

LOVE'S REPRESENTATION IN *KALAM EINEH* LYRICS: A SEMIOTIC PERSPECTIVE BY ROLAND BARTHES

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ABSTRACT

The research aims to explore the denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings of the lyrics of *Kalam Eineh* by Sherine Abdel Wahab. It employs a qualitative descriptive approach with textual analysis. The data are obtained from the song lyrics sourced from YouTube. The analysis is conducted in three stages according to Roland Barthes' semiotic model. First, denotative meaning is analyzed through literal interpretation. Second, connotative meaning is examined to identify emotional values and symbols. Third, mythological meaning is analyzed to uncover broader cultural narratives. The findings indicate that the lyrics of *Kalam Eineh* reflect a complex experience of love. At the denotative level, love is depicted through the symbolism of the eyes and intimate gestures, while at the connotative level, the lyrics emphasize sacrifice and emotional harmony. In terms of myth, love is understood as a magical force that transcends human limitations, creating a reflection of Arab cultural values in the context of interpersonal relationships.

Keywords: *Love, Kalam Eineh, Song, Semiotics, Meaning*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi makna denotatif, konnotatif, dan mitos dari lirik lagu *Kalam Eineh* karya Sherine Abdel Wahab. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan analisis tekstual. Data diperoleh dari lirik lagu yang diambil dari platform YouTube. Analisis dilakukan dalam tiga tahap sesuai dengan model semiotik Roland Barthes. Pertama, analisis makna denotatif melalui interpretasi literal. Kedua, analisis makna konnotatif untuk mengidentifikasi nilai emosional dan simbol. Ketiga, analisis makna mitos untuk mengungkap narasi budaya yang lebih luas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa lirik *Kalam Eineh* mencerminkan pengalaman cinta yang kompleks. Di tingkat denotatif, cinta digambarkan melalui simbolisme mata dan gerakan intim, sementara di tingkat konnotatif, lirik menekankan pengorbanan dan harmoni emosional. Dalam aspek mitos, cinta dipahami sebagai kekuatan magis yang melampaui batasan manusia, menciptakan refleksi nilai-nilai budaya Arab dalam konteks hubungan interpersonal.

Kata kunci: *Cinta, Kalam Eineh, Lagu, Semiotika, Makna*

INTRODUCTION

Song is a form of art that has the power to convey messages, emotions, and life experiences. In every song, the lyrics play a crucial role in connecting the listener to the themes presented (Barradas & Sakka, 2022; Schotanus, 2020). The lyrics of a song are not just words that are sung, they are also a reflection of the feelings and thoughts of the songwriter (Montanari, 2024). Through the lyrics, the songwriter can depict various aspects of life, including experiences of love, loss, happiness, and hope (Malik et al., 2023). When we listen to a song, its lyrics often serve as a reminder of certain memories and feelings, creating an emotional bond between the listener and the work. Additionally, the lyrics of a song also function as a means of communication that allows us to understand the songwriter's perspective on the themes raised, thus creating a depth of meaning that can be interpreted by each individual.

The linguistic forms in a song encompass word choices, figures of speech, and structures used to convey messages (Simanjuntak et al., 2021). In this context, a song can not only represent universal themes like love but also various other aspects of life. Through the use of creative and meaningful language, song lyrics can create a strong and impressive image. For example, metaphorical expressions, personification, or repetition in the lyrics can enrich the listener's experience and add depth to the emotions being conveyed (Dewi et al., 2020). When a song addresses the theme of love, the appropriate use of language can evoke deep feelings and intimacy while also creating a clear depiction of the relationships between the characters in the song. This shows that song lyrics serve not only as entertainment but also as a medium for conveying complex and profound ideas.

The concept of love in song lyrics often depicts various nuances and aspects of human relationships. Love can be understood as a deep feeling, affection, and attachment that connects individuals with one another (Ahuvia et al., 2022). In many song lyrics, love is not only discussed in a romantic context but also encompasses familial love, friendship, and self-love. Lyrics that portray love often include themes of struggle, sacrifice, and hope, creating narratives that touch the heart (Alper, 2022). In the analysis of song lyrics, we can find how writers transform these feelings of love into words that resonate with listeners. For instance, by presenting conflicts in relationships, hopes for happiness, or profound longing, the lyrics can take listeners on a rich emotional journey, making love an enduring and universal theme in the world of music.

The song *Kalam Eineh* by Sherine Abdel Wahab is one of the works that deeply explores the theme of love. Through its lyrics, the song depicts the complexity of feelings experienced in a relationship. Sherine, as the singer, successfully captures the emotions of love in each verse, providing listeners with a strong sense of longing and hope. With a touching melody and remarkable vocals, *Kalam Eineh* conveys the message that love is not only about happiness but also about struggle and the desire to understand one another. This song illustrates how love can influence a person's life, giving profound meaning to listeners. Each lyric in this song not only reflects personal feelings but also mirrors universal experiences of love, making *Kalam Eineh* a relevant work for many who share similar sentiments.

The representation of love in *Kalam Eineh* can be analyzed more deeply through Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, which offers a way to understand the meanings contained in the text. According to Barthes (1972, 1986), every text has two layers of meaning i.e. denotative meaning and connotative meaning. Denotative meaning refers to the literal interpretation of the words in the lyrics, while connotative meaning involves the associations and deeper interpretations that arise from social and cultural contexts. Furthermore, Barthes also presents the concept of myths, which explains how these meanings can be constructed and read within a specific culture. In the analysis of *Kalam Eineh*, we can observe how the lyrics create an image of love that not only reflects the relationships between individuals but also illustrates the hopes and values present in society. By understanding these layers of meaning, we can better appreciate the depth of the lyrics and the message Sherine intends to convey in this song.

Several researchers have conducted previous studies related to the semiotic analysis of Roland Barthes as applied to song lyrics. Harnia (2021) explored the meaning of love in the song *Tak Sekedar Cinta* by Dnanda using Barthes' semiotic approach. Similarly, Kusumawati et al. (2019) analyzed the meaning of the song *Rembulan* by Ipha Hadi Sasono with the same methodology. Aditama and Iman (2023) investigated motivation through Barthes' semiotic lens in the song *Sebusur Pelangi* by Nonaria. Salsabila and Putri (2022) examined the meaning of loneliness using Barthes' semiotic approach in the song *I Need Somebody* by Day6. Suparman (2024) applied Barthes' methodology to analyze songs by Iwan Fals, while Rahma et al. (2024) uncovered the theme of self-improvement in the song *Diri* by Tulus through the same framework. Mukminin et al. (2024) analyzes the representation of social criticism in the song *Bingung* by Iksan Skuter using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. Mukminin (2024) explore the meanings and experiences of nostalgia contained in the lyrics of the song *High School in Jakarta*. Mukminin and Iryani (2024) explaining how the city of Yogyakarta is represented in two song lyrics, namely *Yogyakarta* by KLA Project and *Sesuatu di Jogja* by Adhitia Sofyan, using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. Based on these previous studies, it can be concluded that while Barthes' semiotics has been utilized to analyze various themes such as love, motivation, loneliness, and self-improvement across different songs, there has been no research specifically focusing on the representation of love in the song *Kalam Eineh* by Sherine Abdel Wahab using Barthes' semiotic approach.

Previous research related to Roland Barthes' semiotic theory has provided valuable insights into understanding literary texts and media, including song lyrics. Many studies have employed Barthes' approach to analyze the meanings embedded in various forms of artistic expression. This reveals how linguistic and cultural elements interact to shape our understanding of a work. For instance, research on pop song lyrics often explores how symbols and myths within the lyrics reflect social norms and cultural aspirations. However, there remains a gap for further exploration, particularly in the context of songs written in Arabic, such as *Kalam Eineh* by Sherine Abdel Wahab.

The aim of the present research is to analyze the representation of love in the lyrics of *Kalam Eineh* using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, as well as to identify the denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings contained within it. Although many studies have employed Barthes' theory, the gap in this research lies in its specific focus on songs in Arabic, which often receive less attention in semiotic studies. The novelty of the present research lies in the application of Barthes' theory within a different cultural context and how this can enrich our understanding of love in song lyrics. The present research is expected to provide a new perspective in the analysis of song lyrics and contribute to the literature on semiotic analysis in music, particularly in exploring universal themes like love that are integrated into local culture.

METHOD

The present research employs a qualitative descriptive approach with a focus on textual analysis to explore the denotative, connotative, and mythic meanings (Barthes, 1972, 1986; Santosa, 2017) of the lyrics of *Kalam Eineh* by Sherine Abdel Wahab. The data source consists of the song lyrics obtained from the YouTube platform. After transcribing the lyrics, the analysis will be conducted in three stages according to Roland Barthes' semiotic model. First, the denotative meaning will be analyzed by examining the literal interpretation of each line of lyrics without additional interpretation. Next, the connotative meaning will be explored by identifying the emotional values and associations inherent in the lyrics, as well as how the symbols in the lyrics express the depth of the love relationship. The final stage will focus on the myth meaning, where the broader cultural narratives represented by the lyrics will be identified, revealing how the connotative meanings contribute to social beliefs about love.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Roland Barthes describes the process of sign usage as having three stages, i.e. denotative meaning, connotative meaning, and myth. Denotative meaning pertains to the sign's literal interpretation, while connotative meaning includes the associations and subjective values attached to it. Myth, on the other hand, demonstrates how connotative meanings operate within cultural contexts and contribute to larger societal narratives. The following data illustrates the denotative meaning, connotative meaning, and myth found in the lyrics of Sherine Abdel Wahab's song *Kalam Eineh*.

Table 1. Roland Barthes Semiotics Analysis on the Lyrics of *Kalam Eineh* Song

Lyric	Denotative Meaning	Connotative Meaning	Myth
كَلَامَ عَيْنِيهِ فِي الْغَرَامِ أَخْلَى مِنَ الْأَغَانِي	The language of his eyes in love is sweeter than songs.	The language of the eyes symbolizes intimacy, suggesting that love expressed through the eyes is more sincere and touching than verbal expression.	The myth that true love can be understood without words, through looks and body language, which are considered more honest and

مِنْ كَلِمَتَيْنِ مِنْ سَلَامٍ بَقِيَ حَدِ تَانِي	With two words from a greeting, I become a different person.	A simple greeting or brief interaction can deeply transform one's heart and soul, symbolizing the power of love to change someone's emotional state.	profound than ordinary words. The myth that love has transformative power, a common belief in culture that love can significantly change one's life and identity.
لَمَّا يَمِيلُ قَلْبِي أَنَا وَيَاهُ يَمِيلُ	When my heart leans, it leans with him.	Love creates emotional harmony between two people, depicted through hearts moving in sync.	The myth of emotional unity in true love, where two individuals become one spiritually and emotionally, as if moving together.
تَفْدِيهِ عُيُونِي وَ عُمْرِي كُلُّهُ مُشَ قَلِيلُ	My eyes and my entire life are my sacrifice for him, and that's not little.	Love is expressed as a great sacrifice, willingly given, showing the intensity and dedication of love.	The myth of love as total sacrifice, where one's life and everything they have are given for the happiness of the beloved.
لَيْلِي	My night	The night symbolizes a time of intimacy and longing for love.	The myth of night as a time representing loneliness and longing for love, often associated with silence and emotional reflection.
يَا لَيْلٍ يَا لَيْلِي	Oh night, oh my night	An emotional expression that conveys intense love, filled with feelings that emerge during the night.	The myth of night as a symbol of romance and contemplation of love, a time when emotions of love are felt most deeply.
يَا لَيْلٍ يَا لَيْلِي مِنْ غَرَامِهِ لَيْلِي طَالُ	Oh night, my night is long because of his love.	Love makes the night feel longer, reflecting how strong the longing and feelings of love are.	The myth that love alters one's perception of time, particularly during moments of longing, where time seems to slow down due to the intensity of love.
حَبِيبُ سَيِّئِي	The love of my life.	The beloved is seen as a lifelong companion, indicating long-term commitment.	The myth of the lover as the ideal and only love in one's life, providing meaning and purpose.
بَيْنَهُ وَ بَيْنِي	Between him and me.	A love that is very close yet there is still distance, showing that something still needs	The myth of emotional distance in love, where despite physical and spiritual closeness,

		to be bridged in the relationship.	there are complex dynamics in a love relationship.
يَا قَبْلِي خُطْوَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ يَغْنِي مُشْ خَيَال	He's one step ahead of me, it's not a fantasy.	Love is so close yet feels like a dream that is almost unattainable, indicating high hopes for a real closeness.	The myth that love is a journey requiring small steps and patience, where hope and reality often feel very close yet distant.
يَا رُوحِي رُوحِي مَعَاهُ وَفِي جَمَالِهِ ضَيْعِي	My soul is with him, and I get lost in his beauty.	Love makes someone lose themselves, overwhelmed by admiration for their partner.	The myth of love as an ecstatic state, where one loses their identity in admiration and attachment to the beloved.
طَمَعٌ فِي سِحْرِ الْحَيَاةِ حُسْنُهُ مُشْ طَبِيعِي	Ambition for the magic of life, his beauty is unnatural.	Extreme admiration for an idealized partner, where the partner's beauty is portrayed as beyond human limits.	The myth of extraordinary beauty that seems impossible, creating an image of the partner as something supernatural or above ordinary humans.
دَهْ إِلَيَّ الْقَمَرُ مِنْ عَيْنَيْهِ وَاللَّهُ غَارٌ	The moon is jealous of his eyes.	His eyes are so beautiful that even celestial objects like the moon are envious, showing strong visual attraction.	The myth of eyes as the windows to the soul and a symbol of beauty that can impress or even make natural elements feel envious, adding a magical element to love.
دِي الْإِبْتِسَامَةِ شَمْسٍ طَالَعَةُ بِالنَّهَارِ	That smile is like the sun shining during the day.	The partner's smile is described as something that brings light and life, like the sun that shines and affects life on earth.	The myth of the smile as a symbol of happiness and hope, with a smile that can change the mood and have an extraordinary positive impact on the world.

The lyrics of *Kalam Eineh* by Sherine Abdel Wahab depict love as an emotional experience that is directly felt and expressed through simple interactions. On a denotative level, love is portrayed as something observable in the form of physical gestures such as glances and greetings. For example, in the phrase *كَلَامُ عَيْنَيْهِ فِي الْغَرَامِ أَحْلَى مِنْ الْأَغَانِي* (The language of his eyes in love is more beautiful than songs), love is connected to the eyes, which creates an intimate feeling that doesn't require words. Love does not always need verbal expression; in fact, a gaze can convey more than mere words (Burgoon et al., 2011). This depiction suggests that love possesses a power that transcends language. Moreover, love can significantly change a person simply

through a small interaction (Hassenzahl et al., 2012). The expression *مِنْ كَلِمَتَيْنِ مِنْ سَلَامٍ* (With two words from a greeting, I turned into a different person) shows how love can transform someone's emotional state with just a word or a gesture. On this level, love is understood as something tangible and directly experienced through everyday interactions. The experience of love becomes part of daily activities, making it seem realistic yet emotionally impactful.

On a connotative level, the lyrics of *Kalam Eineh* suggest a deeper meaning of love, where love is viewed as a form of sacrifice and emotional harmony between two individuals. One of the clearest examples of this connotative meaning is the phrase *تَفْديهِ عِيُونِي وَ عُمْرِي كُلُّهُ مِش قَلِيل* (My eyes and my whole life are my sacrifice for him, it is not a small thing), which portrays love as an act of deep dedication. Here, love is understood as something that requires great sacrifice, both emotionally and physically. This sacrifice is not seen as a burden but as a sign of genuine affection, where the subject is willing to give everything for the happiness of the loved one. Beyond sacrifice, love in this song is also depicted as perfect harmony, where two hearts lean on each other (Lehman, 2018). For instance, the phrase *لَمَّا يَمِيلُ قَلْبِي أَنَا وَيَاه يَمِيلُ* (When my heart leans, it leans with him) illustrates how love unites two individuals in emotional alignment. This harmony suggests that love is not just about individual feelings, but about how two people become one emotionally, with hearts and souls seemingly moving in sync. Thus, love not only touches the individual but also unites two people in harmony (Dike, 2023).

On the mythological level, love in the song *Kalam Eineh* is portrayed as a magical force that transcends human boundaries, often associated with elements of nature. The phrase *ذَه إِلَيَّ الْقَمَرُ مِنْ عَيْنِيهِ وَاللَّهُ غَار* (The moon is jealous of his eyes) suggests that a person's beauty can make natural phenomena, like the moon, feel envy. In this sense, love is treated as something supernatural, affecting not only humans but also the universe. This reinforces the myth that love has extraordinary power, capable of overcoming ordinary limitations and making the impossible possible. Furthermore, the phrase *دِي الْإِبْتِسَامَةِ شَمْسُ طَالَعَةِ بِالنَّهَار* (That smile is like the sun shining in the daytime) presents love as something that brings life and brightness, like the sun that illuminates the earth. This metaphor depicts how love can transform the world around a person, offering hope and happiness beyond anything else. The myth of love as a force of nature emphasizes the ideology that love is extraordinary, almost magical, and provides deep meaning in one's life. Love is no longer just about personal relationships, but becomes part of a larger, universal power (Kahane, 2010).

The song *Kalam Eineh* also reflects common views of love within Arab culture, where love is often regarded as something sacred, full of sacrifice, and closely tied to elements of nature. In Arab culture, love tends to be depicted as a force that brings happiness but also great challenges, as seen in the continuous portrayal of sacrifice in the lyrics. Sacrifice is not merely seen as a price to be paid, but as the ultimate expression of affection (Shohet, 2021). Moreover, the use of natural elements such as the moon, night, and sun in the song illustrates how love is idealized in Arab culture

(Aloraini, 2023). These natural elements are frequently employed in classical Arabic poetry to symbolize beauty, eternity, and the strength of love. The lyrics of *Kalam Eineh* continue this tradition by linking love with nature, as if love is something beyond human control, yet also a source of strength and hope. Thus, this song not only reflects a personal view of love but also intertwines with a broader cultural tradition.

The depiction of love found in the lyrics of *Kalam Eineh* can be associated with Robert Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love. Sternberg (1986) argues that healthy love consists of three fundamental elements i.e. intimacy, passion, and commitment. In the lyrics that state, *تَفْدِيهِ عَيْنُونِي وَ عُمْرِي كُلُّهُ* (My eyes and my whole life are my sacrifice for him), it is evident that the expressed sacrifice signifies a strong commitment between partners. This suggests that love is not just about feelings, but also about the actions and sacrifices made for the beloved. This sacrifice is at the core of a lasting and healthy relationship, as previous research has shown that individuals who are willing to sacrifice for their partners tend to have more stable relationships. Therefore, the lyrics of this song not only reflect a profound experience of love but also align with research emphasizing the importance of sacrifice as a key indicator of true love and commitment in relationships. This analysis highlights that sacrifice in love serves as a foundation for greater intimacy and connection between two individuals.

The depiction of love in the lyrics of *Kalam Eineh* can also be linked to previous research on love and commitment. In the line *تَفْدِيهِ عَيْنُونِي وَ عُمْرِي كُلُّهُ* (My eyes and my whole life are my sacrifice for him), it is clear that this sacrifice reflects a strong commitment. Research by Zoppolat et al. (2020) shows that sacrifice is one of the key indicators of commitment in romantic relationships. They found that individuals who are willing to sacrifice for their partners tend to have more stable and satisfying relationships. Another study by Kayabol et al. (2020) supports these findings by demonstrating that sacrifice in romantic relationships often contributes to greater intimacy and relationship satisfaction. Thus, the lyrics of this song reflect principles identified in the existing literature, indicating that sacrifice is not only an action but also a foundation for deep love and healthy relationships.

CONCLUSION

The present research concludes that the lyrics of the song *Kalam Eineh* by Sherine Abdel Wahab reflect a deep and complex experience of love through Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. By distinguishing between denotative, connotative, and mythic meanings, the analysis shows that love is expressed not only as an emotional relationship but also as a force that connects individuals. At the denotative level, the lyrics depict love through the symbolism of eyes and gestures that create intimacy without the need for words. At the connotative level, the lyrics emphasize sacrifice and emotional harmony between two individuals, where each is willing to give everything for the happiness of their partner. This creates an image of love that is mutually supportive and sharing. In the aspect of myth, love is understood as a magical force capable of transcending human limitations, even influencing elements of nature, such as the moon that feels jealous. Through these layers of meaning, the

lyrics of *Kalam Eineh* not only highlight personal experiences but also reflect Arab cultural values.

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