1. Background of the study

Myth, a myth in our daily life greatly influences our thinking and our beliefs about something. It was also the cause myth still be something that is very popular with many fields of research, as well as in literature. Myth is always being a theme, both in making novel, poem, or short story. We as the readers must have smart capture to get what the author means. Therefore, the writer must be able to adjust it or myth what is believed by some people, a group or in the environment.

The meaning of myth itself is *cerita dari masa lalu. Mite menjelaskan esensi kehidupan dan dunia; atau mengekspresikan adanya nilai moral budaya dalam kehidupan manusia. Mite memberi perhatian pada kekuatan yang mengontrol kehidupan manusia dan relasi antara kekuatan tersebut dengan keberadaan manusia. Meski mite kerap dianggap memiliki nilai religi dalam bentuk dan fungsinya, namun mite ditengarai merupkan bentuk awal dari sejarah, sains atau filsafat. (Audifax, Mite Harry Potter Psikosemiotika dan Misteri Simbol di Balik Kisah Harry Potter, 2005:8)*. Similarly, understanding or meaning mite studied by Jung in the collective unconcious say *the collective unconscious is characterized by "archetypes," or "instinctual patterns of behavior and perception," which can be traced in dreams and myths.*

However, Jung discusses myths in different ways, namely by the archetype so even with Frye discusses myths by dividing it by the story that formed in it. They both have the same way of looking at the meaning of the myth itself.

Therefore, myths or beliefs that occur in an area or environment also became a theme raised in three short stories written by Edgar Allan Poe, Louisa May Alcott and Sumaisha Isah Umaisha. All three of them are about a black cat. A black cat that became a myth that scary for some people who believe that black cats are carriers of disaster, as well as being a marker witch incarnation of death.

Seen in one short story by Poe, entitled 'The Black Cat' (1845). There is a myth that is believed by the character ‘I’, the fear of the character ‘I’ because the myth of black cat. Then on the short story of Louisa May Alcott written in 1871, and the last short story is about the black cat too is written in 2007 by Sumaila Isah Umaisha.

1. Research question

* How does the myth of the black cat shape the story?
* How does the characters response to the myth of the black cat?

1. Objectives

Based on the above formulation of the problem, there are several objectives in this study, including:

- To find out what causes a black cat myth in these short stories.

- To find out what effect the black cat myth for the character.

1. Significance to knowledge

The study is entitled "The Myth of the Black Cat in Three Short Stories." This study is expected to be a lesson for everyone, and especially to the students.

The intent and purpose of this study was to explore the knowledge that has been gained for a year and hopefully this research can make us more sensitive, because literature is not only the shape of the text, but also things that are happening around us.

1. The Framework of theory

This study analyzed using the theory of the myth of Northrop Frye and Carl-Gustav Jung, the Jung mite that occurs also due to collective unconscious, that is *ketaksadaran kolektif yaitu semacam ‘alam yang dimiliki bersama’ (shared unconscious realm) dari segenap manusia di muka bumi. Ada sesuatu yang tak disadari tetapi menghubungkan umat manusia di muka bumi ini. Ketaksadaran kolektif berisi timbunan dari akumulasi tema-tema yang berlangsung sepanjang zaman. Beberapa tema berkonstelasi membentuk arketipe yang manifest dalam simbol-simbol. Sejalan dengan waktu, mite demi mite bermunculan (Audifax, Mite Harry Potter Psikosemiotika dan Misteri Simbol di Balik Kisah Harry Potter, 2005:1)*.

The meaning of archetype according to Jung is *entitas purba yang eksis dalam tatanan ketaksadaran kolektif (collective unconscious). Arketipe memuat motif-motif tertentu yang muncul dalam mite dan dongeng di berbagai tempat. Arketipe membuat orang terkesan, memengaruhi, memesona dan mengaktifasi suatu energi psikologis dalam diri individu. (Audifax, Mite Harry Potter Psikosemiotika dan Misteri Simbol di Balik Kisah Harry Potter, 2005:xxvi)*.

Then, for Frye *myth is kumpulan cerita, mengenai dewa dan keberadaan supernatural lain.* *(Audifax, Mite Harry Potter Psikosemiotika dan Misteri Simbol di Balik Kisah Harry Potter, 2005:9)*.

*Northrop Frye divides myths into several groups. First, there is undisplayed myth, generally concerned with gods and demons. Second, romantic, the tendency to suggest implicit mythical patterns in a world more closely associated with human experience. Third, realism to throw the emphasis on content and representation rather than on the shape of the story. (Frye, Anatomy of Criticism Four Essay: 139-140: 1957).*

Frye is also explained by the four divisions of the mite in a literary work, in terms of plot, and the character of the characters, namely spring: comedy, summer: romance, autumn: tragedy, winter: irony and satire.

The myth of black cat in three short stories

Tragedy, comedy, romance, irony, or satire about myth from Frye

Jung’s theory about collective unconscious

Representation the black cat in three short stories

Character’s response to the myth of black cat

1. Research method

In a comparative study used the descriptive method, which is explained by the data obtained from both the text itself is also another source, and finally compared (comparative) the data obtained by the differences that are found on each character in the short story .

As stated by Nazir (2005), *deskriptif adalah suatu metode dalam meneliti suatu kelompok manusia, suatu objek, atau suatu set kondisi, suatu system pemikiran, ataupun suatu kelas peristiwa pada asa sekarang. Tujuan dari penelitian dengan metode deskriptif adalah untuk membuat deskripsi, gambaran, atau lukisan secara sistematis, factual dan akurat mengenai fakta-fakta, sifat-sifat serta hubungan antar fenomena yang diselidiki. Dalam metode deskriptif ini peneliti bisa membandingkan fenomena-fenomena tertentu sehingga merupakan suatu studi komparatif.*

Then for the comparative is *penelitian yang membandingkan keberadaan satu variable atau lebih pada dua atau lebih sampel yang berbeda, atau pada waktu yang berbeda (Sugiyono, 2006).*

* 1. Data Collection

The technique of data collection is sourced from three short stories; first comes from Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Black Cat’, which was released in 1845. Poe is an American-born author is more likely to use the symbol of each short story, essay or poem, and for the short story 'The Black Cat' is, Poe incorporate the theme of the black cat that is a symbol of death, and the myths that developed in the place of his birth .

The second short story from Louisa May Alcott, an author of novels and short stories from British women's 'Seven Black Cats', and then the short story is entitled ‘The Black Cats’ from Sumaiha Isha Umaisha.

In this study, each of the data collected and examined every short story based on a theory.

* 1. Data Analysis

Here is some data taken from each of the short stories, the first short story written by Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Black Cat', the short story is the American environmental background, basically the majority of Americans do not believe or developed countries with myth or superstition, but in this short story Poe raised myths about black cats being evident, as indicated by the main character in the story is the character 'I' which became very frightened and depressed due to factors myth of black cat. As the text from the short story:

*… In speaking of his intelligence, my wife, who at heart was not a little tinctured with superstition, made frequent allusion to the ancient popular notion, which regarded all black cats as witches in disguise... (Poe, 1845).*

*One night, returning home, much intoxicated, from one of my haunts about town, I fancied that the cat avoided my presence. I seized him; when, in his fright at my violence, he inflicted a slight wound upon my hand with his teeth. The fury of a demon instantly possessed me. I knew myself no longer. My original soul seemed, at once, to take its flight from my body; and a more than fiendish malevolence, gin-nurtured, thrilled every fibre of my frame. I took from my waistcoat pocket a pen-knife, opened it, grasped the poor beast by the throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket! I blush, I burn, I shudder, while I pen the damnable atrocity.(Poe, 1845).*

The text above shows that the fear factor of the characters when the character's increasingly believe the myths about black cats occurring in the environment and it appears on a continuous basis of beliefs about the myth of black cat hidden in his mind (collective unconscious), approximately and his own wife, then the character makes a buried fear getting into, as Jung said the collective unconscious contains latent memories of things inherited from one's ancestral past, a remnant psyche of human evolution, which accumulated due to repeated experiences from generation to generation , and the collective unconscious when mastered can foster awareness of irregularities such as phobias, delusions, and other irrationality.

In addition, for the differences derived from each short story about a black cat's myth, can be compared with a different storyline and the ending is not the same. Plot, characterization different to myth put forward by Frye, with four kinds of spring: comedy, summer: romance, autumn: tragedy, winter: irony and satire (Frye, Anatomy of Criticism: 1957:162). For the short story 'The Black Cat' is when seen from the plot that begins with the characters ‘I’, and then he found that the myth of black cat is not only in the surrounding environment, but also his wife, and the real fear and anxiety make it even always hallucinating and in the end the character ‘I’ going crazy. So with the hypothesis that this could take the story 'The Black Cat' entry into the category of tragedy, as mentioned in the book Frye: 206, *in romance the character are still largely dream-characters; in satire they tend to be caricatures; in comedy their actions are twisted to fit demands of a happy ending. In full tragedy the main characters are emancipated from dream, an emancipation which is at the same time a restriction, because the order of nature is present. However thickly strewn a tragedy may be with ghosts, portents, witches, or oracles…*

In the second short story written by Louisa May Alcott (1871), tells the story of the protagonist who maintains seven black cats with a variety of races, but there is always a black cat is dead. So in the end the protagonist no longer want to maintain a black cat, the characters feel cured with it, and it is told in the last paragraph, when a black cat that was maintained by the seventh off:

*He was the last of the seven black cats, and we never had another; for I really did feel as if there was something uncanny about them after my tragical experiences with Czar, Blot, Mother Bunch's family, and the martyred Imp.(Alcott, 1871)*

The short story also mentions the existence of beliefs about black cat myths believed by the family of the main character:

*It seems that sailors are so superstitious they will not sail in a ship with a black cat; and this rogue of a cousin was going to send puss off on a voyage, unknown to any one but the friend who took him, and when the trip was safely over, he was to be produced as a triumphant proof of the folly of the nautical superstition.*

*So the Imp was delivered to his new master, and sailed away packed up in an old fishing-basket, with his head poked out of a hole in the cover.(Alcott, 1871)*

In the short story of Alcott entitled Seven Black Cat, the main character 'I' and the seven pet cats that always ended in death.

Therefore, Alcott short story refers to the myth of the tragedy described by Frye's going on in the story, because of the fear of that happening, hallucinations and other scary things, so the thing they fear caused by myths about black cats that they trust is really happening to them.

In the next short story written by a woman writer from Nigeria, Sumaila Isah Umaisha with the title of his short story The Black Cat, he wrote this story in 2007. This short story talking about the myth of the black cat, this story still focused to the one main character, that is ‘I’,

*‘The black cat was not just a cat; it was her past, present and future; her source of strength in her gradual transition to the unknown. By merely staring at its spooky eyes, she could relive her life. The cat was hope symbolized. Even as she wallowed in the ashes of her past, she never lost sight of the dream that someday, when it was all over, something beyond human knowledge and experience would happen and rekindle the fire.’ (Umaisha, 2007)*

This text explained that the character ‘I’ believed to the black cat myth, because of her past incident. She believed if the black cat is an evil, shadowing her life.

This short story made an irony myth from Frye, because Frye stated in his book: *“irony with little satire is the non-heroic residue of tragedy, centering on a theme of puzzled defeat.”* And for this short story, the ending is not easy to be understand also make us guessing how the right ending of this short story.

*‘Her fortune grows so much that she even sets up a hotel business in Gold City. The business starts on a prosperous note. The sky is no limit to her success, but for her restless nature. She cannot settle down and run the hotel; the business soon folds up and she takes to the fast lanes once again.*

*She wanders endlessly, unmindful of the effect of time. And before she realizes that age is catching up with her, it has. Her legendary beauty has expired and her feminine charm can no longer lure the men. She is no longer stared at hungrily but scornfully.’ (Umaisha, 2007)*

The character ‘I’ in this short story thinking if she is a black cat itself, for first time she have an illusion about the black cat and her past incident. Then, she realized it is not true, because she is a human but in different situation.

**MYTH OF THE BLACK CAT IN THREE SHORT STORIES**

**RESEACH PROPOSAL**

**Submitted to fulfill one of the course requirements**

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