

## WOMAN SOCIAL STRUGGLE IN ELLA WHEELER WILCOX'S 'SOLITUDE'

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### *Abstract*

*This research is about loneliness depict in Ella Wheeler Wilcox poem entitle Solitude. There are two purpose of this research, the first is to figure out speaker's social struggle revealed by situational irony in the poem, and second is to find out the imagery which illustrate the struggle of the speaker's. The researcher used library research to analyze the analysis. The main data of this research taken from a poem entitled Solitude written by Ella Wheeler Wilcox in 1883. Some theories used to analyze the data are theory of Irony, theory of Imagery and theory of Woman Struggle.*

**Keywords:** *Feminism, Imagery, Woman Struggle*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A lot of poems illustrates how a woman is. Ella Wheeler Wilcox was an American author and poet. She is well known through her works that are full of social criticism, in her poems she expresses sentiments of cheer and optimism in plainly written, rhyming verse. Her popular works include Poems of Passion (1883) and Solitude (1883), and the poem entitled

'Solitude' written by Ella Wheeler Wilcox is being used as the subject of the research.

This research focuses on the problem of the character in the poem. The focus of this research are the struggle of the character in the poem with her social problems. This problem is considered as the attractive one by the researcher because the character here must develop herself in order to get out of her loneliness, which in the end the character herself is opposed to what she did before. In addition, not only to discuss about the character's problems in her social life and her struggle, the researcher also discusses the imagery found in this poem.

This research contains two problems, first is the social struggle revealed through situational irony and the second is how imagery does portray the speaker's struggle. In order to complete this research, some theories are used to solve the problems. The theories that being used are figure of speech, irony, situational irony, imagery, woman struggle. Kunda

& Thagard, & Verbeurgt, states that 'A situation counts as ironic when it is conceived as having a bicoherent conceptual structure, adequate cognitive salience, and evokes an appropriate configuration of emotions' (1996:1998), this method being used to answer the second problem. Bernard Williams stated that 'Imagery is a similar distinction, within the realm of free visual imaging, is drawn by philosopher' (1999, 39), while the theory of imagery is used to complete the first problem.

Irony is an expression that is contrary to its true meaning. Irony itself is strong in relation to literary works, such as drama, novels and even poetry. In literary work, irony means a figure of

speech in which words are used in such a way that their intended meaning is different from the actual meaning of the words. It may also be a situation that ends up in quite a different way than what is generally anticipated. In other words, irony is a situation that is different between appearance and reality. Situational Irony is one part of Irony itself, situational irony is one part of the irony that describes the situation. Usually a literary work is enhanced by the use of a figure of speech, but using irony is also needed to make a literary work more beautiful. Understanding the purpose of an irony itself is not easy.

Imagery means to use the figurative language to represent object, actions and ideas in such a way that it appeals to human physical sense. Imagery can make what was previously dead look very fresh and come back to life because of a touch of imagination, which brings the reader into the state that is being described. There are many types of imagery, such as: visual imagery, auditory imagery, olfactory imagery, gustatory imagery, tactile imagery, kinesthetic imagery, and organic imagery. Although there are many types of imagery but this research only focus on three types of imagery that are considered suitable to describe the contents of the poem, they are visual imagery, auditory imagery and kinesthetic imagery.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

The data used in this research are words, phrases, clause, sentences and also discourses containing social struggle revealed through situational irony in the poem 'Solitude' and the images dealing with woman social struggle in a poem written by Ella Wheeler Wilcox. The sources of the data are taken from the poem entitled 'Solitude' by Ella Wheeler Wilcox written on 1883. This poem consists of twenty-four lines with eight lines in each stanza, and it consists of three stanzas. This poem tells about sadness and loneliness.

Library research is used as the technique to collect the data with a poem entitled 'Solitude'. Library research involves the step by step process used to gather information in order to complete this research.

In order to finish this research, there are several steps to collect the data in this poem. There are some steps to do this analysis, the first is read the poem well to understand the meaning and the implied message in the poem that is going to be discuss. Collect the theory to analyze the problem in this research. The related theories of women social struggle, irony and the images dealing with it will be use. This research uses two approaches, they are structural approach and formalistic approach. The approaches here is use to analyze the problems stated in chapter one. Next, by using structural approach and formalist approach, the researcher will describe the topic of this study. The structural approach is used to analyze the social struggle revealed through the situational irony in the poem, while formalist approach use analyzes the images dealing with woman social struggle.

## **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **SOLITUDE**

**BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX**

Laugh, and the world laughs with you;

Weep, and you weep alone;

For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth,

But has trouble enough of its own.

Sing, and the hills will answer;

Sigh, it is lost on the air;



### 3.1.1.3 Getting Pain from the Society

Pain is a thing that most feared by humans, both men and women. Pain often comes in any form, and when it appears we often feel worse inside.

*The echoes bound to a joyful sound,*                    7  
*But shrink from voicing care*                                8

Life even feels so cruel when no one cares, and it feels very painful if nobody wants to listen to your problem, this is what the narrator feels in this poem. This situation is felt by the narrator when she had to deal with the fact that no one wanted to shelter her.

### 3.1.1.4 Getting Illusive Faith

Faith is human nature that is very difficult to achieve. Everyone wants loyalty in their life, including the narrator. However, over time the feeling fades away. Only a few of them survives even in the worst conditions. People mostly leave someone who is considered not the same as they think.

*They want full measure of all your pleasure,*                    11  
*But they do not need your woe.*                                        12

Never sad or everyone will stay away. On line twelve, it seems to refer to a warning for life, that no one is faithful in this world. People can come and go at any time, but whatever the circumstances are, the speaker will always be left behind.

### 3.1.1.5 Finding Self-Identity

Identity is a true description of what people really are. Identity is a part of life that always sticks to it whatever it takes. No one in the universe can change it. As humans being, people often forget their true identity. At first the narrator had lost her identity.

*Succeed and give, and it helps you live,*                    19  
*But no man can help you die.*                                        20

So far she only follows what others want, without considering her own feelings. She realized one mistake that it was not someone else who could keep her alive and survive, but it was an effort of her own. "Succeed and give, and it helps you live," on this line, the narrator gradually begins to understand two important things and she starts to discover the meaning of life. It is not happiness as the important thing that makes her survive through the rigors of life, but it is success that will bring her to happiness. All the falsehood in her gradually began to disappear, her long dead heart began to grow again.

## 3.2. THE IMAGERY DEALING WITH WOMAN SOCIAL STRUGGLE

### 3.2.1 The Visual Imagery

Visual imagery is imagery that is related to the sense of sight.

*Laugh, and the world laughs with you;*                    1  
*Weep, and you weep alone;*                                        2

In the first line of this first stanza, "laugh" usually indicates something that is done when someone feels happy. However, even though the narrator tries to laugh, this happiness does not really come out of her heart. Loneliness and sadness still emanates from her. Laugh still cannot cover up her feelings or what she feels. Weep is a form of expression of sadness that someone exposes when they feel depressed or upset. In the second line of the poem, the narrator attempts to convey the sadness she feels to others.

### 3.2.2 Auditory Imagery

Auditory imagery is imagery that is related to the sense of hearing.

*Laugh, and the world laughs with you;* 1  
*Weep, and you weep alone;* 2

At the first lines in the first stanza, 'laugh' refers to the actions taken by the speaker. While 'weep' in the second lines refers to the speaker's feelings. The speaker only uses 'laugh' as a mask which is used to cover her messy feelings. As a sign that she is always happy even though the speaker actually has an unbearable feeling of sadness and depression. 'Weep' is a form of resentment, disappointment or burden from the speaker that is released through tears.

### 3.2.3 Kinesthetic Imagery

Kinesthetic imagery is imagery that deals with the existence of a movement, whether physical or action categorized as kinesthetic imagery.

*Sing, and the hills will answer;* 5  
*Sigh, it is lost on the air;* 6

When the speaker sings, the hills sing along in a shout. 'hills will answer;' this sentence describes a very, very crowded situation, where everyone sings loudly, humming beautiful tunes with pleasure. This situation illustrates a very warm atmosphere, makes the speaker feel her world becomes very crowded because she is among people who can make her out of feeling lonely. While in the sixth line, the word 'lost' describes the sound of singing that had echoed, suddenly lost in silence for some reason. 'sigh' explains the actions that make all the songs disappear.

## 4. CONCLUSION

This research concerns with situational irony that revealed speaker's struggle, and how the imagery portrays the speaker's struggle from the poem entitled Solitude. Woman struggle described through situational irony are divided into 5 related categories. From the first problem it can be conclude that the poet wants to depict the poem into a loneliness and struggle to break from the situation that put her into loneliness, rejection from the society. The second is how the imagery dealing with woman social struggle are divided into visual, audio, and kinesthetic imagery, the conclusion that can be reached is that the struggle can be known from some kind of imagery mentioned above that related to sight, sound, and movement. These findings make it possible for the audience feel that they're in the same situation and in the same foothold as the poet. The visual imagery can be seen by the expression that shown from what written on the poem such as "Sad old earth" which is describing the figure of someone who lives in a very bad situation, while the auditory imagery can be heard from the first stanza which is 'laugh' that can be heard but used as a mask to cover her true feeling, and the kinesthetic imagery can be known from the action 'laugh' itself depicting of someone who is laughing.

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