

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter aims to explain the theory which would be applied to analyze female readers' interest of homosexual theme in Dong Bang Shin Ki fan fiction. The focus of the study is to find out the meaning of YunJae fan fiction for female fans and the reasons of these fans to like YunJae fan fiction. Thus, the writer decided that Henry Jenkins' theory about slash fiction in his book *Textual Poachers* would be appropriate to support the analysis.

#### 2.1 General Overview

##### 2.1.1 Slash and Yaoi as fan fiction Genres

In most world regions, more women than men write about stories about male-male relationship (McHarry). This is especially found in fans produced literature. There are two major genres in this genre, they are called slash and yaoi.

Slash began in America from a story of Spock and Kirk from *Star Trek* in the early 1970s. Slash is one of the most pervasive and distinctive genres of fan writing. Most fans would agree that slash describes a romantic and sexual relationship between same-sex characters drawn from film, television, comic books, or popular fiction (Green and Jenkins). As far as any researcher has been able to tell, slash really began with the broadcast of *Star Trek* (created by Gene Roddenberry, 1966-1969). *Spockanalia*, the first *Trek* zine, was published just before the beginning of the second season, and *Grup*, the first zine with adult content, was published in 1972. *Grup* featured only heterosexual fanfic, yet it still

prompted discussion amongst fans. At one point, *Grup*'s publishers were called "godless pornographers," one of the first times the label of pornography was applied to sexual fanfic. In 1974, the third issue of *Grup* featured the story "A Fragment Out of Time" by Diane Marchant, the first ever published slash fanfic. As a side note, *Trek* fanfic is where slash gets its name: opening summaries identified stories as Kirk/Spock rather than Kirk & Spock in order to warn fans who didn't want to read of the characters in a homosexual context. *A Fragment Out of Time* was written in an oblique style, referring to Kirk and Spock only as *he* and *him*. Readers would have to be aware of the *Trek* universe to understand that the protagonists were supposed to be Kirk and Spock (qtd. in Shaxophile 2009).



**Figure 2.1 Captain Kirk and Spock from Star Trek**

On the other hand, yaoi came to life in Japan as a new genre of amateur manga which was coined in the late 1980s. Yaoi is an acronym for the phrase, *Yama nashi, ochi nashi, imi nashi* (No Climax, No Resolution, No Meaning). Yaoi is also a genre of romantic fiction that aims to entertain primarily female readers (Thorn 171). Then yaoi became a part of *dōjinshi* market, *dōjinshi* is

the [Japanese](#) term for [self-published](#) works, usually magazines, [manga](#) or novels. The phrase *Yama nashi, ochi nashi*, imi nashi also refers to how yaoi focuses on the yummy parts (oral sex and anal penetration guaranteed) rather than a traditional plot structure (qtd. in Falkenberg 2009).

In slash gay males are often referred to in English as *tops* and *bottoms*, whereas in yaoi both of those male characters are called *seme* and *uke*, both protagonists having equal powers in the game, although different. The *seme* and *uke* are often drawn in the *bishōnen* style, *bishōnen* meaning beautiful boy, where the characters are blending both masculine and feminine qualities. The *seme* is depicted as the stereotypical male of anime and manga culture; restrained and physically powerful with a strong chin, short hair and small eyes. He usually pursues the *uke*, who has softer, androgynous features with bigger eyes and a smaller build. Usually the *top* character is the aggressor in the relationship, but sometimes the *bottom* character is (qtd. in Falkenberg 2009).

### **2.1.2 Women and Slash/Yaoi fan fiction**

Many researchers agree that slash and yaoi are ways to express women's sexuality. Although the relationships depicted in the fan fiction are homosexual male relationships, it is generally created for and by heterosexual females. According to Suen Noh women like to read this kind of fictions because yaoi fan fictions give the female readers pleasure of voyeurism. Yaoi and slash fiction also give an androgynous feeling or in the Suen Noh research it is called subversion. The pleasure of subversion gratified by deconstructing the present of patriarchal

orders. Sween Noh also said, which is also stated by Jenkins, that fans of fan fictions see male-male relationship as their object to satisfy women's desire.

In the patriarchal society, women who become inferior side cannot be free to express their desire. According to Freud, women are more often affected by hysteria because they cannot freely express their desires and passions (Tyson 86). Whereas fan fictions which tell about love between male-male characters are a place where women can express their desirability. In fan fictions, women can write and read about everything that they cannot experience in their real life. For example, women will be judged that they are "naughty" if they talk about sexual activity in public. This thinking comes from traditional gender role which amend in the society. Society believe that woman will be a "good girl" if they accept their traditional gender role and obey their patriarchal society, if she does not do that then she will be a "bad girl" (Tyson 88). So that women need to find a safe way to keep their image as a "good girl" and gratify their desirability. Then women find that slash and yaoi fan fiction is one of the safe way to get pleasure of their desire in a relationship.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

In analyzing Yunjae fan fiction the writer applies the theory by Henry Jenkins. Henry Jenkins is one of the most productive and influential film and media scholars in the world. His books and articles have been major contributions to existing fields of inquiry such as film history (*What Made Pistachio Nuts?: Early Sound Comedy and the Vaudeville Aesthetic; Classical Hollywood*

*Comedy*), Political Communications (*Democracy and New Media*) and Children's Studies (*The Children's Culture Reader*); his works have helped to establish new fields such as media ethnography (*Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*; *Science Fiction Audiences: Dr. Who, Star Trek and their Followers*). Jenkins' book "Textual Poachers" which published in 1992 gives a big contribution in the cultural academic knowledge (Web, *Henry Jenkins – Biography*).

Four elements of Henry Jenkins' theory of female fan fiction readers' reason of reading slash fiction which will be applied in female fan fiction readers to know their reasons why they like reading yaoi fan fiction are:

### **2.2.1 Slash as a Female Pornography**

In slash story female readers can read story about their idol character. The story of slash fiction usually remains as even more exclusive feminine genre (Jenkins 19). Slash story is giving a brief description on the emotional quality of the sex than on physical sensation. As an example like a piece of story from a fan fiction with title *Irresistible Temptation*, unlike Jaejoong that wanted to avoid this situation, Yunho tried his best to stop him by embracing him tightly from behind. As Yunho embraced Jaejoong and snuggle on his neck so he will feel ticklish and disturbed with the feeling, Yunho used that chance to close and lock the door securely. From the piece of the story to prove that slash does not prioritize how sex is shown but rather to how sex was built.

Almost all slash stories tell about a strong love story between male and male relationship. The story's opening frequently describes how the relationship

is created from the pair's basic relationship in the previous original story (Jenkins 212). From the very beginning how the story is built up to the end of the story which usually ends with a happy life relationship between two male characters and how the story give emotional sensation rather than physical satisfaction to the readers make slash is called as female pornography.

### **2.2.2 Slash as Androgynous Romance**

Androgynous is a strong figure that mentally joins the female and male characteristics together as one (American Heritage). Androgyny does not only refer to the physical senses, it also refers to the cultural and social aspects of daily life. The male characters that contain in a slash story are always told to have masculine and feminine side in their attitude. These androgyny characters make the reader of slash or yaoi story have a good imagination of love story between two men without any awkward feeling.

This androgyny characters also make the relationship of both characters look equal. Mutuality and equality cannot be found in a relationship between heterosexual sex in patriarchal society. The characters which are physically and mentally described as person who has traditionally feminine and masculine side make the readers can express freely their utopian visions of romantic bliss (Jenkins 200). Society refers to traditional heterosexual relationship with its focus on female nurturing and male independent (Jenkins 202), yet in yaoi fan fiction both of the characters mix and match traditionally masculine and feminine traits.

Yunho and Jaejoong who have androgynous characters show that there is an equality in a relationship like what female readers want.

### **2.2.3 Slash and Fantasy Identification**

Slash or yaoi also has a criteria as a fantasy identification for the reader. In slash or yaoi story, the reader can read a story about male-male love relationship which is usually written in various point of views, for example from Yunho's point of view, Jaejoong's point of view, or the author's point of view. This kind of writing makes the readers feel tempted because of shifting point of view will lead the reader to a story where they can feel two poles of being and having. This fantasy has it all and all at once, the reader can be Yunho or Jaejoong and also have them as sexual object (Jenkins 203). In the slash or yaoi story, the writer of the story depict Yunho and Jaejoong as lovers while at the same time asserting that the protagonist are not gay and have no history of previous homoerotic experiences (Jenkins 204).

Yaoi fanfiction which has shifting point of view will make the readers of yaoi fanfiction feel that they can be Yunho or Jaejoong and also can feel that they have Yunho or Jaejoong as their lover. The possessiveness towards the idol is a reflection of "having" fantasy which is owned by fans. It can be seen from how the readers are enjoying while they read the story from author's point of view. The descriptions that writers write about how those characters look like and what those characters do make the readers feel as if they look those characters do that in front of them. The shifting point of view in the story can make the imagination of the

reader becomes stronger because the “I” character in the story can turn up the reader’s fantasy and it makes the reader feels as if she is a character of the story.

#### **2.2.4 Slash and Homosocial Desire**

In slash stories relationship between male and male can be seen very clearly, it does not like what we usually see in the relations between men in society. This is due to patriarchal term which states that men should look firm and it will be awkward if a man has too intimate relationship with another man. Some women find out that man also has a growing desire toward their same sex friend, relative, coworkers, etc. After that, women who write slash fiction try to develop irregularities in the relationship between these men into a story and make it into a close relationship and be accepted by female readers.

In patriarchal society, for a man to be a man’s man is separated only by invisible, carefully blurred, always-already-crossed line from being interested in men (Jenkins 208). It means that if men do something like what women do to her woman friend like hugging or holding hand in the public place, they will be seen as a stranger.

### **2.3 Review of Related Studies**

The writer faces difficulties in finding study on fan fiction especially yaoi fan fiction in Indonesia, then the writer decided to use study conducted in other country and the study on fan fiction . The one which can be found is a research from Sandra Youssef from Mount Holyoke College, South



Hadley, Massachusetts, entitled *Girls who like Boys who like Boys – Ethnography of Online Slash/Yaoi Fans* (2004). Youssef's research is similar with this research in several ways. Firstly, both researches use the same object, that is fan fiction. Secondly, both researches also use yaoi genre as the main focus of the analysis of the researches.

Aside from the similarities, there are also some distinctions which differentiate Youssef's research with this research. First, Youssef uses Harry Potter as her example object and this research use Yunho and Jaejoong or YunJae from DBSK as example object. Harry Potter is a fictional character whereas Yunho and Jaejoong are real people. The theories used are also different. Youssef tries to find out about the influence of fanfiction to psychology and reader's daily life whereas this research tries to find the reason why female fanfiction readers like to read yaoi fanfiction.

Another research about fanfiction also has been done by Suen Noh (1998). Suen Noh tries to find the reason of female readers like reading yaoi comics. In her research, she used yaoi comics and yaoi comic readers as her objects of the study. She also used an ethnographic interviewing as the main method of analysis. In the end of her research, Suen Noh found out that female readers like reading yaoi comics because they take special pleasures when they read yaoi comic. Their pleasures were classified as pleasure of "voyeurism" and "subversion." The pleasure of "voyeurism" acquired by watching in the romantic and sexual relationship of gay heroes could similarly appear in other media.

However, the pleasure of “subversion,” gratified by deconstructing the present patriarchal orders, is a peculiar trait of yaoi.