

Insidious: Astral Projection as Death and Dying Concept

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Abstract— *This study aims to analyze astral projection as a concept of Death and Dying by using a postmodern fiction discourse analysis approach in Insidious movie script. This study finds that astral projection is a capability possessed by a person to leave his physical body and explore an astral world or the spirit world. Astral projection is a death and dying concept that is presented as one of the postmodern fictional strategies known as the superimposition strategy. This strategy illustrates that there are two worlds that accumulate and co-exist with each other. Its presence is a way of deconstructing the idea of something that is considered uncanny and unusual as well as a counterpoint of totality that puts the ontological side of the existence of something. It is a sister-genre of postmodern fiction. Science fiction explores ontological issues in order to build a good story while postmodern fiction simply presents the problem without having to build a story. Furthermore, both genres can adopt each other's strategies. Meanwhile, postmodern fictional relations and fantasy fiction are the same, borrowing strategies for exploring ontological issues.*

Keywords— *insidious, astral projection, death and dying, discourse analysis, postmodern fiction.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The early years of the development of literary theory as a discipline imply that literature is written merely as a channel for the message of creators, or in this case authors. The rate of development of literary concepts in the context of subsequent further expanding fields of discussion of such disciplines is no longer limited to the author's perceptions alone, but simultaneously conveys a message construction through its features. Death and Dying - borrowing the term Death and Dying in their native language - is one of the symbols presented in a literary work by authors functioning as a medium for conveying messages as well as constructing messages to readers (Bennett, 1974).

This development is identified as a period that is incorporated into the era of postmodernism; the notion that imaged the content of a work that presents two

worlds at once, namely the real world and the unseen world. McHale (1987) calls the unseen world a world next door, a world or space untouched, invisible, and unreal. Todorov (on Hat Pujiati, 2009: 2) categorizes supernatural things including magic and marvel as fantasy. However, the fantasy, he argues, is a genre that is positioned between the uncanny and the marvelous genre. The uncanny genre is a genre that contains supernatural events, a state of deception and hallucinations, even death and dying, which are explained from the point of view of natural law. Unlike the marvelous genre that contains supernatural events that are presented and accepted as if it is a norm (McHale, 1987: 74).

As far as the researchers are concerned, the two genres above are internalized into the material object to be analyzed. The next work that is used as an object in this paper is the script of the movie *Insidious* (2010), a work that carries the horror fantasy genre in it. The horror genre containing the astral element, or in other languages referred to as the further, in this film recognizes the fact that the universe contributes to color in the pluralistic portrayal of the universe. The astral projection possessed by the character of Josh and his son, Dalton, is presented in the form of a binary opposition between rational and irrationality, as well as the concept of Death and Dying; Two concepts that the author tried to present the author in order to convey and construct a message to the reader about the event of death and dying. The problem that will be revealed in this paper is "how does the author reveal the concept of death and dying in an *Insidious* movie script?".

II. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Astral projection as a Death and Dying concept contained in the *Insidious* script is evident in the dialogue between the forces. Two figures in the script depicted having astral projection capabilities are Josh and Dalton. See the quotation below.

Elise: "Have you ever heard of astral projection?" Renai: "Out of body experiences?" (Elise nods)

Elise: "I call them travellers. These are people with the ability to leave their physical body and travel to different places in an astral form. To some degree, we all have the ability to do it...but most of us subconsciously suppress it or don't how to access it." (Page 69, Scene 94, INT. Living Room, New House-Day) (Whannell, 2010).

Astral projection is a capability that a person has to leave his physical body and explore an astral world or the spirit world. Elise's character is told to explain to Reina-Josh's wife that Dalton's incident was one of the wrong forms of astral projection. The projection that caused Dalton's astral body got lost in the spirit world. In a logical perspective, Dalton is described as having a coma, a condition when one is between life and death.

(In the darkness, the towers metal skin is barely visible. Directly below the lamp is the very definition of innocence a sleeping child. His mouth is slack, eyelids twitching to dreams unseen. The truly deep sleep that an adult can only wish for) (Page 2, Scene 1, INT. Darkened Bedroom – Night) (Whannell, 2010).

Dalton is mentioned as a sleeping figure. He sleeps not in a conventional concept, but dying. Dalton's spirit experiences separation with the physical for some unpredictable time. The state of sleep can thus be said to refer to the occurrence that Benstock (1969) referred to as moribund. Moribund is a condition that places a person in two conflicting situations; life and death. Furthermore, through insidious, the author also displays the further or "another world" which is the spirit world in which Dalton's astral body gets lost. The following quotation explicitly emphasizes the argument above.

(Elise gazes up at the ceiling, as if looking into another world)

Elise: "In the further."

Renai: "What do you mean?"

Elise: "The further is that place beyond our perception, beyond our understanding of the physical world that we can see and touch. It is a place without clocks or measurements, without past or future...an infinite realm that holds all of our dreams...and all of our nightmares."

(She turns to look at them)

Elise: "That is where Dalton is." (Page 71, Scene 94, INT. Living Room, New House-Day) (Whannell, 2010).

The quotation above indicates that there is a another world that Elise's character is called the further. The further can be said to be a place beyond the human perception of the physical world that can be perceived, through sight or touch. The another world can refer to the understanding of a place without the dimension of time and space, without the past or the future; A situation that

grasps all dreams and even nightmares. Michael Foucault (in McHale 1987: 44) calls the "another world" the term heterotopia, a kind of space where a number of fragments indicate a possibility of a simultaneous build up of two worlds.

The presence of another world (heterotopia) indicates a link between the real world and the unseen world. The real world represents all life forms, while the unseen world becomes a representation of all sides of death (Whannell, 2010). It also shows the epic sustainability through the most phenomenal, magical, and supernatural fantasies. Epic continuity is one type of postmodern characteristic. The epic is illustrated by heterotopia through the existence of another world. It is called "another world" because it is marginalized by the modern. Another world is presented in a postmodern work to deconstruct the real world through values and ideology (Adi, 2012).

In this space is a form of astral Dalton figure. Dalton's alienation is described as a deceased form (Benstock, 1969), a phase of death that occurs when the soul parted with the body. This fact had such a fatal impact on Dalton as the real death awaited him. Dickinsons (in Krueger, 2004) has indeed mentioned that death is the door to a happy, lasting life in the view of Christians, but we are not in a conversation about how lucky a person's death for himself.

The further and astral projection are two strange and unreasonable things in the eyes of modern society. These two things are presented as one of the postmodern fictional strategies known as superimposition. This strategy illustrates that there are two worlds that accumulate and co-exist with each other. Its presence is a way of deconstructing thoughts about something that is considered strange and unusual. It also indicates that unconsciously on the real-life side there are other dimensional spaces which have been marginal and unrecognized. If something strange and unusual is present then there will be interruptions of reality that initially is not problematic to be problematic. Reality in the individual zone as its world will become unproblematic as it becomes a routine reality. In addition, the interruption of reality is also seen as a proof of postmodern thought that rejects absolutes while celebrating relativity. Absolutes lead to a single centeredness or logo-centrism.

The further and the astral projection are presented as fantasy as well as the counterpoint of totality that puts the ontological side of the existence of something. It is said by McHale that it is a sister-genre of postmodern fiction. Science fiction explores ontological issues in order to build a good story, while postmodern fiction simply presents the problem without having to build a story. Furthermore, both genres can adopt each other's strategies. Meanwhile, postmodern fictional relations and

fantasy fiction are the same, borrowing strategies for exploring ontological issues. McHale (1987: 62-83) states that in its development, postmodern found its new form, the postmodernist fantastic; The use of fantastical elements in supernatural postmodern fiction in banal and its exploration of ontological problems.

The quotation above also illustrates the conversation between Elise and Renai which is a form of postmodernist treatment of fantasy which also uses hesitation, banality, and resistance strategies. Doubt in the strategy of treating the fantasy genre in postmodernist work is by presenting the real world and the another world (McHale, 1987: 74-5).

Zone doubts were formed with the game structure ontological and or epistemological structure on the fantasy. Through this game of hesitation metaphors it is often stalled by making hesitation-revisited between the literal and metaphorical meanings for the duality of ontological duality. A banality (fairness) is a strategy of postmodernist text treatment of fantasy by placing the fantastic side into extreme logic in the world of text (McHale, 1987: 76-7).

Josh: "This is a fantasy, and you need a therapist, not a member of the clergy." (Page 53, Scene 81, INT. Living room, New house-night) (Whannell, 2010).

The quotation above explicitly describes Josh's resistance to the problem of ontological and epistemological structures. Resistance became the media of postmodernist writing to emphasize the inherent chronology of fantasy (McHale, 1987: 77-9). In the script of this film, there is a character Alanso (a student) who tried to deconstruct Josh's thinking as a modern society profession as a lecturer:

Alanso: "Things are simple. You just can't see it. Put your faith in Him." (He takes a gold cross hanging on a necklace out of his shirt, kissing it and holding it up.) (Page 37, Scene 54, INT. Gymnasium, Forrester High School-Day) (Whannell, 2010).

Alanso resisted Josh's statement of the normal to the paranormal with the banal treatment of the paranormal, so that the postmodernist fictional treatment of the fantasy seemed passive and embodied the fantasy. The normal intermediate resistance to the paranormal continues but is ignored by the character or by the reader. In postmodernist work, fantasy remains a zone of doubt but no longer between the marvelous and the uncanny as Todorov discloses, but according to McHale "between this world and the world next door" (McHale 1987: 75). The fantasy that occurs in *Insidious* exploits the paranormal element as the banality of the world. Doubts between the real world and another world have been abandoned.

The quotation also describes Alanso's explaining that not everything can be answered by science. There is a higher power work. He believes that many things are not only verified through laboratory testing using logical scientific explanations because not everything can be explained from the viewpoint of the intended object's visibility. According to him, supreme power is something that refers to the creator or God. The Creator or God refers to the phrase put your faith in Him which means "trust in Him". This can be proved through the symbol of a gold cross which means "golden cross" which refers to spiritualism. The era of modernity sweeps so many forms of spiritualism, because people of the modernity group believe that they will only be able to accept and cultivate all logical and measurable entities. Spiritualism is confined to religious activities, and indoctrinated behind the walls of places of worship. This fact indicates that the modernists are unconsciously experiencing spiritual death or living-dead because of the diminished religious values within them. Josh's understanding of something that he and modern humans have continuously been deconstructed through Dr. Sercarz, a doctor who treats Dalton who is in a coma, is because his astral body is lost in the spirit zone (the further).

Dr. Sercarz: "I wouldn't say we've exhausted every single angle... but we're close. The underlying cause is still known. The good news is that he's breathing without the use of a mechanical apparatus, and there are no lesions or hemorrhages in any of the CT scans".

(Josh and Renai look in at their boy)

Josh: "So...there's no brain damage or...?"

Dr. Sercarz: "None that we've detected. Technically, he's in coma. He doesn't respond to stimuli, he has no sleep-wake cycle, but there's no brain trauma or infection. His scans are normal. To be honest, I've never seen anything like it."

Josh: "That fall he took...I mean, it looked like he hit his head pretty hard."

Dr. Sercarz: "We definitely exhausted that possibility, but it was always doubtful. The cut was superficial; there wasn't even a skull fracture."

Josh: "So what do we do now? Does he stay here?"

Dr. Sercarz: "We'll conduct some further testing, but beyond that...I really don't know." (Page 24, Scene 34, INT. Hospital Room, ICU Unit-Day) (Whannell, 2010).

Dr. Sercarz's explanation of the results of laboratory tests conducted on Dalton's condition reinforces the statement of the greatest failure of modernists for having glorified reason above all else.

The quotation simultaneously undermines the grand design that has been their-modernist-lasting. It is as if life and life can walk on the will of human reason. Worse, they deny the existence of the creator and other entities simply because they are invisibly invisible and cannot be proven to exist through laboratory tests along with related scientific explanations. Insidious stirs discourse within it by using heteroglossia in discourse to present the worlds in discourse, present between order and disorder, between the world of adults and children. Heteroglossia is the term Bakhtin for thousands of discursive strata in all national languages and the ways these strata determine the operation of meaning in each phrase (Makaryk 1993: 551).

III. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Dickinson death is the door to a happy, eternal life in the view of Christians. There are stages of life symbolized as follows: children strove (early life), gazing grain (physical maturity), and setting sun (aging). Meanwhile, death symbolized into two parts, namely: Carriage (train coins or coffins), and swelling ground (grave).

This contrasts with Benstock who classified the death phases into three parts in a critical essay "The Dead". The first is called deceased, a phase of death that occurs when the separation of the spirit with the body, which in general is close to anyone and all humans will surely experience it. Secondly is moribund. Moribund is a condition that describes a person who is in a situation between life and death, physically, still alive but on the brink of death. The condition refers more to the elderly (elderly). The third is Living-dead, or Benstock called it as spiritual death, is a condition of someone who is still healthy and fit but has a frozen heart (dead) and paralyzed. The frost and liver paralysis are due to the diminishing of religious values within him

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the explanations that have been expressed, it can be concluded that astral projection is a concept of death and dying presented as one of the postmodern fiction strategies known as superimposition strategy. This strategy illustrates that there are two worlds that accumulate and co-exist with each other. Its presence is a way of deconstructing the idea of something that is considered uncanny and unusual as well as a counterpoint of totality that puts the ontological side of the existence of something. It is said by McHale (1987) that it is a sister-genre of postmodern fiction. Science fiction explores ontological issues in order to build a good story while postmodern fiction simply presents the problem without having to build a story. Furthermore, both genres can adopt each other's strategies. Meanwhile, postmodern

fictional relations and fantasy fiction are the same, borrowing strategies for exploring ontological issues.

This concept gives us an insight that one can have the ability to project his astral body to explore beyond the universe or the heterotrophic world (heterotopia) that has been considered uncanny, even ignored. This astral projection is not a real death, because when astral projection occurs, the astral body or the spirit of a person will come out and separate from the physical body, but the spirit can return to the body. However, fatal when the spirit is lost in the astral world (the spirit world), a person will experience a real death.

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