

**RACISM AS REFLECTED IN BOB MARLEY'S
SONGS: *WAR* AND *BUFFALO SOLDIER***

A Graduating Paper

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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 this graduating paper are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

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

Atas perhatian yang diberikan, saya ucapkan terimakasih.

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Yogyakarta, 18 February 2014

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MOTTO

TIME IS MONEY

WE MUST USE IT THE BEST WE CAN DO

DEDICATION

This Graduating Paper is dedicated to:
MY BELOVED MOTHER, FATHER, SISTER AND BROTHER

INTISARI

Bob Marley adalah seorang penyanyi reggae legendaris yang berasal dari Jamaika. Dia banyak menulis lagu yang bertemakan rasisme. Dua dari sekian banyak lagu yang bertemakan rasisme yang ditulisnya adalah *War* dan *The Buffalo Soldiers*. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dua lagu tersebut dengan mengaplikasikan teori Ekspresif dari M.H. Abrams. Dengan mengaplikasikan teori Ekspresif darinya yaitu sebuah karya sastra harus dihubungkan dengan pengarang aslinya, disini penulis menghadirkan kisah Bob Marley dimana kehidupannya memiliki banyak interaksi kepada orang dari berbagai ras. Hal ini mempengaruhi respon dia terhadap masalah rasisme yang terjadi di Afrika dan Amerika.

Metode penelitian ini menggunakan kualitatif research; dokumentasi. Berkenaan dengan objektif study, fungsi teori ini ditujuakan pada dua tujuan pertanyaan yakni memahami bagaimana Bob Marley mendeskripsikan masalah ras dalam lagu *War* dan *The Buffalo Soldiers*, dan bagaimana kehidupan Bob Marley mempengaruhi responnya terhadap masalah ras seperti yang tertuang dalam lagu yang berjudul *War* dan *Buffalo Soldier*.

Berdasarkan hasil analisis yang dilakukan penulis terhadap kedua lirik lagu tersebut, lagu *War* menceritakan masalah ras yang dialami orang Afrika di tanah kelahirannya, sedangkan lagu *The Buffalo Soldiers* menceritakan masalah ras yang dihadapi orang Afrika di Amerika. Kedua lagu tersebut juga menegaskan bahwa yang dimaksudkan dengan ras adalah perbedaan kelas sosial, warna kulit dan warna mata. Dengan adanya perbedaan tersebut menimbulkan diskriminasi antar ras. Bob Marley tidak setuju dengan adanya diskriminasi ras, dan menyerukan pada semua orang untuk ikut berjuang melawan diskriminasi tersebut.

Kata Kunci: *rasisme, lagu, and Bob Marley.*

ABSTRACT

Bob Marley is a legendary reggae singer who comes from Jamaica. He writes some songs concerning on the problems of racism. There are two interesting songs which deal with racism. They are *War* and *The Buffalo Soldier*. This research aims to analyze those songs using Abrams's Expressive theory. Applying Abrams's Expressive theory in which a literary work must be connected to its author, the writer presents Bob Marley's life which related to many people from different races has affected his works.

The method of this research is qualitative research: documentation. Regarding to the objective study, the function of the theory is to analyze how Bob Marley responds to the problem of racism as reflected in his songs entitled 'War' and 'Buffalo Soldier' and how Bob Marley's personal and social life affect his view.

Based on the analysis of the songs' lyric, *War* song presents about the problems of racism experienced by African in their home land—Africa, while *The Buffalo Soldiers* describes about the racism problems experienced by African in America. Significantly, Bob emphasizes on his songs that a race is something relates to skin and eyes color. The differences of skin and eyes color among people leads to discrimination. Through his songs, he motivates people to wake up and against racism.

Key words: *racism, song, and Bob Marley.*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

In life, God creates many kinds of races. They are separated to all countries in the world. Race refers to person's physical appearances such as skin color, eyes color, and hair form (Simarmata, 2012: 6). Those physical appearances differ from one and another person living in different places, ethnics, traditions, and cultures. Those differences are naturally given by God, but people sometimes use it to differentiate themselves from others to elevate their status social. When skin color becomes the distinguish factor among people or groups, they claim superior to the others. That reaction can be called racism. Moreover, Jaret (1955: 128) that

“Defines racism as attitude, belief, action, and policy of individuals, groups, or organizations that intentionally help to create or to maintain the racial inequality (sociological, economic, political, health, educational) including the advantages and benefits of one race with deprivations and burdens for another race”

In other words, racism is a belief that a race is inherently superior to other people or groups. Consequently, both the race, which gets a conflict, pushes one of the race to lower condition. On the other hand, Donnelan (2013: 1) explains that

“It is Racism as treating one group of people less favorably than another because of color, religious belief, and ethnic origin. Therefore, it can cause many problems, and give bad effects to human relation. People mostly contradict racism since it gives no benefits. It only creates disharmony in society, particularly in a country which has compound ethnic groups”.

Based on Donnellan statement, it indicates that the problems of racism in the world come to complicated age, especially the problem between black and white people. The story between black and white stays longer. It can be seen from a war which occurs in the history of America. It stimulates war such as American Civil War from 1861 to 1865 and Apartheid conflict from 1948 to 1994.

On the other hand, the problem of racism nowadays is no longer become serious attention since people begin to realize the importance of respecting other people. Therefore, people should not totally think that the problem of racism is totally over. At least, there are some problems of racism although they are not as big as the previous problems. However, it should be concerned to decrease a conflict to be a serious attention. It is not impossible that the problem stimulates more serious than the previous one. Therefore, it is important for people nowadays, especially scholars as young generation to learn about racism, whereas that they can have solutions to the problems.

In the past era where people solved the problems with gun, nowadays there are more effective ways to do against racism. People can

use their own ability to do against it, for example politicians against racism by developing better rules, painters show their resistance to racism through their painting, and singers show their resistance through their songs. Through the rules, paintings, and songs people express their any feelings, imaginations, and opinions. Through those media people persuade other people to fight against racism. Therefore, the writer interests in analyzing the respond to the problems of racism in modern era. Specifically, the writer focuses to analyze the respond which is delivered through song. The writer prefers analyzing song to others because song is considered more effective as it can be heard through mass electronic media such as radio, television, mp3 player, and mobile.

As a part of music, there are various music genres existing in music industries, such as pop, rock, jazz, blues, ska, and reggae. One of the popular genres is reggae. Reggae is one of music genres popularized around the world by Bob Marley. The characteristic of reggae music is on its offbeat rhythm. It makes the lyrics can be clearly listened. In addition, the tempo is slower than ska and rocksteady music. Ska is one of the music genres that has characteristic on a walking bass line accented with rhythms on upbeat. Rocksteady is known for its prominent bass lines and floating with offbeat rhythms. The combination instrument of reggae music makes some listeners easier to follow and to simulate the sound of the lyrics. That combination is founded on Bob Marley. He is a Jamaican Reggae singer. Manus mentions that Bob Marley is the icon of reggae since

he is considered as the first creator of reggae. He is called as the king of reggae. He gets several lifetime achievement awards such as the award of Jamaica's best loved musical superstar(2014: pars. 1).

One of the social problems which Bob Marley concerns about is racism. There are some of his songs telling about the problems of racism; however in this paper the writer analyzes two songs entitled *War* and *Buffalo Soldier*. *War* tells about the problems of black and white discrimination happening in Africa, while *The Buffalo Soldier* tells about white and black discrimination in America. The discrimination describes in the song is caused by the different color of skin and eyes; therefore the writer argues that the songs responds to the problems of racism. In addition to respond the problems of racism, the songs also promote peace. The songs aim to develop a world without any wars, oppressions, and slaveries.

Regarding to these issue, this paper focuses the songs as the expression of the author. This paper analyzes how Bob Marley respond to the problems of racism as reflected in *War* and *Buffalo Soldier* and how the authors' life affecting their works. In order to analyze how Bob Marley responds to the problem of racism as seen on his songs, the writer uses expressive theory by Abrams. Abrams defines a work as the author's expression. The work is seen as the facility to express the author's ideas, aspirations, and experiences.

The research data are taken from two representative songs of Bob Marley entitled *War* and *Buffalo Soldier*. To avoid a deviation and screwy analysis, it is necessary to give limitation. Therefore, the research is focused further on lyrics that contain racism perspective only, the author, and the history of the songs itself.

1.2 Problem Statement

From the background of the study above, it is clear that the analysis deals with the racism. Concerning the interest of the issue, the main problems that are answered in this research are below

1. How does Bob Marley respond to the problem of racism as reflected in his songs entitled *War* and *Buffalo Soldier*?
2. How do Bob Marley's personal and social life affect his view?

1.3 Objective of Study

Based on the formulated question, the objective study of the writer would like to achieve through this research are to describe:

1. To describe Bob Marley respond to the problems of racism as seen on his songs *War* and *Buffalo Soldier*.
2. To analyze the Bob Marley's personal and social life affect his view on racism.

1.4 Significance of Study

Theoretically, the writer hopes that this research contributes in giving the readers an understanding of the relation between literary work and its author as this research applies Expressive approach which concern on finding the relation between the text and the author. Specifically, the writer hopes that this research can be one of the examples of the analysis of song, especially reggae.

Practically, this research hopefully can contribute to some people such as the lecturer, scholars, and all readers.

1. For lecturer, this paper hopefully can be a reference to teach in literature, especially about song and expressive approach by Abrams.
2. For scholars, this paper hopefully can give better understanding of how to apply expressive approach by Abrams in a song as well as how to understand the problems of racism.
3. For readers, this paper hopefully can give knowledge about the meaning or the moral value of Bob Marley's songs, especially *War* and *Buffalo Soldier*.

1.5 Literary Review

After searching some previous researcher who has similar topics as the writer, the writer concludes that there are three researches relating to the topic. Here are the related prior researches:

- a. The first thesis is *Racism Perspective as Reflected in Bob Marley's and the Wailer's Songs* by Setyo Cahyaningtyas from Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta. She uses interdisciplinary, semiotic, sociological, and biographical approach to analyze the nine songs of Bob Marley's and The Wailer's songs (*Redemption Song, Get Up Stand Up, Buffalo Soldier, Slave Drive, One Love, Could You be Love, I Shot the Sheriff, Babylon System, and Judge not*).
- b. The second thesis is *Representation of Rastafarian Identity: A Textual Analysis of Selected Lyrics from Bob Marley's Songs* by Mega Noviandari from Education University of Indonesia, Bandung. She uses Woodward's theory of identity. She emphasizes her analysis on the meaning of the lyrics.
- c. The third thesis is *Analysis of Freedom toward Black Slavery in Bob Marley's Buffalo Soldier and Redemption Song* by Lutfi Miftachul Fauziah from Diponegoro University, Semarang. She uses exponential and sociological approaches. Exponential approach is used to analyze intrinsic elements such as diction, symbol, and personification. Sociological approach is to analyze the extrinsic elements such as background, economic state, and ideology of author.

The points that differentiate their researches from the writer's research are the theoretical approach and the topic of the research. The writer uses Expressive theory by Abrams.

1.6 Theoretical Approach

The writer applies Abrams's theory of Expressive. Meyer Howard Abrams is an American literary critic. He was born on July 23, 1912. One of his popular works is a book entitled *The Mirror and the Lamp*. On the book, he divides literary approach into four, they are:

1. Mimetic approach, it connects the text to the universe or social background.
2. Pragmatic approach, it discusses the work through the view of the readers.
3. Expressive approach, it connects the text to the author.
4. Objective approach, it depends only on the text itself without connecting it to the extrinsic elements.

Relating to some approaches above, the writer chooses to analyze Bob Marley's songs using Expressive theory. The idea of Expressive theory is connecting the literary work with the author. It defines the songs as an expression, or overflow, or utterance of feelings, or as the product of the imagination operating on his perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. Both the work and the author have cohesive relation that cannot be separated. The theory emphasizes the author is more important element than the work.

According to the theory, the literary work is an overflow, an expression, a light ray of the mind and feeling of the author. Besides, Abrams defined that in general terms, the central tendency of the expressive theory may be summarized in this way:

“A work of art is essentially the interval made external, resulting, and embodying the combined product of the poet’s perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. The primary source and subject matter of a poem, therefore, are attributes and actions of the poet’s own mind; or if aspects of the external world, then these only as they are converted from fact to poetry by the feelings and operations of the poet’s mind” (1953:22)

1.7 Methods of Study

1.7.1 Type of Research

This research is qualitative research. The qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological tradition inquiry that explores the social and human problems (Herdiansyah, 2010: 8). This analysis deals with the explanation of words, not in the statistic form. Furthermore, this research applies expressive approach which connects to the work with the universe.

1.7.2 Data Sources

The source of data in qualitative research is society, social phenomenon, literary works, manuscripts, etc, and its data can be words, sentences, or discourses (Subroto 1992: 47). The writer uses the song lyrics as the main data sources while the supporting data is a data which the writer takes from document in World Wide Web. Both data are used by the writer to analyze racism as reflected in Bob Marley's songs.

1.7.3 Methods of Collecting Data

According to Creswell, data collection procedures in qualitative research involve four basic types: observations, interviews, questioner, and documents (1994: 149). This research uses a type of documents. To assemble the data, the writer finds the main data of this research that is the lyrics of the songs. The writer listens to the song to reach the information relating to the topics. In addition, the writer reads about the history of the songs as well as the author biography.

The data is collected from books, essays, and any other kinds of writings that are related to the topic, including those from internet sources. Then, the writer also removes some information from the data which does not relate to the topic before the writer decides the analysis data.

1.7.4 Methods of Analyzing Data

In conducting this research, the writer takes some steps. First, the writer decides the works, the songs, which are going to be analyzed. Second, the writer reads the songs profoundly to analyze the content. Third, the writer finds some supporting data either from book or internet to get deeper understanding of the songs. Fourth, after understanding the content, the writer decides the topic and the problem statements. The problem statements are used to develop the discussion.

The next step is to find the theory that is related to the topic. It is used to answer the problem. After finding the data and the theory, the writer begins to analyze the data, the songs, to answer the first problem statement that is Bob Marley's description of racism in *War* and *Buffalo Soldier*. Then, by applying Expressive theory, the writer connects between the description of racism in the songs and the author biography to understand the structure of racism. The last step is making a conclusion based on the analyses.

1.8 Paper Organization

This paper is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is introduction, which includes background of study, scope of study, problem statements, objectives of study, significances of study, prior researches,

theoretical approach, methods of research, and thesis organization. The second chapter presents literary review which tells about the history of Bob Marley and the songs. In the third chapter, the analysis of the main data is presented in several sub-chapters. The last chapter, the fourth chapter presents the conclusion.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, AND SUGGESTION

4.1 Conclusion

As stated in the first chapter, this research aims to analyze Bob Marley's songs using Expressive theory by M.H. Abrams. To understand the cases of the songs, the writer has two problem statements, which are analyzed. They are: How Bob Marley respond racism on his songs entitled *War* and *Buffalo Soldier* and how the author's background contributes affecting Bob Marley's respond. Bob Marley in *War* describe that the problems of racism still happened in Africa. It is indicated by the social class differences or gaps which based on skin and eyes color. The song also explains that there is stratification in society between first class and second class.

Meanwhile, in *Buffalo Soldier* song, Bob describes the problems of racism experienced by African people in America. The Africans, who served white people in America called 'buffalo soldier' because their appearances are like buffalos. They have black skin and dreadlock hair.

Applying Abram's theory of Expressive, the description of racism in both songs related to the author's background. The structure of the problems of racism in the songs is relevant to the structure of the real problems of racism experienced by African people. Therefore, the writer concludes that through *War* and *Buffalo Soldiers* songs, Bob

Marley responded to Africans who were oppressed. He wanted to criticize the problem of racism by his songs. He also struggled the rights of black people through his songs because he came from the same race. Bob Marley's way to criticize the problems through songs is a wise way to protest without any violences.

4.2 Implication and Suggestion

The issue of racism becomes important to be analyzed because racism is forbidden in Islamic religion. As Allah S.W.T says in Al Qur'an Sura Al Hujarat verse 13 and Sura Ar-Ruum verse 22:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَّاُنْثٰى وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوْبًا وَّقَبَاۤىِٕلَ
لِتَعَارَفُوْۤا اِنَّ اَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ اَتْقٰىكُمْ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌ خَبِيْرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

Meaning: O mankind, we have created you from a male and a female; and we have made you tribes and sub-tribes that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing and All-Aware (Farid, 1969: 1106).

وَمِنْ ءَايٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَّالْاَرْضِ وَاٰخِثٰتِ السِّنِّكُمْ
وَالْوٰزِنِمْ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لٰاٰيٰتٍ لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

Meaning: And of His signs are the creation of the heaven and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and your colours. In that, surely, are Signs for those who possess knowledge (Farid, 1969: 874).

The verses teach about the warning to someone who sees the other people by measuring the ethnic, race, nationality, tradition, culture, and religion. It is not allowed to be done because it can spark off any quarrels, hostilities, fights, and disputes among the races. Those are bad attitudes that must be avoided. The rule of forbidding racism is also stated in the Hadith narrated by Imam Bukhari:

“All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black nor does a black have any superiority over a white, except by piety and good action” (Eddie, 2007: pars. 3).

The Hadith explains that The Prophet affirms to people who are equal. The distinct thing is only their god-fearing. There is nothing that makes them different (race, ethnic, nationality), except their faith and god-fearing to Allah S.W.T.

The writer suggests for the next research to analyze the song with the theory of racism. In addition, the song can also be compared to Indonesian racism songs to find out the differences and the similarities of both songs. The writer also suggests the next researcher to analyze other

Bob's song besides *War* and *Buffalo Soldier*, such as *Redemption Song*, *No Woman No Cry*, *One Love* and many others.

To support the research, it is better if the next researcher can find some books of Bob Marley including his biography, songs, and his career on music. However, the complete information can make the researcher deeply understand about the problem statements that will be presented. Finally, the writer hopes that the next researcher will be able to conduct better research.

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