

The Representation of Human Existence Amid the Limitations of Reality in Raim Laode's *Dunia Yang Nanti* Through Paul Ricoeur's Hermeneutic Perspective

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Abstract

*Contemporary song lyrics have increasingly been recognized as literary texts that convey symbolic meanings extending beyond entertainment; however, studies examining how they represent human existence through Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic perspective remain limited, particularly in the context of contemporary Indonesian songs. This study aims to examine the representation of human existence amid the limitations of reality in the song lyrics *Dunia Yang Nanti* by Raim Laode using Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic approach. Employing a qualitative descriptive design, the study analyzed the official song lyrics through documentation, intensive textual reading, thematic categorization, and hermeneutic interpretation, supported by existential philosophy and relevant literary scholarship. The findings reveal five interconnected existential themes: temporality, human limitations, existential love, moral consciousness, and hope, which collectively illustrate how individuals construct meaning through interpreting and accepting realities beyond their control. These findings demonstrate that the lyrics transcend a conventional romantic narrative by offering a philosophical reflection on human existence through symbolic language. The study contributes to literary hermeneutics by extending the application of Ricoeur's interpretative framework to contemporary Indonesian song lyrics and highlights the potential of popular music as a literary medium for exploring existential meanings in contemporary society.*

Keywords : *Human Existence, Hermeneutics, Song Lyrics, Raim Laode, Limitations Of Reality*

INTRODUCTION

Literature has long been recognized as a medium through which human beings express experiences, emotions, beliefs, and reflections on the realities of life. Beyond its aesthetic function, literature enables readers to explore existential questions concerning identity, freedom, morality, hope, and the search for meaning. In contemporary society, song lyrics have increasingly attracted scholarly attention because they combine poetic language with cultural narratives, allowing complex philosophical ideas to be communicated through symbolic and metaphorical expressions. As literary texts, song lyrics not only accompany musical compositions but also construct meanings that invite

diverse interpretations depending on readers' cultural, social, and philosophical perspectives (Abrams & Harpham, 2015; Eagleton, 2008).

Among contemporary Indonesian musical works, *Dunia Yang Nanti* by Raim Laode presents a distinctive representation of human existence through themes of time, limitation, life choices, moral consciousness, and hope. Unlike many popular songs that predominantly portray romantic relationships as emotional experiences, *Dunia Yang Nanti* frames love within broader existential realities, emphasizing that human beings often encounter circumstances beyond their control. The lyrics depict how individuals negotiate between personal desires and objective reality while continuously seeking meaning through acceptance rather than resistance. Such representations position the song as a literary text that extends beyond romance and offers philosophical reflections on the human condition.

The representation of existential themes in literary works has been widely discussed in previous studies. Research on literary hermeneutics consistently demonstrates that literary texts communicate meanings through symbols, metaphors, and contextual narratives rather than literal expressions (Ricoeur, 1976, 1981). Likewise, existential literary criticism has shown that literary works frequently portray human existence through experiences of freedom, temporality, alienation, responsibility, and the search for meaning (Heidegger, 1962; Sartre, 2007). Studies on song lyrics have also confirmed that contemporary songs function as literary texts capable of reflecting social, cultural, and philosophical realities while encouraging interpretative engagement from readers and listeners (Nurgiyantoro, 2018). Collectively, these studies suggest that song lyrics constitute legitimate objects of literary inquiry because their symbolic language enables multiple layers of interpretation.

Despite these advances, previous studies have primarily focused on the aesthetic, sociocultural, or linguistic dimensions of song lyrics, while relatively limited attention has been devoted to examining how contemporary Indonesian songs represent human existence through a systematic hermeneutic framework. Existing studies employing Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutics have predominantly analyzed novels, poetry, folklore, or religious texts, whereas contemporary popular songs remain comparatively underexplored. Moreover, many lyric analyses emphasize thematic description without critically explaining how symbolic meanings are constructed through Ricoeur's theory of interpretation or how these meanings contribute to broader existential discourse. Consequently, the philosophical representation of human existence embedded in contemporary Indonesian song lyrics remains insufficiently understood.

This gap highlights the need for a more comprehensive hermeneutic investigation capable of integrating symbolic interpretation with existential philosophy. Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutics provides an appropriate theoretical framework because it views texts as autonomous entities whose meanings extend beyond the author's original intention through processes of interpretation and symbolic mediation (Ricoeur, 1976, 1981). Through Ricoeur's perspective, symbols are understood not merely as linguistic ornaments but as vehicles that disclose deeper dimensions of human existence. This framework is further enriched by Heidegger's concept of temporality, which explains that

human existence is fundamentally shaped by time, finitude, and the continuous construction of meaning (Heidegger, 1962). The integration of these perspectives enables a more comprehensive understanding of how literary texts represent existential realities beyond their literal narratives.

Accordingly, this study aims to investigate how human existence is represented in the song lyrics of *Dunia Yang Nanti* by Raim Laode through Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic approach. Specifically, the study explores how symbolic expressions contained in the lyrics construct meanings related to temporality, human limitations, existential love, moral consciousness, and hope. Accordingly, this study aims to examine the representation of human existence amid the limitations of reality in the song lyrics of *Dunia Yang Nanti* by Raim Laode through Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic perspective. In doing so, it explores how symbolic expressions in the lyrics construct existential meanings concerning temporality, human limitations, love, moral consciousness, and hope.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of literary hermeneutics by extending the application of Ricoeur's interpretative framework to contemporary Indonesian song lyrics, an area that has received relatively limited scholarly attention. It also enriches existential literary studies by demonstrating how symbolic language in popular music represents fundamental dimensions of human existence, including temporality, limitation, moral awareness, and hope. Practically, the findings encourage literary scholars, educators, and readers to appreciate song lyrics as literary texts capable of communicating profound philosophical meanings and fostering reflective engagement with contemporary human experiences.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design using Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic approach to examine the representation of human existence in the song lyrics *Dunia Yang Nanti* by Raim Laode. The primary data consisted of the official song lyrics, with words, phrases, clauses, and lyrical expressions serving as the units of analysis, while relevant books and peer-reviewed studies on Ricoeur's hermeneutics, existential philosophy, and literary criticism were used as supporting references. The researcher acted as the primary research instrument, guided by Ricoeur's hermeneutic framework and Heidegger's concept of temporality in interpreting symbolic meanings. Data were collected through documentation and repeated textual readings to identify, classify, and categorize symbolic expressions into recurring existential themes. The data were then analyzed through an iterative hermeneutic process involving textual reading, thematic categorization, symbolic interpretation, and theoretical explanation by relating the findings to Ricoeur's hermeneutics, existential philosophy, and relevant previous studies. To ensure trustworthiness, prolonged engagement with the text, theoretical triangulation, and continuous verification between textual evidence, thematic interpretation, and theoretical explanations were employed to enhance the credibility and consistency of the findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings and discussion concerning the representation of human existence amid the limitations of reality in the song lyrics *Dunia Yang Nanti* by Raim Laode. Using Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic perspective, the interpretation focuses on symbolic meanings embedded in the lyrics rather than their literal expressions. The findings are organized into five interrelated themes, namely human beings as creatures subject to the power of time, human limitations in confronting reality, love as an existential experience, the conflict between emotion and moral consciousness, and hope as a means of constructing the meaning of life. Each theme is discussed by integrating textual evidence, hermeneutic interpretation, existential philosophy, and relevant previous studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the lyrics represent human existence.

The hermeneutic reading identified five dominant existential themes within the lyrics of *Dunia Yang Nanti*. The first theme portrays human beings as creatures whose lives are shaped by the power of time, reflected in the lyric "*Waktu bawa kita ke tempat tak terduga.*" The second theme represents human limitations in confronting reality through the lyric "*Kau ada yang miliki, ku ada yang punyai,*" which illustrates the boundaries between personal desire and lived reality. The third theme presents love as an uncontrollable existential experience, expressed through the metaphor of *jatuh cinta* as an event beyond rational choice. The fourth theme reflects the conflict between emotion and moral consciousness in the lyric "*Kita dua hati yang salah, bodoh pada waktu,*" emphasizing the tension between emotional experience and ethical responsibility. Finally, the fifth theme identifies hope as a symbolic reconstruction of life's meaning through the lyric "*Karena tidak bisa kupunyai, maka kudoakan kisah kita satu di dunia yang nanti,*" where hope functions as an existential response to unattainable reality. Collectively, these themes demonstrate that the song consistently constructs human existence through the interaction of time, limitation, emotion, morality, and hope.

The five themes reveal a coherent existential narrative rather than isolated symbolic meanings. The lyrics portray human existence as a continuous process of confronting circumstances beyond individual control while striving to construct meaning through interpretation and acceptance. The progression from time, limitation, emotional conflict, and moral awareness to hope illustrates the transformation of human experience from recognizing existential constraints toward achieving acceptance. Rather than presenting despair as the final consequence of limitation, the lyrics suggest that individuals preserve their existence by continuously interpreting reality and assigning meaning to experiences that cannot be altered. This thematic progression demonstrates that human existence is characterized not solely by freedom of choice but also by the capacity to reinterpret life's unavoidable limitations.

The present findings are consistent with Ricoeur's view that literary texts possess symbolic meanings extending beyond their literal expressions and that interpretation emerges through the interaction between text and reader (Ricoeur, 1976, 1981). The representation of time as an existential force also supports Heidegger's concept of temporality, which considers human existence inseparable from the continuous

movement of past, present, and future (Heidegger, 1962). Furthermore, the findings reinforce previous literary studies suggesting that song lyrics function as literary texts capable of expressing complex philosophical and existential meanings through symbolic language (Abrams & Harpham, 2015; Eagleton, 2008; Nurgiyantoro, 2018). Unlike previous studies that primarily examine existential themes in novels and poetry, this study demonstrates that contemporary Indonesian song lyrics also provide a rich medium for hermeneutic interpretation, thereby extending the application of Ricoeur's hermeneutics to contemporary musical texts.

From Ricoeur's hermeneutic perspective, meaning is not located solely within linguistic expressions but is constructed through the interpretative engagement with symbols embedded in the text (Ricoeur, 1976, 1981). Accordingly, the symbols of time, love, mistakes, and *dunia yang nanti* function as metaphors that mediate readers' understanding of existential reality. Heidegger's existential philosophy further explains that human beings inevitably encounter limitations because existence unfolds within temporality rather than absolute freedom (Heidegger, 1962). Consequently, the song does not merely narrate an unattainable love story but symbolically portrays the existential journey through which individuals acknowledge limitation, exercise moral awareness, and ultimately construct meaning through hope. The interaction between Ricoeur's hermeneutics and Heidegger's existentialism therefore provides a coherent theoretical explanation for understanding how symbolic language transforms ordinary life experiences into philosophical reflections on human existence.

This study contributes to literary studies by demonstrating that contemporary Indonesian song lyrics constitute meaningful literary texts capable of revealing existential values through hermeneutic interpretation. Theoretically, the findings strengthen the application of Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic theory in interpreting symbolic representations of human existence while enriching discussions on existential meaning in contemporary popular literature. Practically, the study encourages educators, literary scholars, and readers to appreciate song lyrics as educational and philosophical texts rather than merely entertainment. Nevertheless, this research is limited to a single literary work and one interpretative framework. Future studies are therefore encouraged to examine other contemporary literary texts or compare multiple hermeneutic perspectives to broaden understanding of existential representation in Indonesian literature.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that *Dunia Yang Nanti* represents human existence as a dynamic process of confronting time, limitation, emotional conflict, and moral responsibility while sustaining hope amid realities beyond human control. Through Ricoeur's hermeneutic perspective, the symbolic expressions contained in the lyrics reveal that existence is ultimately defined not by the fulfillment of desire but by the human capacity to interpret reality, accept limitation, and continuously construct meaning in life.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the song lyrics *Dunia Yang Nanti* by Raim Laode represent human existence through five interconnected existential themes, namely temporality, human limitations, existential love, moral consciousness, and hope, which collectively illustrate how individuals construct meaning amid the limitations of reality. Through Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic perspective, the findings reveal that the lyrics extend beyond a narrative of unattainable love by symbolically portraying the human journey of interpreting, accepting, and assigning meaning to experiences shaped by circumstances beyond individual control. These findings enrich literary hermeneutics by extending the application of Ricoeur's interpretative framework to contemporary Indonesian song lyrics while demonstrating the value of popular music as a literary medium for exploring existential issues, thereby offering insights for literary scholars, educators, and readers in appreciating symbolic meanings embedded in contemporary texts. Nevertheless, this study is limited to the interpretation of a single literary work using one hermeneutic perspective, which may restrict the transferability of the findings. Future studies are therefore encouraged to examine broader corpora of contemporary song lyrics or employ comparative hermeneutic approaches to deepen understanding of existential representation across diverse literary and cultural contexts.

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