IJHS, e-ISSN 2597-4718, p-ISSN 2597-470X, Vol. 3, No. 2, March 2020, pp. 211-227

International Journal of Humanity Studies
http://e-journal.usd.ac.id/index.php/IJHS
Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

APOCALYPTIC NARRATIVE SCHEMAS IN DYSTOPIAN FILMS

Thafhan Muwaffaq, Nurul Komar, and Rio Armandaru
Universitas Al Azhar Indonesia[1,2], Universitas Indonesia[3]
thafhan.muwaffaq@uai.ac.id, nurulkomar@hotmail.co.id, and
rio.armandaru@gmail.com
DOI: https://doi.org/10.24071/ijhs.2020.030207
received 14 November 2019; accepted 15 March 2020

Abstract
This research investigates the way dystopia as film genre is attributed with catastrophe or, what will be regarded here as apocalyptic events. We question the way in which the genre represents state of affairs of humanity in the face of a catastrophe, in catastrophe, and after catastrophe. A narrative analysis is conducted using cognitive semiotics approach, by identifying narrated events, and actions of the protagonist as constituting parts of event. We argue that narrative in dystopian films represent three types of apocalyptic schema (i.e. pre-apocalyptic, apocalyptic, and post-apocalyptic). Each schema seems to have distinct model of storyline, regardless of the predefined genre of the film (e.g. adventure, sci-fi, fantasy, etc.). Despite the distinct schemas, the analyzed films illustrate typical tone of hopefulness wherein humanity prevails over catastrophe and dystopian state of affairs. Another typical representation in dystopian films analyzed here is portrayal of collective fear among the protagonist. Our study leads to a point that humanity is portrayed as being adaptive to catastrophic situations, therefore it is able somehow to survive. Here we offer narrative standard in dystopia genre using the light of cognitive semiotics perspective, which differs to a great degree with theories offered by classical literary studies.

Keywords: *films, genre, dystopia, cognitive semiotics, apocalyptic events schema,*

Introduction

Extensive etymological explanation regarding the concept of utopia by Fatima Vieira includes the discussion about dystopia (Vieira, 2010). The discussion addresses notions of utopia and dystopia as if entangled into a polarizing dichotomy. Among many things, an important insight one can draw is that dystopia can be understood as literary genre referring to "imaginary places that were worse than real places, but also works describing places such as these." (Vieira, 2010). We favor the relativity the word *worse* implies, though at the same time it leaves uncovered gap.

Dystopia is considered different from the apocalyptic narrative, because the primary target of its narrative is to represent impossibility of ideal society that motivates one to construct state of affairs as such. In this sense, dystopian narrative should not situate the end of the world or the humanity. Instead, it should call forth optimism towards humanity and society as a persisting idea. Indeed, it is important to distinguish apocalyptic narrative from dystopia. But, supposed an apocalypse in whatever sense is considered a challenge posed to humanity, where the possible outcomesare whether humanity persists or perishes, would then apocalypse have something to do with dystopia? In our view, apocalypse seems tohold something to do with dystopia at certain degree.

Accounts regarding dystopia often talk about utopia as if they both are inseparable (Claeys, 2013; Deese, 2011; Greene, 2011; Klonowska, 2018).While our interest resides with dystopia as a narrative genre, wepinpoint our interest to the elaborative account from Claeys that the notion of dystopia has other properties than merely a literary genre. It is but encompassing as well ideology and communal movement, as specifically a portrait of societyliving in fear and under threatening situations. Dystopia in some respects may be analogous to what religious narrative propagates as hell. At this point, one can notice how dystopia as an account of place is not entirely the same as doomsday or Armageddon.

The latter may justify what Vieira's view. However, the religious narrative regarding doomsday and hell is linear. That is to say, supposed the former means the end for every living individual, of who will be anyway continue living in afterlife be it in hell or heaven. Vieira does not seem to take that into account; therefore we are siding on Claeys' view. It should be noted as well that the polarization of dystopia-utopia is likely to work in a spectrum, instead of black and white palette. That is to say, the polarization is relative to whose perspective is anchored in viewing a given state of affairs. In other words, one's dystopia might be utopia of the others and vice versa. Our view here echoes Claeys explanation about "'identity' definition of dystopia" (Claeys, 2013). Here, utopia and dystopia are related somehow in the way they contrast each other.

Claeys regards three variations of dystopia (e.g. despotism, totalitarianism, and Doomsday or Armageddon) as corresponding in the way they represent human volition has been undermined thus destabilized by intervening external force, however the form or the figure. He concludes that dystopia in metaphorical statement that it is a trip to hell with no return. Thus we add, and in hell we can imagine ourselves tormented and constantly pressured by horrifying and painful torture. However, it seems difficult to accept that dystopia is spatially limitless, considering its interrelation with utopia as a whole spectrum.

Dystopia as literature genre and its exemplifying works have been studied. For instance (Conkan, 2012) evaluates theoretical views regarding dystopia as a genre, and as a representation within stories under sci-fi and fantasy. Some typical words such as *pessimistic*, *apocalyptic*, *repression* are embedded issues within humanity

state of affairs. Further, fantasy and sci-fi might narrate dystopian story in disparate ways. The former seems to anchor on "metaphorical evil", whereas the latter metonymically put into play evil that can be present realistically in society.

Indeed, dystopia seems to manifest in pessimism, repression, and disaster. In a particularly meticulous study, senior high school students were asked to imagine what would happen to the world and how they would experience it in the future, then they were given a task to write their prediction (Nordensvard, 2014). The study found that majority of the students wrote pessimistic prediction, in which there are occurrences and states of affairs such as what has been pointed as situated in dystopian world. These occurrences deviate what is quo in the world at present into a world wherein there is dehumanization, social inequalities, and conflicts that are pertained by competition over depleted resources. Another point of interest is that dystopian narrative seems to be associated with hopefulness, despite it is in itself a pessimistic projection of future.

Typical representation, popular themes, and tropes in dystopian contemporary films have been studied (Klonowska, 2018). The study argues two specific films considered as structured by dystopian narrative (i.e. *The Hunger Games* and *Elysium*. It is argued that there is a shift within dystopian narrative from focusing on political state of affairs to character-driven focus narrative. Klonowska seems to have concern with the essence, the value, the conception of dystopia (and utopia). Practically, we do not share such concern. Any given shifts in the way certain narrative genre serves the narration may indicate dynamicity of genre, which has to do with produced texts and situations.

Problematizing dystopia as genre

The central issue of our paper is elaborating the standard of dystopian narrative, and the event variables that comprise the narrative (Friend, 2012). Although the existing literature so far has imported valuable insights regarding dystopia as a genre and a notion in particular, it is seemingly short in laying down the configuration of the narrative (Vieira, 2010; Claeys, 2013; Conkan, 2012; Deese, 2011; Nordensvard, 2014; Klonowska, 2018). Our study is interested in looking closely at the way film narrative represents dystopian state of affairs. Indeed, not all of the films studied here is under dystopia genre. However, we assume they do not have necessarily be so. Dystopia has to do with what we regard here as catastrophe or apocalyptic event, that refers an occurence which pertains great deal of suffer to humanity. By no means we are implying dystopia is a form of apocalyptic narrative, or the catastrophe an apocalypse that ends humanity. Rather, in this paper we argue event as such is property of dystopian narrative as a form of precedent, immediate or ongoing present, and potential precedent. This underlying assumption guides our view that film narratives studied are in possession of such features as narrative schema, however they are formally represented in narration. That being said, genres that are typically considered under dystopia category (e.g. sci-fi and fantasy) can nevertheless narrate conception of apocalyptic event or

catastrophe in relation to representation of dystopia. The representation appears as in variations which Claeys calls forth (i.e. despotism, totalitarianism, and apocalypse).

Dynamic interconnectivity between genre, text, and situations imply the involvement of social context so to bring those three constraints, modifications, responses, and propagations. Ostergaard and Bundgaard (2015) provide detailed account of genre dynamics as mentioned, as formulating model and parameter one should address in distinguishing certain text genre from others. It is tempting to use their theoretical model of The Double Feedback Loop and The Parameter Theory of Genres here, as we are attempting to study dystopia as particular genre. However, the limited resources and time pose challenges to carry. Additionally, the internal features of dystopia as narrative text are not yet clear. In other words, our objective is to necessarily delineate prototypical representation of dystopia in a given narrative text, prior to elaborating its dynamics and parameters.

A narrative text can appear as non-fiction or fiction. They are themselves certain genre which has its ontological status, thus indebted speech act principles (i.e. illocutionary act in specific) as Searle has put it eloquently (2006). In fiction, the only principle of illocutionary act that is complied by author is the sincerity rule. This implies authors are committed into believing what they are expressing as they write fiction. And, generally the assertion itself conceives a pretended speech act in the sense of not deceiving its receptor but make-believe to the content of the assertions. It is this special status that allows reception of fictional narration excused from the text fidelity (Hendersen& Clark, 2007; Zwaan, 1994). That is to say, unlike fiction, the way we exploit our cognitive resources in grasping fictional text differs from nonfictional one, as we are more attentive to the superficial level (i.e. expression) of the former comparably to the latter. In contrast, our attention delves into seeking the situation level or the content of the latter.

Fiction is a genre which product can be a form of literary works, film, or anything of the sort. Cognitive ability of our species allows creative endowment in producing narrative text, be it fiction or nonfiction. This cognitive ability is a byproduct of long evolutionary process of humankind that at some point incites Cognitive Revolution (Harari, 2014). Fictional narrative serves fundamental principle that it transmits information within and across group in large numbers. Common myth is most likely fictional, story that tells about ghosts, spirits, and supranatural agents. The conceptions of those entities are made possible by exploitation of domains within our cognitive architecture prompted by imaginary process (Sørensen, 2005). These contents should as well be yielded by creative neural processing that involves semantic and episodic memories.

At the broadest sense, our species is predisposed to this cognitive ability of producing and receiving narrative, as the ablity itself is an evolutionary by-product. Thereby, it makes sense to think business with production of fictional narrative is essentially for the sake of preserving existence of our species. Dystopian fictional

narrative, and presumably nonfictional as well, then represents what the species reflects as ill-suited kind of living condition or "habitat" so to speak. This representation projects what the species wants to anticipate or avoid, therefore will not be materialized, as its upbringing would call forth great risk and reduction to survival.

There is something that Searle overlooks when he says fiction has no inherent properties, in terms of narrative structure and its comprising language. As a matter of fact, fiction as a genre is constituted by a set of standard (i.e. constituting properties of certain work), contra-standard (i.e. excluded properties that used in certain work), and variables (i.e. differentiating properties within certain class) (Friend, 2012). The shifts of narrator perspective are considered standard of fictional narrative, while continuous immediate consciousness contra-standard to non-fictional text, and variables can be exemplified as the extent of details of character description. It should be emphasized that her theoretical framework is not constrained only to fiction, as she illustrates the application of her proposition using music and any other form of arts (see Friend, 2012).

Adapting Friend's proposition then implies that fictional narrative has inherent structure, though may be varying. Given that dystopia is a genre under fiction, it should embody as well the narrative structure that standardizes fiction. However, one can assume that dystopia as a certain genre would have theme of its own which makes itself distinct and particular. If dystopian themes are manifested in terms of repressive society situated under totalitarian, despotism, and apocaliptic atmosphere, this study posits a question such as how the themes of the genre of dystopia are represented schematically in the narrative.

The framework of semiocognitive text processing

Film semiotics is aimed to unearth imperceptible system of signification which is embedded on screen, and has underlying assumption that film has language of itself which is similar to what Saussure coined as parole (Metz, 1991). Having said that, film semiotics gives the impression that it concerns the way in which spectators make meaning as they watch film. The problem is that in doing so the approach of film semiotics makes no direct reference to what is going on in the mind of spectators. They are rather considered as passive and that meaning making is autonomous to their mental processing which is renderred by cognition. As what will be elaborated the framework of cognitive semiotics complements what the traditional film semiotics has failed to account.

One assumption in cognitive semiotics is that film aesthetic experience is multimodal. In that sense information processing that takes place in mind as endowed cognitive capacity receives more than one sensory information. Human brain is wired for that capacity (Magliano and Zacks, 2011; Coegnarts and Kravanja, 2015; Suchan and Bhatt, 2016). Semiocognitive text processing assumes filmmakers employ available tools in producing film narrative such as auditorial and visual stimulus (e.g. sound, music, shot, color, etc.) with semiotic intent. Spectators then actively process those stimuli so to make meaning (e.g. conceiving diegesis and storyworld). This process that is occuring in the mind of spectators is

the very same process to make sense the reality, and that it has no prerequisite competence as what is propagated by cognitivist under Chomskian influence.

Contextual information provided by certain scene and occuring dialogue are stored in working memory, thereby enabling spectators have mental model of the narrative in its entirety. Reflecting on the interrelation between what is on screen and what is in the mind might yield emotional response among many other things. It is arguably the work of human neural equipment as well that renders perception of characters represented on-screen, who are actually a person enacting or enunciating invented persona, to be theorized to have mind of their own. Thereby, they are perceived as intentional agents who are able to carry out action, perception, give emotional response, etc. This already echoes what embodied cognition propagates in the way we process text and make meanings out of it, which view is central in the cognitive semiotics standpoint.

In film aesthetics, *mise-en-scene* (i.e. how things appeare on-screen and situate event) and *mise-en-shot* (i.e. how certain scene is filmed) are two crucial aspects of building film narrative and narration. In our case, we counted shots taken in order to pinpoint what events are represented as scenes. Thereby, we put the events into chronological order to locate spatiotemporal positions of the recount and and the unfolding story. We consider the schema conceived by the chronological order with respect to situated state of affairs and events wherein. By schema, we refer to perceived recurring structure (Johnson, 2013). The recurring structure is constituted as certain pattern of schema. In itself, it is the mechanism of our event-perception in mind.

We consider that the latter is of essential to our study, thus positions cognitive semiotics as the compatible approach. The study places its central issue at human meaning-making process, where neural process is taken into account. Meaning-making process in the way we construe narrative is one of the topics of cognitive semiotics. Cognitive semiotics may share similar assumption with traditional semiotics that in a narrative, there is an invented entity called narrator which anchors the perspective and the source of information, as well as furnishes details and consciousness representation (Genette, 1983; Stanzel, 1986; Chafe, 1994; Herman, 2007; Bundgaard, 2010). However, in case of narrative comprehension traditional film semiotics may not account for inference that is generated by spectators/readers in building situation model from representational meaning (Zwaan and Magliano, 1995; Muwaffaq, 2018).

As to film, Muwaffaq (2018) has attempted using semiocognitive approach in studying horrifying Christchurch massacre video. It is argued the clip represents creational reality of showing off force to spectators, and shaping manhunt schema. Further, the study is predicting practical implications of publishing the atrocity in motion picture clip. Our study is not yet reaching the question of what kind of cultural information is being transmitted, though, nor spelling out the creative employments of film maker in terms of *mise-en-scene* and *mise-and-shot.* The

objective of our study is to find out prototypical representation of dystopian narrative in films, which can be offerred as standard in seeing dystopia as a certain genre.

Method

Studying certain genre is a matter of classifying or categorizing. It should be noted then categorization that this study is committing itself into does not necessitate drawing static criterial definition. Rather it is seeing attributes that are shared across films, and treating those films that are positioned in fuzzy boundary still as member of the category but less prototypical. By elaborating the shared attributes across films this study then uses descriptive approach, and by discussing the implication to humanities based on the already described attribute this study employs as well functional approach in genre studies (Buckland, 2015).

In order to carry out the study, we have selected several films, they are *Annihilation* (Garland, 2018), *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (Jackson, 2001), *World War Z* (Forster, 2013), *The Road* (Hillcoat, 2009), and *The Hunger Games* (Ross, 2012). Our selection takes into consideration that the films are adaptation from, originally, fiction novel. Indeed, it would be interesting very much to study the original text since it is fair to assume film has placed itself as a popular kind of art and media worth studying. This pertains film should be studied critically as narrative medium, regardless of whether or not spectators or public merely see it as an entertainment.

At the broadest sense, the use of semiocognitive framework in textual processing in great respects is employing the available cognitive facility. However, this needs to be explicated. The process of our anlysis started by noting the down number of shots. Noting down shots allowed seeing the way the narrative is established. Thereby, we introspectively described situated events based on narration, by accounting underpinning context and actions of characters. Described events were ordered chronologically, and patterns recurring from the order were considered schematic. We noticed there were features that constitute events, thus we accounted them by considering their recurrence as event-structuring variables.

Findings and Discussion

Apocalyptic narrative schemas

To begin with, it seems necessary to clarify what it means by the apocalyptic events or catastrophe.We would use the term interchangeably. They refer to an occurrence that urges humanistic individuals either to anticipate as a problem-solving state of affairs otherwise extinct, or to persevere with the hardship of living under threatening immediate environment. This occurence pertains to a situation wherein humanity and humanistic in whatever sense are represented as reduced.

We propose dystopian narrative has hhumanistic individuals as the protagonist. They are not necessarily portrayed by human in physiological nature. In fantasy film, for instance The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring, these individuals appearing in races (e.g. hobbit, dwarf, and elf). However, the formal

representation does not necessarily take out humanistic properties inherent to the representation. On the contrasting antagonist side there are orcs, goblins, and the likes. They represent what seem to be monstrous, brutal, immoral, and whatever else that represent them less humane or inhumane.

The antagonistic characters are not to be considered humanistic individuals, thoughthey might be as human-like as the humanistic ones. Trivially, they are represented as able to talk, act, have belief, etc., irrespectively to their physiology. What distinguishes the humanistic ones from the other is the former seems exemplifying humane characters. It is this trait that should allow us to perceive the characters, again however the physiological characteristics, as humanistic individuals. We suspect that this is made possible by the operating mechanism that allows us to have supranatural representation (e.g. ghost, evil spirits, etc.). As to film narrative, its multimodal information helps shaping perception and semantic of these two polarizing characters so to render the aesthetics.

The dystopian narrative is attributed with representation of apocalyptic events or catastrophe in ways that can be classified into three types of schemas, namely pre-apocalyptic, apocalyptic, and post-apocalyptic schema. Narrative is recount of events which devises what spectators find as story (Zwaan and Magliano, 1995; Genette, 1983; Stenzel 1986; Chafe, 2004; Muwaffaq, 2018). In this sense we can assume stories are sequences of events that have been passed. This follows that narrative is anchored at the same spatotemporal point with with the audience. It serves as the source of information regarding the stories, by recounting past events. In doing so, it sets up perspective to the way the story is recounted, and how the story is. In this case the latter is typically reclined without respect to chronological order. Such is the standard[1]of fiction, and this implies films under fiction share similar property (Friend, 2012). However, we have cognitive ability to chunk situated actions and their context so to perceive them tied together as particular event. Events in a given narrative then, though chronologically scrambled, can be ordered as a linear flow (Zacks and Magliano, 2011). It is based on the linearity of sequential events in the studied film narrative we classify the types of apocalyptic event schema.

Pre-apocalyptic narrative schema

The pre-apocalyptic schema narrates catastrophe as a representation of occurrence to be anticipated, or a problem to be solved. It urges humanistic individuals as protagonist to respond so to the upcoming apocalyptic event. Here, dystopia seems to be a predicted alternative and subsequent antecedent had the protagonist failed her anticipation. In this sense, we perceive the catastrophe as yet to happen and to potentially entail dystopia. Its occurrence may be represented on screen as hints in some sort of protagonist's premonition or antagonist's threat, in case of *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*. In Annihilation the occurrence of catastrophe is merely predictive statements given by an authoritative character. But, we are allowed to draw inference as the narrative feeds information regarding the actions and events of protagonist along the the narrative. For instance, the protagonist explains the phenomenon that happens in The Shimmer. It should be noted that lines of protagonist and other characters are not the only instance we

can rely on in comprehending the narrative. The film *mise-en-shot* supplies information by representing alien object that is crashing into the earth, alien material which behaves similarly to pathology, and caption.

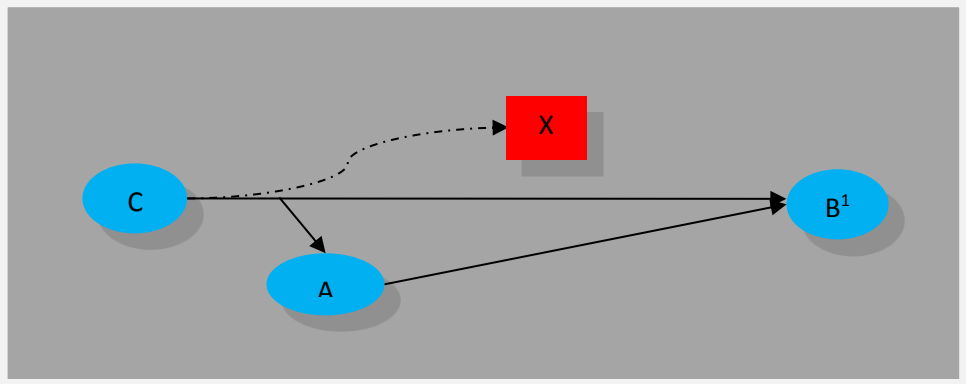


Figure 1. Pre-apocalyptic schema in dystopian films

Figure 1 illustrates pre-apocalyptic schema which structures the narrative in *Annihilation* and *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*. Based on the chronological order of the narrative, there seems to be four spatiotemporal position. *C* represents precedent state of affairs which istypically portrayed by flashbacks.*C* is positioned with respect to immediate present*A*, and the outcome of anticipating the possible catastrophe as antecedent B^1.Here, the possible catastrophe is marked by *X*. We consider *B* is at the same level with *C* because they situate the narrative as a whole. This implies *A* is a sort of specified and isolated space and time with respect to the whole scale of the narrative. It is merely a part where the story is centralized, and where the narrative point is anchored. But, it should not be considered representing the whole state of affairs within the narrative. It is this point that spectators follow as the main story, as it takes major part of the narrative. These two interlinking narrative points are proceeding to *B*.

When ordered based on this spatiotemporal points, the narrative of annihilation starts with the coming of extraterrestrial object to the earth. This leads to the emergence of what is regarded by The Shimmer, its spread, and deployment of investigations into the area within as countermeasure. This leads to deployment of expedition teamthat enlists a sergeant whosemotivation is self-destructive tendency, andwho knows his wife is unfaithful. The team never survives in The Shimmer. However, his alien duplicate returns home as a person who suffers serious affliction. It is at this point the narrative transitions to the immediate present. That is to say, spectators would follow along the expedition of protagonist which somehow annihilates The Shimmer. At the end, protagonist is interrogated by authority as she is the only survivor in her team.

The narrative consists of the act of recount and the story recounted. Spatiotemporal location of the recount and the recounted story are essentially different. However, they can be assumed as designed to overlap, jumbled, or to be in ways that we cannot anticipate insofar the narrative is constructed as a whole. As to *Annihilation* the interrogation of protagonist underpins B^1, whereas *A* is underlying her adventurous expedition, and C her memory and shots of alien object going into earth.

Interestingly, there is no explicit representation about the catastrophe in *Annihilation*. There is only statement from authoritative character that we can use

as basis of inference. As to the representation itself we can draw information from scenes that represent the mission of protagonist. In our inference *X*is the annihilation of whatever organism exists on earth due to continuous mutation caused by environmental influence of The Shimmer, and its replacement with alien and mutants. Had this happened, we refuse to believe there would be dystopia. Rather evolution that put off humans from selections, thereby humanity perishes. However, the process to the total annihilation would be likely to attain dystopian state of affairs.

There is explcit difference between *Annihilation* and *LOTR* in the way the latter represents catastrophee. There are scenes of protagonist premonition if he should fail, though it does not entirely sketch the whole picture. Again, by inference we can model the catastrophe and the dystopia entailed. To be specific, the catastrophe would be the return of The One Ring to Sauron as followed by his domination over Middle Earth. We can imagine Sauron dominating force would conquer the free folk of Middle Earth. Afterwards, humanity as represented by Sauron's counterpart (i.e. humanistic individuals) would be replaced with repressive kind of society, in which nonhumanistic individuals rule. There, we have dystopia in Middle Earth which is analogous to some respects with representation of repressive society in *The Hunger Games*. However, humanistic individuals in *LOTR* prevail and Middle Earth is saved from threats of Mordorunder Sauron'scommand. That is the antecedent from protagonist successful quest (i.e. destroying The One Ring).

Humanity is represented by depiction of different races that bear humanistic values (e.g. human, hobbit, elf, dwarf, etc.). Fantasy seems to be unique in the way the genre intermingles the variation of races. And the condition that we can make sense the varying races may be humanistic or nonhumanistic is appropriatized by our practice of exploiting domains within cognitive architecture. The narration in the opening, which positions narrative point *C* has already furnished spectators with formal representation that informs spectators which is humanistic and nonhumanistic. It is fortified as we follow along the journey of protagonist which arcs from him as a common hobbit to become hero of Middle Earth after destroying The One Ring. It should be noted, the journey of protagonist situates narrative spatiotemporal *A*. And, similarly to *Annihilation* the story is centralized in A. But, the narrative point does not fully represent the whole state of affair of Middle Earth per se.

Apocalyptic narrative schema

A catastrophe occurs in apocalyptic schema and leads to dystopia, unlike that of pre-apocalyptic schema. However, the occurring catastrophe is resolvable thereby urging humanistic individuals into finding ways to overcome the event (see

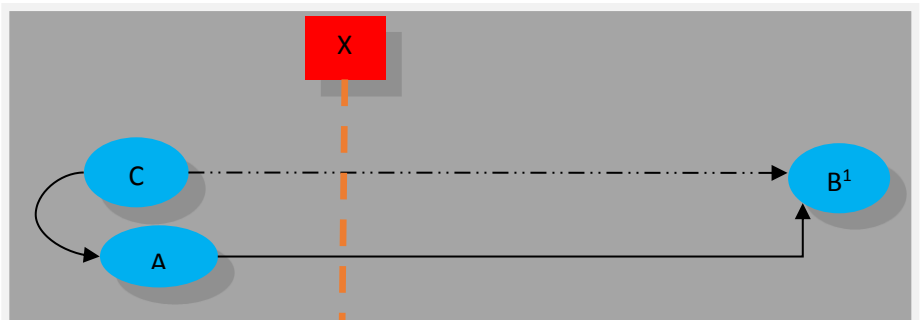


Figure 2. Apocalyptic Narrative Schema

figure 2). The occurence of catastrophe is represented by *X*. Generally, it may be represented as different kind of occurrence that deviates the quo state of affairs as represented by *C.* The immediate present which spectators find as unfolding story is similarly to the pre-apocalyptic schema. It is localized part of the whole narrative. The relation between *A* to the antecedent $B^1$is direct, in a sense it situates action of protagonist in resolving the catastrophe. On the other hand, *C* and $\mathbf{B^1}$are indirect considering the resolution of apocalyptic event would impact the whole narrative, and that the former is background to *A*.

In *World War Z, C* what is represented as news broadcast until protagonist is stuck in a traffic jam. There is not explicit representation of zombie outbreak, except statements from news about the spread of virus and case of strange behaving people. Protagonist soon realizes the apocalyse and struggle preserve his life. At this point, spectators are already served with immediate present *A*. Technically, *A* is over as protagonist reunites with his family. However, his discovery of camouflage situates the antecedent *B*: the fighting of humans against the infected. Spectators experience perceiving representation of the world that they know is shifting into an unprecedented catastrophic world. There, dystopia appears as the collapse of social institution, chaos, etc. Similarly, the resolution of catastrophe seems to represent the prevail of humanity.

Post-apocalyptic narrative schema

Catastrophe *X* is a precedent in post-apocalyptic narrative schema respectively to the immediate present *A*. The narrative may or may not give specific information regarding the apocalyptic even, which has happened at some time prior to *A*. Due to X implied past state of affairs has been shifted due to the occurrence of catastrophe. Here, the latter situates narrative space and time *C*. It is in this schema the representation of dystopia as livable environment seems salient, albeit the environment in itself is ingrained by repressive threats by authoritarian rule or some sorts. Spectators would follow the immediate present*A* wherein protagonist is struggling under dystopian condition. The struggle leads to the point where he is surviving in the dystopian condition, or able to bring down repression that causes dystopia. The latter is marked by B^1, and it represents successful attempt of preserving humanity (see figure 3).

The protagonist in *The Road* is able to get by as he finds migrating companion after losing his father. This leaves piece of information that allows us to believe his chance of surviving remains. As to The Hunger Games we can already sense that there is a brewing resistance against the oppressive state of Panem, and eventually protagonist manages to turn down oppressive government. It is those points that we consider the narrative has reached point B^1. In *The Road*, dystopia is a representation of place in which society is repressed by environmental and societal threats. However harmful the environment, it is yet bringing an impression of livable place. Protagonist, with his humanistic traits taught by his father, survives. Other than that, dystopia seems to be reparable. The repairdeviates the place as less and less repressive, or less and less dystopic.

There is no explicit explanation on apocalyptic event *X* in narrative of *The Road*, which is different from *The Hunger Games*. For this matter, spectators are able to infer from information supplied by narrative. In contrast, the former has representation of *C* that is portraying the life of one of the protagonist prior to *X* while the latter does not. Both narratives represent immediate present *A* wherein,

protagonist is migrating to safer place (*The Road*) and is trying to rebel against authoritarian rule (The Hunger Games). It should be noted that, as illustrated by figure 4, the event *X* motivates protagonist to take action proceeds her struggle to reach point B^1.

Similarly, to the previous schemas, *A* is localized in the sense it only represents protagonists' whereabouts. At least in *The Hunger Games* the winning of rebellion resolves dystopia in global scale. *The Road* does not seem to exemplify the same state of affairs, yet the surviving protagonist implies there is a great possibility that others may share the same experience at the global scale. It is the underlying reason of why *C* and B^1 are at the same level.

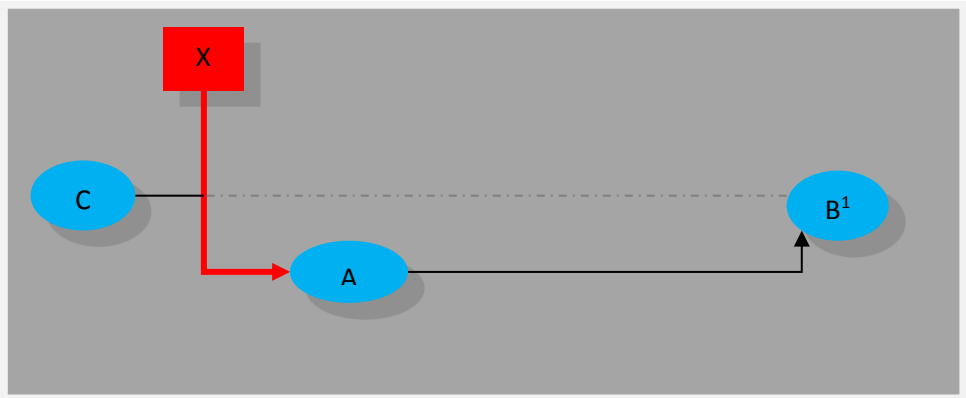


Figure 3 Post-apocalyptic narrative schema

Event-structuring variables in apocalyptic schema

In earlier section we have proposed dystopia as a particular genre is characterized by narrative that situates catastrophe or apocalyptic schema which entails humanity under repressive state of affairs. What we mean by schema is generic conceptual representation that is structured by typical or recurring process of events. Perception, as result of cognitive process, holds key role in shaping recurring events into schema. This echoes Gestalt principle as the operating mechanism of our perception. An event is configured by chunks of action underpinned by contextual situation. We refer those chunks of action and their contextual underpinning as event-structuring variables.

A film narrative furnishes spectators with contextual information and action that are situated and perceivable to the eye of spectators. We propose several event-structuring variables that configure apocalyptic schema in dystopian narrative. Concept of THREAT is one of event variables which stimulate protagonists into reacting. It situates context of the event. By its appearance, THREAT can be segmented into NON-AGENTIVE or AGENTIVE. The former is represented by natural disaster or whatever it is coming from natural setting. As to AGENTIVE, it represents entities at the broadest sense which are not always as necessarily human being. Therefore, any organism capable of posing danger or harm to protagonist by carrying out particular action can be considered AGENTIVE THREAT (e.g. zombies, orcs, peacekeeper, cannibal, mutant bear, etc.).

In responding to THREATS, the protagonist carries out certain actions. The actions are represented on screen differently. The way they are represented is analogous across and within a dystopian narrative. That is to say they fundamentally

serve the same purpose, which typically has anything to do with surviving or preserving humanity. Thereby, we argue those actions are conceptualization of ACTS OF SURVIVAL. It should be noted, though, the purpose of ACTS OF SURVIVAL is not necessarily exclusive to the protagonist. Other characters can as well be targeted as patient of the acts of protagonist, or protagonist can be the beneficiary from acts of others. It is in situation such as the former we consider protagonist action altruistic, while the latter an example of altruism by others.

Altruistic acts represent actions that are able to preserve existence of herself and her fellow. They are inherently practical implementation of humanistic motive. ACT OF SURVIVAL is segmented into MIGRATION (i.e. protagonist movement from threatening environment to less threatening one), SELF DEFENSE refers to fighting or fleeing threats, and looking for their information under the ongoing catastrophe or apocalyptic event. FORAGING is referring to looking or gathering resources for survival. AFFECTION means altruistic and psychologically comforting acts.Finally, SEEKING HELP OF OTHERS is communicating needs to conspecifics or the likes in order to earn support.

We pinpoint INSTITUTIONAL ACTS as a structuring-event variable which can be generated by protagonist and the antagonist. This is so because both sides are often narrated as part or agent of larger whole. Here, we consider the whole social institution, in whatever kind of forms. At the very least, a group of friends is a representation of social institution, while at broader level it appears as government, alliance of races, etc. SOCIOCOGNITIVE SIGNAL is an instance of INSTITUTIONAL ACTS. This refers to action, gesture, sign, or linguistic expressions of others that furnish protagonist knowledge by perceiving them.By this instance, the protagonist can sort of learn or gain knowledge about ongoing catastrophe or enclosing threats. There are occasions where SOCIOCOGNITIVE SIGNAL seems to be transmitted by mass in panic over fearing threats. For an example, in *World War Z* the protagonist is trying to inform himself by processing signals conveyed within panicking mass.

Typical in apocalyptic narrative protagonist has limited knowledge regarding the catastrophe. Protagonist represents part of social institution whose place is the closest to common citizen. Take for instance Frodo (*LOTR*) is a simple hobbit, Gerry (*WWZ*) a full time dad—UN investigator retirement, and Katniss (*The Hunger Games*) a regular townswoman. The protagonists in dystopian films, at least discussed here, are often portrayed as naive. Throughout the narrative they are informed by other characters that are part of social institution, which has more authoritative resources and power than the protagonist (e.g. Gandalf, Thierry, or Mitch). The information allows protagonist to be cautious in facing catastrophe and its pertaining threats. Thereby, given information from social institution seems relevant to protagonist survival. This bases our reason to consider it as an event-structuring variable typical in apocalyptic narrative schema, as referred by INFORMING.

Already mentioned previously protagonist is particularly represented as less authoritative. This leaves asymmetric relation between protagonist with the more authoritative characters, regardless to whether the characters are in the side of protagonist or its counterpart. Importantly, the asymmetric relation privileges these characters to exerting force or to issue certain instructions for any interest of the

social institution as a whole. We identify actions as such as event-structuring variable under social INSTITUTIONAL ACTS, namely IMPOSITION.

A dystopian film has apocalyptic narrative in which protagonist survives despite the threats or the occurrence of a catastrophe. We notice protagonist may have shortcomings as represented on screen in many ways (e.g. death and disloyalty of group members, losing supports, obstructions). We consider the representation of shortcomings as mentioned is a conception of DEFECTS. It is another event-structuring variable under INSTITUTIONAL ACTS, which refers to hindrance entailed by action of others. In many occasion, DEFECTS can portray what is resulted from collective fear and can imply the sense of hopefulness in the narrative.

INSTITUTIONAL ACTS may be represented by the group preparing plans, conferring on decision, or any sort of cooperative as well as collaborative actions. Taken together, they are property of sociocognitive ability as portrayed on screen. In themselves, they are carried out in order to solve problem. We take this as part of INSTITUTIONAL ACTS sub-variation, which referred by COLLECTIVE ACTION. Table 1 notes event-structuring variables that are elaborated previously.

Table 1. Event-structuring variables in apocalyptic schema

Threats	**Acts of survival**	**Institutional acts**
Non-agentive	Migration	Socio cognitive signal
Agentive	Self defense	Informing
	Foraging	Imposition
	Affection	Defects
	Seeking help of others	Collective acts

Apocalyptic narrative schemas in dystopia: the significance to humanities

We have elaborated how dystopian film narrative is structured by what we regard here as apocalyptic event schema. This schema is configuration of chronological arrangement of the narrative in which catastrophe or apocalyptic events are narrated as potential occurrence, occurring, or has occurred. It has been noted as well the schema has event-structuring variables as its property. Granted what has been explained is the case of dystopian narrative as a particular genre under fiction, then it seems we have a grounding to formulate what kind of genre is dystopia.

In our view, post-apocalyptic schema serves the prototypical standard of dystopian genre, while apocalyptic and pre-apocalyptic turn them as less prototypical. They, nevertheless, bear familial resemblance to the prototype, thus should be accounted as belonging to the same genre. Further, it seems plausible to consider the argued prototype as representation of standard of dystopian genre. It narrates the world has suffered from certain devastating event, which causes expensive cost to humanity. As aftermath, the event generates collective fear of authoritarian rule or socio-environmental threats to the remaining or the existing humanistic individuals, who would then put efforts to alter the world to be less dystopianso to keep on surviving. We also propose here the event-structuring variables as elaborated earlier should be counted within the set of standard of dystopian narrative genre. This variation may appear in different kind of formal representations.

Indeed, film narratives studied here are strictly limited, but we predict the same event-structuring variables would be represented on screen and as narrated. In themselves the variables are concept vary in the way they are depicted. But, the way they are depicted as visual information perceivable to spectators is merely a semiotic form. The semiotic form, thanks to neural makeup in processing information, is paired to semiotic meaning. In other words, variation of forms leads to the same mental representation, rendered by the semi cognitive information processing that shapes our perception.

Interestingly, in our reflection it does not seem to be a problem supposedly we neglect the fact the films studied here differ in their already given genre. This leads us into thinking when dystopia is remarked as genre in prototypical sense; it takes fantasy, sci-fi, action, drama, and any other sort of film types as variables. Therefore, wizard, elf, aliens, cannibals, wildfire, earthquake, authoritarian soldiers, mutant, zombies, etc. are but formal representation to conception of threats, in agentive or non agentive, to humanistic individuals.

At this point, in many ways dystopia already seems associated with catastrophe that drastically changes environmental condition. Catastrophe or apocalyptic events as represented in films, and maybe text of fiction, may or may not specify the causality of its occurrence. To this we argue that spectators or readers can readily, perhaps as easily, dismiss such underspecified causal explanation. This is so because the narrative focuses not on whatever issues relevant to environment that triggers the event, so to the collapse of representation of the world as we know into the world we consider representing dystopia, which spectators might have never conceived in mind.

Rather, the narrative focuses on humanistic individuals anticipating the apocalyptic events, or attaining their survival under the events and their aftermath. At least, films that are studied here exemplify humanistic individuals prevail, which is often represented triumphantly, epically, and dramatically. This leads to somewhat implicit triumph of humanity against whatever there is antagonizing, repressing, or threatening. It is here we get the sense optimism in dystopian narrative. At least textually speaking, however, the optimism set asides environmental issues to be secondary and peripheral respectively to what becomes the focus and central subject matters: humanity.

There are some issues in our study, especially in its methodological sense. That is to say albeit our study is proposing prototype or standard of how dystopian narrative is, qualitatively, future study is nevertheless suggested to pursue whether the prototype is applicable. For that matter, one can study different narrative under the same genre, be it in film or prose.Moreover, further study might as well be conducted in direction of quantitative method, specifically by experimental approach.

Our suggestion sees possibilities of using emotional reaction (i.e. fear) as dependent variable that might be triggered by THREATS in the studied films. Granted the resources, one can experiment on the hypothesis whether or not empathetic response of spectators would be triggered by represented THREATS. Certainly, there are more uncovered gaps that are yet to cover and to discuss. Pursuing them would shed more lights regarding dystopian narrative, film aesthetics, and even the relation between mind, meaning-making, and narrative at

the broadest sense. However, considering the limitation, it seems very much unlikely we can dispell the gaps in this occasion.

Conclusion

Dystopia, either as genre or thinking, has been regarded as criticism towards how human and its doings to the world. Instead of impressing the world as a place where every individual can have piece of positive state of affairs, it offers the contrast that the world is not as positive and can be worse. But, the world here does not seem to be necessarily in reference to environment, let alone its issues. And, environmental issues in our understanding are, plainly, pollution, climate change, global warming, etc. They do not seem tackled by dystopian narrative, and if the narrative taps into them, it is but merely a sort of condiment to the dish. However, we refuse to consider the mentioned as deficiency of dystopia as a particular genre in addressing environmental issues. Assuming it may help addressing environmental issues is plausible. But, we thought that the genre is not reliable very much for helping to raise the awareness of the real problems. In our view, the genre would reinforce confidence to and in humanity that it is so adaptive despite the apocalypse and the entailing aftermath.

References

Bundgaard, P. F. (2010). Means of meaning making in literary art: Focalization, mode of narration, and granularity. *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia*, *42*(S1), 64-84.

Claeys, G. (2013). News from somewhere: Enhanced sociability and the composite definition of Utopia and Dystopia. *History*, *98*(330), 145–173. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-229X.12005

Coëgnarts, M., & Kravanja, P. (2012). Embodied visual meaning: Image schemas in film. *Projections*, *6*(2), 84-101.

Conkan, M. (2012).Revisiting fantastic Dystopias. *Caietele Echinox*, *23*, 216–223.

Chafe, W. (1994). *Discourse, consciousness, and time: The flow and displacement of conscious experience in speaking and writing*. University of Chicago Press.

Deese, R. S. (2011). Twilight of utopias: Julian and Aldous Huxley in the twentieth century. *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*, *5*(2), 210–240. https://doi.org/10.1558/jsrnc.v5i2.210

Friend, S. (2012). Fiction as a Genre.*Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society (Hardback)*, *112*(2), 179–209. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9264.2012.00331.x

Genette, G. (1983). *Narrative discourse: An essay in method* (vol. 3). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Greene, V. (2011). Utopia / Dystopia. *American Art2*, *25*(2), 2–7.

Harari, Y. N. (2014). *Sapiens: A brief history of humankind*. Canada: Signal Books.

Hendersen, D. J. O., & Clark, H. H. (2007). Retelling narratives as fiction or nonfiction. *Proceedings of the 29th Annual Cognitive Science Society*, 353–358.

Jackson, P. (2001). *The Lord of the Rings: The fellowship of the ring*. New Line Cinema.

Johnson, M. (2013). *The body in the mind: The bodily basis of meaning, imagination, and reason*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Klonowska, B. (2018). On desire, failure and fear: Utopia and dystopia in contemporary cinema. *New Cinemas*, *16*(1), 11–28. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1386/ncin.16.1.11_1

Metz, C. (1991). *Film language: A semiotics of the cinema*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Muwaffaq,T.(2018). Introspeksi masa lalu terfragmentasi dan narasi bermoda percakapan dalam yang sudah hilang oleh Pramoedya Ananta Toer. *Jurnal Al-Azhar Indonesia Seri Humaniora*, *4*(3), 171-184.

Muwaffaq, T. (2018) Telaah semiokognitif video penembakan teroris di mesjid Christchurch, Selandia Baru. *Jurnal Magister Ilmu Hukum Universitas Al Azhar Indonesia (in-press).*

Nordensvard, J. (2014). Dystopia and disutopia: Hope and hopelessness in German pupils' future narratives. *Journal of Educational Change*, *15*(4), 443–465. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-014-9237-x

Ostergaard, S., &Bundgaard, P. (2015). The double feedback loop and the parameter theory of text genres. *Cognitive Semiotics*, *8*(2), 97–127.

Searle, J. R. (2006). The logical status of fictional discourse. *New Literary History*, *6*(2), 319. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.2307/468422.

Sørensen, J. (2005). Religion in mind: A review article of the cognitive science of religion. *Numen*, *52*(4), 465-494.

Stanzel, F. K. (1986). *A theory of narrative*. Cambridge: Cambrige University Press.

Suchan, J., & Bhatt, M. (2016, July). Semantic question-answering with video and eye-tracking data: AI foundations for human visual perception driven cognitive film studies. In *IJCAI* (pp. 2633-2639).

Vieira, F. (2010).The concept of Utopia. In *the Cambridge companion to utopian literature* (pp. 3–27). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Magliano, J. P., & Zacks, J. M. (2011). The impact of continuity editing in narrative film on event segmentation. *Cognitive science*, *35*(8), 1489-1517.

Zwaan, R. A. (1994). Effect of genre expectations on text comprehension. *Journal of Experim*, *20*(4), 920–933.

Zwaan, R. A., Magliano, J. P., & Graesser, A. C. (1995). Dimensions of situation model construction in narrative comprehension. *Journal of experimental psychology: Learning, memory, and cognition*, *21*(2), 386.