Beverly, Massachusetts, in 1826. When about twenty years of age she went to Illinois, taught there for some time, and was for three years a pupil in Monticello female seminary. On her return to Massachusetts she was employed for six years in a seminary at Norton. During the civil war she wrote many patriotic poems. When “Our Young Folks” was established in Boston in 1865, she became an assistant and in the following year, chief editor, conducting the magazine till 1874. Miss Larcom had subsequently resided at Beverly, Massachusetts. Her published works are
“Ships in the Mist, and other Stories” (Boston, 1859) “Poems” (1868) “An Idyl of Work, a Story in Verse” (1875) “Childhood Songs” (1877) and “Wild Roses of Cape Ann and other Poems” (1880). A complete collection of her “Poetical Works” appeared in 1884. She edited several collection of poetry, including “Breathings of a Better Life” (Boston, 1867), “Hillside and Seaside in Poetry” (1876) and “Roadside Poems for Summer Travellers” (1877) (from Edited Appletons Encyclopedia, Copyright © 2001 Virtualology™ at http://www.famousamericans.net/lucylarcom/).

“The Cross and the Grail”

I
Arthur's knight had trials long,
Going forth to right the wrong:
Arthur's knight had perils great,
On the moorlands desolate,
In the dungeon and the fen,
Slaying dragons, rescuing men.

II
Knightsly souls must needs be true:
Arthur's knight had work to do,
Vows to keep and quests to make,
Such as heroes undertake:
Tokens in the earth and sky
Led him on to victory.

III
Visions of the Holy Cup
Shone before him, gazing up
Where, upon some peak remote
Morning's sudden sword-flash smote,
Or where pilgrim-pathways steep
Rose, and sank in sunsets deep.

IV
Sometimes, tinged with radiance strange,
Would the beaker seem to change
To the outline of a cross--
Emblem of life's gain in loss--
Glimpsing, fading like a cloud,
As he stood, with forehead bowed.

V
'Twas the cup the Master drank;
Veiled to those who weakly shrank
From His awful sacrifice;
Only shown to faithful eyes
Turned in steadfast prayer to Him:
Only pure lips touched its brim.

VI
Only knightly purity
Could the glorious vision see:--
But if once his longing sight
Drank its overflow of light,
Soul of Arthur's knight grew strong
For the unending strife with wrong.

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VII
On a mountain in the West
Hangs a snowy cross impressed,
Melted not by summer's heat,
Undefiled by careless feet,
Gleaming through the clouds, a sign
Of the Sacrifice Divine.

VIII
That white cross is lifted up
Like an over brimming cup:
Downward from its stainless snow
Rills of limpid crystal slow;
And the traveler at their brink
May of heaven's refreshment drink.

IX
Say not that by accident
Those gray crags were seamed and rent!
God can write upon His hills
Any message that He wills.
Glad the mountains are, to bear
Christ's dear sign aloft in air.

X
Holy Cross and Holy Grail!
Hold them not an idle tale
Of the dead crusader's years!
They are for the ear that hears,
For the open eyes, that see:
Man, the vision is for thee!

XI
Wear the white cross on thy heart,
For Christ's messenger thou art.
From His love's great overflow,
Love divine shalt thou bestow;
Thou, a stream of life, shalt bless
Souls that thirst for righteousness.

XII
Only manhood that is pure
Work achieves that shall endure:
Manhood like the Master's, brave
With His strength, His world to save
From the curse that sin has wrought:--
Brave and pure, in deed and thought.

XIII
Subtler wrongs than Arthur's knight
Ever faced, are thine to fight.
In thine own heart, at the board
Where the dizzying wine is poured:--
Foes in thine own household stay:
Gird thee! shrink not from the fray!

XIV
Go thou forth, the knight of Christ;--
Him, whose perfectness sufficed
To make men and angels see
God in our humanity.
Lo! His Cup, His Cross divine!
Conquer by each holy sign!
XV
Thou, if pure in heart, shalt see
God in all things, close to thee;--
In each drop of water quaffed,
Taste a sacramental draught;--
Feel, in every breeze, the breath
Of His life, who vanquished death.

XVI
Purity and sacrifice!
Lo! the Christ, before thine eyes!
Unto mortal vision given,
Yet receding into heaven,
That thy human soul may climb
After Him, to heights sublime!

XVII
Bear His Cross, receive His Cup!
Be thy whole life offered up
For thy brethren, in His name
Who to save our lost world came!
Never lower standard can
Shape thee to a perfect man.

1.9 Clarification of Terms

Arthurian Legends: Group of tales (in several languages) that developed in the
Medieval Ages concerning Arthur, semi historical king of the Britons,
and his knights of Round Table. The legend is a complex weaving of
ancient Celtic mythology with later traditions around a core of possible
historical authenticity. \textit{(Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 1997)}

Displacing of meaning: One of types of unidirectional expression caused by the
use of simile, personification, synecdoche, metonymy, and metaphor

Holy Grail: In medieval literature, the sacred cup used by Jesus Christ at the
Last Supper and later piously sought by the knights of the legendary
King Arthur. According to tradition, Joseph of Arimathea, who collected
it in the blood from the body of the crucified Christ, preserved the Grail.

(Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 1997)

Poem: A verbal composition characterized by the use of condensed language chosen for its sound and suggestive power and by the use of literary techniques such as meter and metaphor (The Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 1997 Dictionary)


Symbolism: An object or action that has both literal and figurative meaning. It is often a concrete object that represents a concept. Many of the traditional stories have recurring symbols designed to quickly and clearly share messages and morals to a wide audience. (http://www.citruscollege.com/DE/Eiland/eilandshared/literary/symbol1.htm)

1.10 Paper Organization

The paper organizations, from the first to the last chapter are as follows.

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