

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter comprises of the background of the study, research question, purpose of the study, scope of the study, and significance of the study. Those parts are explained below.

### 1.1. Background of The Study

Nowadays, there are various themes in the song lyrics which raised from the issues taking place in society such as war, peace, love, and one of them is about the value of humanity. This theme is often raised as many conflicts in a country, and from disaster which happen in this world.

Many people who applied this theme in the song lyrics such as Michael Jackson, John Lennon, Iwan Fals and Ebiet G.Ade from Indonesia. In 2009 when the war in Gaza raged, appeared a singer with songs full of the value of humanity and got a huge response from the audience as it has more than 1 million views of the original video on YouTube (in the first month), more than half a million downloads mp3 and more than 10,000 emails, comments and messages of support. The singer is Michael Heart.

Michael Heart is a Syrian American singer composing songs whose lyrics containing the value of humanity, for example, *We Will Not Go Down*, *Freedom*, *Help Is On The Way*, and *What About Us* are four his singles in support of various causes (<http://michaelheart.com/songsforcauses.htm>). While enjoying his songs, listeners will be driven indirectly to growing their sense of humanity and realizing the value of humanity.

Michael has also written songs in support of various causes. The most recent song, "What About Us" was written about the tragic situation in Syria. The song "Freedom" was inspired by the popular protests in North Africa and the Middle East. His song "We Will Not Go Down" was

written about the horrific situation of the Palestinian people in Gaza. Michael also wrote a song called "Help is on the Way", about the devastating earthquake in Haiti, in 2010 (<http://michaelheart.com/songsforcauses.htm>).

One of the literary work is song lyric. As defined in Oxford, song is a short piece of music with words that we sing. However, the definition of song is not as simple as that. Blade (1996: 12) has stated that song is an artwork filled with messages, through which the writer or the composer transfer to the listener or the viewer. The messages are usually represented by lyrics, a set of words that make up a song. The themes in lyrics are usually raised from the issues taking place in society. In short, music has an important part in capturing issues happened in the society.

Lyric is part of music. Poetry or blank line intended to be set to music. Song word is not much different from the word of poetry (Lee, 1965). This is appropriate with the definition of the lyrics of the song by (Semi, 1988:106), that the lyrics are short poem that expresses emotion.

Lyrics of the song have rules that there is an element of emotive poetry through sounds and words. It also reinforced by the definitions of the lyrics in oxford dictionary, that lyric is a poetry expressing a person's personal feelings and thoughts, connected with written text for singing. In addition, to obtain a certain impression as well as poetry, song lyrics sentences are also simple and to the point.

Moreover, another reason that makes the writer interested in analyzing his songs beside the messages contained in the lyrics of Michael Heart's songs is the language. He uses a simple language that is easy to understand and poetic but very heart touching. The straight forward lyrics with slick portrayal that makes the listener intrigued the sympathy and empathy feelings to help people.

The writer is going to find out how Michael Heart's song lyrics conveying the value of humanity in four song lyrics, *We Will Not Go Down*, *Freedom*, *Help Is On The Way*, and *What About Us* will be analyzed using Roland Barthes semiotic theory approach.

## **1.2. Research Question**

Based on the problem identification above, the writer propose research question : "how do the song lyrics of Michael Heart portray the value of humanity?"

## **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

The study purposes to show how the value of humanity is portrayed in Michael Heart four song lyrics : *We Will Not Go Down*, *Freedom*, *Help Is On The Way*, and *What About Us*. And to give further knowledge about the value of humanity in song lyrics.

## **1.4. Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study is limited in analyzing Michael Heart's song lyrics; *We Will Not Go Down*, *Freedom*, *Help Is On The Way*, and *What About Us* which portray the value of humanity.

## **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The writer expects this study could be significant to enhance, broaden, and improve ED's students knowledge how to analyze song lyrics and to find out the meaning behind the literary works just like within the song lyrics.