

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Lyrics in music is a literary work that belongs to poetry. Poetry, one of the oldest forms of literature, has a close association with the term "lyric." The word "lyric" is etymologically connected to the Greek musical instrument "Lyra," which hints at its musical origins. Throughout classical antiquity and the Middle Ages, poets would recite their works while being accompanied by the lyre or other musical instruments, as was common practice for minstrels (Klarer, p.27 par.3, 2004).

Lyrics in music can be considered as literary works, lyrics often possess poetic qualities and can convey deep meaning, emotions, and storytelling elements. Many songwriters employ various literary devices such as metaphors, similes, alliteration, and symbolism in their lyrics (Klarer, p.32 par. 2, 2004). They use language creatively to evoke specific moods, communicate messages, and express their thoughts and experiences. From the explanation above, the writer will try to dissect the song to fulfill the purpose of finding social issues inside *Where Is the Love* song.

Race problems that occur in America today are not new because this problem has happened since the beginning of the formation of the American continent in the

18th century. For black people, it is still very much felt until this century. About 59% of black people in America thought that the effects of slavery that occurred in the early 18th century caused racial inequality. Not only black people, but this problem also occurs in Hispanic people. About 51% of respondents said that white people are more likely to develop self-development or economy than Hispanics or blacks (Horowitz et al, p.1 par.4, 2019). This then causes problems such as racial discrimination and prejudice.

Based on data reported from Dosomething.org, in New York City in 2018, the police stopped about 88% of black and Latino people while the rest were white. In addition, a survey in the same year stated that about 15.8% of American students experienced race-based bullying (“11 Facts About Racial Discrimination” p.1 par.1). From this description, the writer observes that social inequality based on race is reflected in the music of Black Eyed Peas *Where Is the Love*.

Where Is the Love is one of the songs on the album Elephunk (2003) by Black Eyed Peas. The 4-minute-long music video talks about the problems of racial inequality that occur in America. Released in 2003 and published on YouTube in 2009, the music has had 600 million views. From the comments column contained in this music video, the writer sees that many of these comments say that the lyrics of this music are still very relevant to what is happening in their social environment.

The writer argues that the songs that are used for this study contain social problems that are trying to be spoken by the singers. It is based on the definition that the writer explains above, that song lyrics either share information related to the culture or the social life of the authors. The writer will use Steven E. Barkan's social issue theory as the main theory and Ferdinand Saussure's semiotics theory as the supporting theory to help find the meaning of lyrics and music video.

Based on several data that will be used as the primary source in this discussion, the writer tries to examine the contents of the music, entitled *Where Is the Love* (2003). After reviewing the contents of the music by discussing both the intrinsic and extrinsic elements, those are the reasons behind the selection of *Where Is the Love* music as the main topic of this discussion.

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the background description above, the writer has formulated several questions in this discussion, including:

1. How are the depictions of social issues inside *Where Is the Love* music video?
2. What are the intrinsic elements in *Where Is the Love* music?
3. How can the signifier depicted inside *Where Is the Love* music video be considered as the development of the social issue?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Related to the mentioned research problems above, the objectives of this study are:

1. To figure out the meaning of the lyrics of *Where Is the Love* song.
2. To reveal the development of social issues depicted both inside the lyrics and the scenes of *Where Is the Love* music video.

1.4 Previous Studies

To enhance the validity of this research, the writer uses several previous studies which are still related to this research to serve as references and additional information so that the discussion of this research can be more optimal. The writer only uses references to gain information related to the topic of this discussion. The eight references which are used in this discussion can be seen in the next paragraph.

The first reference used by the writer is the thesis entitled *A Semiotic Analysis on Born This Way by Lady Gaga* (2020) by Nonanda Pribadi from University of Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara's English Education Department. This thesis examines *Born This Way's* lyrics by using Barthes' semiotics theory. The lyrics were examined in terms of its denotative and connotative meaning.

For the second reference source, the writer uses Indriani Octaviani and Muh Kholiq's from the Faculty of Language and Literature of Gunadarma University thesis entitled *A Semiotic Analysis in Music Video of Blank Space by Taylor Swift* (2018). Their thesis examines both visual and the lyrics of the music video by using Barthes' denotative and connotative theory and visual signs and verbal signs theory proposed by Saussure.

The third research has been conducted by Mahardika Reza Lesmana's thesis entitled *Love in the Beatles' Selected Song Lyrics (Semiotic Analysis)* (2018). Lesmana, from Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University's English Letter Department, examines several songs of *The Beatles* using Riffaterre's heuristic, hermeneutic, and poetic signs theory to examine each lyric of *The Beatles*'s songs.

Dina Septiani's *A Semiotics Analysis on Michael Jackson's Song Lyrics and Music Video* (2020) thesis from the Faculty of English Education Department of Syiah Kuala University is the fourth reference of this study. Septiani examines some songs of Michael Jackson – *Heal the World*, *Earth Song*, *Childhood*, *They Don't Care About Us*, and *Mirror* using Saussure's semiotics theory in order to find the correlation between the lyrics and the scenes of the music video.

Semiotic Analysis on Twenty One Pilots' Music Video "HEAVYDIRTYSOULS" (2018) thesis by Hayyundi Qurratuain from Brawijaya University's Language and Literature Department is the fifth reference for this study. Qurratuain tries to highlight mental issues problem inside *HEAVYDIRTYSOULS*'s music video by combining Peirce's semiotic theory and denotative and connotative theory by Sebeok.

The sixth reference of this study uses Argalis H. Avilla's thesis from the Faculty of Humanities of Airlangga University entitled *Representation of Woman in Maroon 5 "This Love" Music Video: A Semiotic Analysis* (2012). Avilla discusses the

depiction of woman sexuality issue within the music video from linguistic perspective. Both the lyrics and the scenes of the music video are interpreted by implementing Barthes' linguistic message theory – coded and non-coded iconic.

For the seventh reference of this study, the writer uses Maya Puspita Dewi's thesis from the Faculty of Humanities of Diponegoro University entitled *Separatism, Racism and Terrorism as Social Issues in the Black Eyed Peas "Where Is The Love?"* (2019). Dewi examines separatism, racism, and terrorism issues contained inside lyrics of the music by combining both Alan Mckee's theory of textual analysis and close reading and close listening methodology.

The last previous study was Nur Izzati Rozman's thesis from the Faculty of Humanities of Sultan Zainal Abidin University entitled *Analysis of the Song – Where is the Love by Black Eyed Peas-* (2012). In her discussion, she examines the lyrics of *Where is the Love* music using intrinsic elements theory that focuses on its figurative language and its rhyme.

Based on the references used by the writer, the writer will try to discuss and explain the development of social issue contained inside Black Eyed Peas' *Where Is the Love* lyrics and music video, which is used as the main object of this study, by examining both of its intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Eventually, the writer will try to elaborate the evidences contained inside the music video using its lyrics and scenes.

1.5 Scope of the Study

In this discussion, the writer will examine the development of social issue portrayed inside *Where Is the Love* music video through its intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. For the intrinsic elements, the writer focuses on theme, setting and message of the song. In order to gain information related to social issues, the writer further examines the lyrics by applying Steven E. Barkan's social issue theory as the main theory and Ferdinand Saussure's semiotics theory as the approach to support the research.

1.6 Research Method

1.6.1 Method of Approach

In conducting this research, the writer applied qualitative research. When viewed from its definition, qualitative research is defined as research with the aim of understanding problems, both in a social environment or humans themselves, by collecting information from informants or related objects in detail to be able to describe the events that occur in that environment (Creswell, p.98 par.1, 2007).

In order to examine the depiction of social issues inside *Where Is the Love* music video, the writer applies social issues theory proposed by Steven E. Barkan (2012) and Abrams' definition of intrinsic aspects to select the elements in the music video. The issues contained inside in both lyrics and the scenes of *Where Is the Love*

music video, in further, will be comprehensively examined using Ferdinand Saussure's theory of Semiotics.

1.6.2 Method of Research

The writer applies the research library data collection method proposed by Mary George to search for supporting data from external sources. Library research collects data from multiple sources, such as books, articles, journals, and information obtained via the internet, which can be trusted or is undoubtedly true. Therefore, the key to this data collection method is to use ideas or writings put forward by experts in their fields (George, p.23 par.1, 2008).

1.7 Writing Organization

The writer divides its discussion into four chapters which can be seen as follows:

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the background of the study, research problems, objectives of the study, previous studies, scope of the study, the writing organization, and the methodology of this study.

CHAPTER 2 THEORY

This chapter contains the explanation of the theories used for this study.

CHAPTER 3 DATA ANALYSIS

The third chapter contains the explanations of the result of the research based on the data analysis and the used theories.

CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION

The last chapter consists of the generalization of the results of the analysis obtained from the observation.