

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Metaphysics, which is derived from Aristotle's book entitled *Ta meta ta phusika*, can cover a broad range of topics from religious ones to those about consciousness. Metaphysics is about exploration and philosophy, not about science and math (Casano). The two questions that are considered as two basic metaphysical questions are "Does God exist?" and "Is God the source of all reality?" (Jamesmh). The term metaphysical poet is firstly coined by Samuel Johnson (1179-1781) in his book *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets*. Metaphysical poets themselves are "a group of 17th-century poets whose works are characterized by the use of complex and elaborate images or conceits, typically using an intellectual form of argumentation to express emotional states." ("Metaphysical Poet").

John Donne is considered as one of the greatest metaphysical poets in the seventeenth century England. He was a metaphysical poet that dealt with religious

topics. Donne's poems are known for "his jarring, unusual meters; ... and double entendres; his often bizarre metaphors ...; and his process of oblique reasoning" ("Donne's Poetry"). Double entendre is "an ambiguity of meaning arising from language that lends itself to more than one interpretation" ("Double entendre"). Furthermore, most of Donne's metaphysical poems on religious topics (Holly Sonnets) were written regarding his personal life when he was in serious illness and became dying. The Holly Sonnets include "Thou Hast Made Me and Shall Thy Work Decay?," "Batter My Heart, Three-Person'd God," and "If Poisonous Minerals," that I would analyze in this thesis. John Donne's poetry had also inspired some other metaphysical poets including Andrew Marvell, Henry Vaughn, and George Herbert.

In this thesis, I would like to analyze theme through diction because I am interested in John Donne's use of harsh words and content, in talking about religion, which will later help reveal the theme. According to Literary Devices, theme is "an idea that recurs in or pervades a work of art or literature" ("Theme"). The theme itself is revealed by the diction, which "can be defined as a style of speaking or writing determined by the choice of words by a speaker or a writer" ("Diction"), because metaphysical poets rely on diction to shape their poem's content.

I choose formalism to analyze theme through diction in the three selected poems because I am able to find the information I need solely in the poems themselves. Formalism "examines a text as a self-contained object; it does not, therefore, concern itself with biographical information about the author, historical events outside of the story, or literary allusions, mythological patterns, or

psychoanalytical traits of the characters (except those aspects described specifically in the text.)” (“Writing a Formalist Literary Analysis”).

Statement of the Problem

The research problems in this thesis are stated as follows:

1. What are the themes of the three selected poems of John Donne’s?
2. How do the diction of the poems help to reveal the themes?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is stated below:

1. To show the themes of the three selected poems of John Donne’s.
2. To show how the diction helps to reveal the themes.

Method of Research

I started my library research by reading the three selected poems of John Donne’s. Then, I analyzed the poems by using formalism approach. I analyzed the diction to reveal the theme in each poem. I took some references and resources from the Internet and books to support the analysis of the poems and the writing of the thesis. At the end of the thesis, I present some conclusion from my analysis.

Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is written in three chapters. Chapter One deals with the Introduction, which includes Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. Chapter

Two presents Theme Analysis of Three Selected Poems of John Donne's through Diction. Chapter Three is Conclusion. The thesis ends with Bibliography and Appendices, which consist of John Donne's poems and the Biography of John Donne.

