

THE PORTRAYAL OF PSYCHOPATH IN THE LYRIC OF AVENGED SEVENFOLD'S "A LITTLE PIECE OF HEAVEN"

Fitra Fauzi

Abstract

Fictional characters with psychopathic personality traits are very common in thriller novels and films, and the stories of psychopath have attracted a lot of audience. Although quite more challenging, the psychopathic theme can also be found in song lyric with its limited description in words. One of the songs that portray psychopath is Avenged Sevenfold's "A Little Piece of Heaven". This research aims to figure out the portrayal of the psychopath in this song. The writer uses qualitative research as the research method and combines it with an interpretive approach to provide more explanation about how the psychopath is described in the lyric. The method of close reading has an important role in this research, especially when the writer collects data and analyzes lyrics. As for the theoretical approach, the writer uses New Criticism, particularly Geoffrey N. Leech with his 4 concepts: Ambiguity, Irony, Paradox, and Tension to reveal the meaning of the lyrics. Regardless of which psychopaths are brought into social life, this analysis can provide a closer look at how the theme of deviant behavior is elaborated in the lyrics within the seventy one lines and twelve stanzas. The final result of this research is that the writer finds an understanding of the unity of the psychopathic theme in the lyric of "A Little Piece of Heaven" and how psychopath works. Also, this research finds ambiguity, paradox or sarcasm, irony, and tension in the constructed meaning of this lyric.

Keywords: Close Reading, New Critism, Psychopath, Lyric song

YOGYAKARTA

GAMBARAN PSIKOPAT DALAM LIRIK LAGU AVENGED SEVENFOLD "A LITTLE PIECE OF HEAVEN"

Fitra Fauzi

Abstrak

Karakter fiksi dengan ciri psikopat sangat umum dalam novel, film, dan cerita pspikopat telah menarik banyak perhatian penonton. Sebagian besar penderita psikopat tidak terlalu terlihat dan cenderung suka menyendiri dan melakukan sesuatu agar penderita merasakan kepuasan tersendiri. Tema psikopat sendiri terceminkan dalam lirik lagu "A Littlte Piece of Heaven". Penulis menggunakan penelitian kualitatif sebagai metode dan menggabungkannya dengan pendekatan intrepretatif untuk memberikan penjelasan lebih banyak tentang objek penelitian, "A Little Piece of Heaven" dan tema utama psikopat. Metode "Close Reading" atau membaca dengan teliti memiliki peran penting dalam penelitian ini terutama pada saat penulis mengumpulkan data dan menganalisa lirik. Dengan menemukan setiap aspek kecil atau elemen intrinsik menggunakan metode "Close Reading", penulis menggunakan teori "New Critics" untuk menafsirkan makna lirik. Kehadiran teori sastra seperti "New Critics" yang membawa empat (4) konsep utama analisis dari Geoffrey N. Leech, seperti Ambiguitas, Ironi, Paradoks, dan Penekanan adalah untuk mengetahui tujuan dan makna dari lirik. Jadi, terlepas dari psikopat yang dibawa ke dalam kehidupan sosial, analisis ini dapat memberi gambaran lebih dekat bagaimana tema perilaku penyimpangan tersebut diuraikan didalam lirik sepanjang tujuh puluh satu baris dan dua belas bait. Hasil akhir dari penelitian ini adalah penulis menemukan adanya pemahaman tema psikopat didalam karya lirik lagu "A Little Piece of Heaven". Penelitian ini nantinya akan membantu peneliti di masa depan atau orang-orang yang tertarik entah itu didalam objek lirik lagu atau temanya, dan cara mengetahui penderita Psikopat, and mencari Ambiguity, Sarkasme atau Paradox, Ironi, dan Penekanan juga mengetahui makna dari "A Littke Piece of Heaven.

Kata kunci: Lirik lagu, New Critism, Pendekatan membaca, Psikopat

A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this graduating paper is definitely my own work. I am completely responsible for the content of this graduating paper. Other writer's opinions or findings included in the graduating paper are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

Yogyakarta, Sept 27, 2020

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Saya menyatakan bahwa skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan pada sidang Munaqasyah untuk memenuhi sebagian syarat memperoleh gelar Sarjana Sastra Inggris.

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MOTTO

Be better and Never Surender

"It's hard to be patient, but wasting the rewards of patience is far worse."



DEDICATION

This graduating paper is dadicated to:

My beloved Mother, My Late Beloved Father, Myself, Readers and To All my

Friends.



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Yogyakarta, 25th of August 2020



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Study

Psychopath is a personality disorder which can be characterized by several traits such as antisocial, no empathy, and unpredictable temperaments. The exact cause of psychopathic disorder can not be identified with certainty. This disorder is predicated to arise due to genetic influences and traumatic experiences of childhood. Some argue that psychopath usually grows from disharmonious family background (Mayo Clinic 2017).

Portrayal of the psychopath in a novel can be identified through how the psychopathic behaviours are narrated in the story. In film, it can be identified by looking at the characteristics and what the psychopath does. However, the portrayal of psychopath is somewhat challenging in poetry or lyric song because of its format. Poetry and song lyric tend to be short, with limited words or duration. That is why it is interesting if there is a lyrical song that can portray psychopath with all its limitation.

The writer chooses the lyric as the object of analysis because it has hidden and implied meanings. Lyric usually does not express the author's imagination and thought concretely. Therefore, more explanation is needed in ordert to be able to understand the content of song lyric. It is in line with what M.H. Abraham said in his book *A Glossary of Literay Term* "Critism, or more specifically literary critism, is the overall for studies concerned with defining, classifying, analyzing,

interpreting, and evaluating works of literature (2009;61)". This statement fits the case when people read a poem or lyric. In understanding it, they should interpret well because many words are expressed in connotative meanings. Unlike denotative, word with connotative meaning does not say what it actually means to say. Usually, the words can be understood in multiple meanings. Christopher states in his book *How to Analyze Poetry* (1966;31) "connotation- the suggested or possible meaning of word".

With its unique nature, lyric is also often used to give motivation or critic. It can demonstrate some important events that need certain attention. For example, it functions to tell about the mental disorders like psychopath. One of the musical band that uses lyric to describe difficult topic such as psychopath is Avenged Sevenfold (often also written A7X). This band is a hard rock music group the United States formed in 1999. This band came from Huntington Beach, California. Avenged Sevenfold currently consists of M. Shadows, Synyster Gates, Zacky Vengeance, Johnny Christ, and James Owen Sullivan.

The band was known with their metalcore genre on their debut "Sounding the Seventh Trumpet," which contans many vocal screams. The band changed their style on their third album, *City of Evil*, which features melodic vocals and power ballads. The band continued to explore new sounds with Avenged Sevenfold's self-titled release and enjoyed success before their drummer, James "The Rev" Sullivan Owen. "A Little Piece of Heaven" was adapted from "Edgar Allan Poe's essay entitled "Annabel Lee." According to an encyclopedia online, "it peaked at number 4 on the Billboard 200 chart. On September 23, 2008, the

album received a gold certificate from the RIAA". There are several songs that discuss about psychopath such as "Nightmare," "Almost Easy," "Natural Born Killer," "Betrayed," and "Paranoid." However, this research will focus on "A Little Piece of Heaven".

"A Little Piece of Heaven" itself becomes an object of expression for Avenged Sevenfold and the lyricist, that psycopath can be found within the metal core song and modern lyric. It triggers the writer's curiosity to analyze it in order to find the exact meaning of what the author intends to convey through his works. In addition, the question of patterns in phrases, words, or sentences found in the lyric also makes this lyrical song become more interesting. In this study, the writer uses new criticism to analyze the portrayal of psychopath in this song. All the possibility that may appear in the lyric will give a new thematic understanding about seeing a lyric as an object to show the psychopath. New Critism theory by Geoffrey N. Leech is very helpful and useful in understanding the meaning of this song as well as to answer the research question. There are four concepts from Leech, i.e., ambiguity, paradox, irony and tension.

It is the purpose of the writer to conduct the research about how psychopath is portrayed in song lyric. In this research, the writer will show the understanding of psychopath "A Little Piece of Heaven". The purpose of using new criticism by Geoffrey N. Leech is that textual understanding becomes the major point in new criticism. In this case, the text of the poem is the key to the analysis. The reason is because new critics want to search about the decisive version of a poem textual analysis which does not mention about morality, expression or emotional concept.

It focuses only on finding the meaning within the text. New criticism can also be used to explore the intention and meaning specifically. It helps the writer to understand the object of analysis textually without having to relate it to the context and background information.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the explanation above, the research question is formulated as follows: How is a psychopath portrayed in Avenged Sevenfold's "A Little Piece of Heaven?"

1.3 Objective of Study

Based on the formulation above, the objective study can be described as follows: to figure out the portrayal of psychopath in Avenged Sevenfold's "A Little Piece of Heaven" lyric textually.

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1.4 Significances of Study

This research has two kinds of significance of study: academically and practically. Academically, the theory of new criticism is still relevant to find the meaning of lyrical poem. This theory is necessary to find the meaning through formalism and focus on the text itself. It will make the ground basis for the next

research and analysis in English literature department that focuses on the object of study or the thematic understanding of psychopath.

Practically, this research can also enrich the discussion about how to find the meaning of Avenged Sevenfold's "A Little Piece of Heaven" using particular New Criticism theory such as multiple-meaning concept of ambiguity, paradox, irony, and tension. This song lyric may convey and explore the idea of psychopath ideology within the lyric. The discussion of the lyrical poem can be an additional contribution to literature and even metal core genre music enrichment.

1.5 Literature Review

The writer does not find the critical works related to the object of study "A Little Piece of Heaven". However, there are three previous researches that used the same theory or method of research. First, 2013 undergraduate student thesis written by Fahurrazi, a student of Islamic State University Sunan Kalijaga, entitled "Reading Death in D.H Lawrence's The Ship of Death." This paper uses John Crowley Ransom New Criticism theory and theme of "Death" in his research. Second, 2018 undergraduate student thesis written by Syidiq Saiful Ardli, student of Islamic State University Sunan Kalijaga, entitled "ReadingThe Antichrist in "At the Left hands Ov God" By the Behemoth". This graduating paper uses new criticism theory and uses the theme of "Antichrist" in his research and he uses close reading method by Geoffrey N Leech.

Third, 2013 undergraduate student thesis written by Gunawan, a student of Islamic State University Sunan Kalijaga, entitled "War as Represented in Michael Heart's We Will Not Go Down". The researcher analyzes six elements: irony, paradox, rhyme, diction, imagery, and ambiguity. This thesis uses Cleanth Brooks New Criticism theory and uses the theme of "war" in his research. The researcher in this paper tells about war in that song. He focuses on the portrayal of Gaza war.

This study is different from those prior researches. Here, the theme that the writer focuses on is psychopath. Even though the method of research and the three prior types of research are the same that is close reading method, but the process of each work in this study gives a new result. It is caused by the differences in the theme. This research not only uses new critism theory but also focuses on describing psychopath that is described in the song.

1.6 Theoretical Approach

New criticism is a theory or concept related to a critical approach to understand the meaning of a literary object. It is a common thing for New Criticism to analyze an object like poem. Meaning is the ground concept that New Criticism is trying to search. Using textual concept and logical discourse, a New Criticism has tried to uncover the meaning of a poem. The writer uses Geoffrey N. Leech "A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry" as the main theory. Some parts of the theory apply New Critic concepts. While Geoffrey's theory is used primarily in the analysis of meaning in New Criticism, textual understanding becomes the

major point in New Criticism. In this case, the text of the poem is the key to the analysis. The reason is because New Critics wants to search out about the decisive version of a poem (the reason that makes poem different from prose). Textual analysis here does not mention about morality, expression or emotion concept. It focuses only to find meaning within the text.

According to Leech, there are four concepts of new criticism: ambiguity, paradox, irony and tension. Leech describes ambiguity the same as in linguistics where it has generally been used in a narrow sense which may represent more than one cognitive meaning in a same piece of language. Later, both ambiguity and the wider concept of multiple significances are manifestation of many valued characters of the poetic language. Leech (1981:30) says "an expression is said to be ambiguous when more than one interpretation can be assigned to it." This ambiguous expression can happen in one word or one sentence/phrase. As we know as lexical and structural ambiguity.

Abrams also states in ordinary usage that "ambiguity" is applied to a fault in the style that is, the use of a vague or equivocal expression when what is wanted precision (2009:12). The precision of Abrams means the method of using ambiguity in explaining the multiple meaning of works. There are two ways of explaining the ambiguity within the work, denotation and connotation meaning. Denotation means a word in its primary signification or based on the reference such as using Cambridge Advanced Learner Dictionary (CALD). This can be used to determine the meaning of each word and phrase. The use of CALD will be major in further analysis, because the writer tries to become as general as possible

to determine the exact meaning using the same reference as everyone does, that is dictionary. Most explanation of denotation is based on dictionary references, but the writer only cites some parts in the analysis using CALD. Meanwhile, connotation means a feeling or idea that is suggested by a particular word, although it is not a part of the word's meaning or something suggested by an object or situation (Cambridge, 2008).

The paradox based on Geoffrey Leech is "a contradiction, it is an absurd statement caused by false self evidence" (1969: 132). Then Leech describes paradox as some equation of antonyms as the boldest and simplest form of paradox (p.142). For example, "My Grandmother is a male, that lie is true, or War is peace and, Freedom is slavery, Ignorance is strength" (George Orwell, 1984. Li). This paradox is needed to conjoin two terms or more to make a phrase, line or sentence which has paradox meaning. These two terms have a contradiction meaning as stated by Leech as an equation of antonyms. Hence, paradox can be found if such contradiction happens in the line or phrase of the lyric. This contradiction fits with Abrams' Paradox, as he says that paradox is a statement which seems on its face to be logically contradictory or absurd yet turns out to be interpretable in a way that makes sense (2009: 239).

Meanwhile, according to Geoffrey Leech, irony is "a two-level response noted in litotes as a whole characteristics of linguistic irony" (1967;171). In the same page, by mentioning H. W. Fowler in Modern English Usage, Leech describes "irony as a mode of expression which postulates double audience, one of which is in the knowledge and awareness of the speaker's intention, while the

others are naive enough to take the utterance at its face value". On some pages, Leech also illustrates the object of the mask as the idea of explaining the role of irony in Poetry. The notion of a disguise is particularly pertinent, as it brings out [a] the element of concealment of irony, and [b] the fact that what concealed is meant to be found out for (p.171). Furthermore, Leech explains that "the "mask" of approval that may be called the Overt or Direct meaning, and the disapproval behind the mask as the Covert or Oblique meaning" (1969:171). For irony itself, it has multiple kinds of similarity with ambiguity. Here, irony can be known as irony in general term, sarcasm, and irony metaphor.

As for Leech, the term sarcasm means saying the opposite of what is intended: saying something nice with the intention that your hater should understand something nasty. "A superficial absurdity points an underlying interpretation; and as with hyperbole, the initial interpretation may be rejected for one of two reasons, first because it is unacceptable in the situation, or second because it will be unacceptable in any situations" (Leech, 1969: 172). Either of both terms, the two of them use the idea of sarcasm as a method to show the intended meaning with sarcastic word forms which disapprove and criticize or even nasty words.

The definition is described by Leech. Leech "stated that metaphor and irony can arise from the same linguistic source that is violation of co-occurrence conditions showing that they are both modes of interpretation; that is, they are not so much part of the text, but as part of the reader's response to the text" (Leech, 1969: 174). In a simple explanation, the irony metaphor is made when the phrase

is classified as irony metaphor and it tends to violate the linguistic and English grammatical. For example, Leech explains the use of irony metaphor in King Lear, and is spoken by Lear when he meets Edgar in the guise of a Tom o' Bedlam, and imagines him to have been brought to madness and destitution by his daughter.

New criticism analyzes the intrinsic elements which are important. There are only some elements applied. They are paradox, irony, ambiguity, and tension. Appropriated by Culler, according to Cleanth Brooks, John, W.K. Wimsatt, for new critics, the task of criticism is to elucidate individual works of art. It focuses on ambiguity, paradox, irony, and the effect of connotation and poetic imagery (2000: 130).

1.7 Method of Research

1.7.1 Type of Research

This research uses qualitative method-library research because the subject of this research is a text. This research also uses the interpretation of words and analysis of words that are based on new criticism theory. Due to the subject of research focuses on the text only and not the author, the approach of this research is objective approach. Most analysis uses interpretation to explain the object of research. This method of analysis may become more comprehensive with interpretation approach and qualitative method-library research.

1.7.2 Data Sources

In this research, the main data and supporting data are both important. The main data are Avenged Sevenfold band's song lyrics entitled "A little Piece of Heaven" and the supporting data in this research are dictionary and articles or encyclopedia in internet supporting the theme of psychopath.

1.7.3 Data Collection Technique

For the data collection, this research uses close reading method. The writer reads the lyrics many times to understand the main data and its relation to psychopath theme. The writer collects the data which are relevant to the research questions i.e. the portrayal of psychopath. The writer uses references such as dictionary and encyclopedia to help explain the main data.

1.7.4 Data Analysis Technique

The data are analyzed by using descriptive analysis method. It means that all of the main data are analyzed and interpreted to get the results. There are some steps to be done in this research:

- A close reading must be done to pay attention to every little aspect of the text
- 2. Categorizing words or verse in the lyric with the concept of new criticism concepts like irony, tension, ambiguity and paradox

- 3. Relating those words with the same main theme which is psychopath.
- Drawing a conclusion of the research based on the thematic unity and how
 New Criticism explains the meaning of the text.

1.8 Paper Organization

This paper consists of four chapters, and each chapter is subdivided into subchapter. Every information related to the lyric is explained in the first chapter where in the first chapter, consists of the background of research, research question, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, literature review, theoretical approach, method of research, and paper organization. Then the second chapter is the element formal consisting of rhyme, diction imagery. Third chapter is the discussion about The meanings of the portrayal of psychopath as expressed in "A Little Piece of Heaven" are explained in this section. The last chapter consists of conclusion and the suggestion.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1 Conclusion

This research uses poetic devices to analyze the lyrics. The poetic devices are derived from the New Criticism theory, particularly Leech's concepts of rhyme, diction, imagery, paradox, irony, ambiguity and tension. Based on the analysis, the portrayal of optimism is described in the stanzas. Every stanza gives a different explanation about psychopath but supports each other. The writer found out that the lyrics use a vast way of explaining the matter with its many lines. Based on the analysis of paradox, irony, and ambiguity, the portrayal of psychopath in this song can be revealed. The tension gives the description about cannibalism and feelings that support the psychopathic traits; for example, the psychopath is portrayed as laughing and crying. Psycopath as cannibalism is portrayed by eating the organs of the corpse. The psychopath that is always related to rejection by some people is mixed well in the lyric using figurative languages and indirect meaning. The song lyric can be shown as a strong emotion of the author in expressing their idea and perspective thought. The statement "Piece of Heaven" is the man's little bit enjoyment. Then it leads to a karma. Eventually, the last way as human right, they should believe that God will help them to gain greater and peaceful life.

4.2 Suggestion

The writer realizes that this research needs some suggestion because it is still far from perfection. There are limited references, sources, and knowledges encountered during the research. Futhermore, this research can also be explored deeply with the other theories. The writer suggests the next researcher to use semiotic theory, reader response theory or dynamic structuralism theory when analyzing a lyric. It will be helpful to give more variation to analyze this case, because this song is not only about intrinsic element but also extrinsic element.



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