CONCEPTUAL AND LANGUAGE REPRESENTATIONS IN AMERICAN GOBBLEWONKER MONSTER AS LOCH-NESS MONSTER MYTHOLOGY IN HIRSCH'S ANIMATED SERIES *GRAVITY FALLS*

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CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The fictional reality is a product of author's creativity, in which some ways emerge from an original idea or already-existing inspiration. In era of excessive information access, the consumption of a large variety of ideas and information has broadened our concept regarding what and how the cultures exist in our life and the other part of the world. As a result, many of these ideas of cultures are reproduced in some way as part of the creative process into a new shape of existence; one of which is called representation. Representation, according to Jamaican theoretical sociologist Stuart Hall, is defined as simple as the activity in which meaning is produced and exchanged through between cultures (Hall, 1989:15). The meaning itself works as concept and the production of meaning stands as language. Hence, the representation is a concept that is produced and presented through language like signs and images representing said concepts.

This idea of representation encompasses the work of a cultural study as part of 'circuit of cultures;' a framework that is useful to analyze the product of cultures. The work of representation in modern era has rapidly increased especially in cinematic films. The effectivity of representation to deliver the new concepts, especially culture, to new audience through film has acted as part of cultural widespread in mainstream media. These cultural representations take many forms and shapes; one of which is old mythology. As a result, the existence of cultural

representation in mainstream literary field does not only contribute to introduction of world-wide norms and lifestyles, but also contribute to perseverance of old folktales and mythology (House, 1992:72).

American animated TV series *Gravity Falls* is the case example of mythology representation in modern mainstream literature. *Gravity Falls* is a two season American animated TV series firstly aired in June 15th 2012 in Disney Channel and Disney XD. It tells the story of twin siblings Dipper Pines and Mabel Pines as they explore and uncover the mystery of *Gravity Falls* in fictional Oregon of United States. The animated show earns its worthy predicate as adventure-mystery genre TV series that appeal to general audience because of its unique representations of monsters from real-life mythologies. Alex Hirsch, the *Gravity Falls'* creator, infuses many cultural inspirations of real-life mythological creatures around the globe, including the Gobblewonker, an American monster that bares huge similarities to Loch Ness mythology from Scottish lore. The Gobblewonker itself is a lake monster myth surrounding the local inhabitants of American outskirts named Gravity Falls in Oregon, United States.

The writer has found a particular interest to analyze and review this research as part of cultural representation study between American fictional myth and European real-life myth. The writer uses the representation theory from Stuart Hall to review and elaborate as to what and how Gobblewonker character, an American local mythology monster in *Gravity Falls* correlates to real-life Loch Ness mythology of Scottish Lore in form of representation. Hence, through the lens of representation theory, this study examines the Gobblewonker character in Gravity

Falls and its representation aspects to Loch Ness mythology by analyzing the analyzing conceptual map and language representations of Gobblewonker that contains correlation to Loch Ness myth to demonstrate how representation works in building connection between fiction and real-life based myth and preserving old mythological tale in modern media.

1.2. Research Questions

In relation to the thesis, the writer bases the analysis on two main questions:

1. What are the conceptual representations of Gobblewonker monster as Loch Ness mythology in Alex Hirsch's *Gravity Falls*?

2. What are the language representations of Gobblewonker monster as Loch Ness mythology in Alex Hirsch's *Gravity Falls*?

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this thesis research is based on two main analysis points:

1. To analyze conceptual representations of Gobblewonker monster as Loch Ness mythology that exists in fictional America of Alex Hirsch's *Gravity Falls*.

2. To analyze language representations of Gobblewonker monster as Loch Ness mythology that exists in fictional America of Alex Hirsch's *Gravity Falls*.

1.4. Scope of Study

This research aims to analyze the Gobblewonker as representation of Loch Ness myth through animated series *Gravity Falls*. Hence, the source of data is limited to only episode, The 2nd episode of first season "*The Legend of*

Gobblewonker," in which The Gobblewonker monster makes an appearance. The analysis of this research of Alex Hirsch's *Gravity Falls'* Gobblewonker focuses on the discussion of conceptual map and language representations according to Hall's system of representations.

1.5. Previous Studies

The writer has found several previous studies that have similar objects, subjects and approaches of the analysis. The first previous study is a journal research *Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation* written by Stuart Hall. The journal focuses on how culture is preserved in cinematic area through representations and the correlation between cultures and myth as through its historical cultures shared by common people in area.

The second previous study is an undergraduate thesis *Propaganda Illuminati Dalam ANIMASI (Analisis Semiotika Pada Animasi Gravity Falls Season 2 "Weirdmageddon")* written by Vini Ovita. The writer of thesis provides the method on identifying external elements of semiotic of Illuminati in *Gravity Falls* by using semiotic techniques and selective library research.

The third previous study is an undergraduate thesis *Dysphemism in Gravity Falls TV Series Season 1* written by Intan P. F. Putri. The thesis analyzes dysphemism (a part of communication frequently used to vent frustration) through means of dialogues and textual symbols from characters in *Gravity Falls*.

Then, the fourth previous study is an undergraduate thesis *Pesan Propaganda Illuminati dalam Film Animasi (Analisis Semiotika pada Film Despicable Me 2*

Karya Pierre Coffin) written by Muhammad Ikhsan Hervinto. This thesis focuses on the propaganda aspect of Illuminati in Despicable Me 2 through cinematic fields by using semiotic analysis.

The fifth previous study is an undergraduate thesis *A Visual Semiotic Analysis on Webtoon GHOST TELLER* written by Desy Maya Sary. The thesis focuses solely on semiotic analysis of Peirce triadic signs embedded into visual media such as Webtoon panels through selective outsourcing of relevant data in form of comic picture/frames.

The sixth previous study is an article *The Modern Quest: Teaching Myths and Folktales* written by Jeff House. The article aims to seek the mission to teach and preserve the mythology and folktales as cultural perseverance in modern era, mainly through the means of literature and media (songs, films, video games, cultural icons, etc.)

The seventh previous study is a journal *What Do We See in Film?* Which is written by Robert Hopkins. The journal analysis the basic definition of film and the elements work as supporting foundation of the film itself; this includes representations, cinema and how picture works as basis of representations in films.

Then the eight previous study is a journal *Beyond Immersion Absorption, Saturation, and Overflow in the Building of Imaginary Worlds* written by Mark J. P. Wolf. The journal discusses about immersion analysis on world building of aims to give insight on how readers perceive the information given in entertainment

media to create an imaginary world in their consciousness through works on imageries and visualities in *Gravity Falls*.

The ninth previous study is a university journal *American Animation Films Today* written by Stephen Bosustow and John C. Mahon. The journal presents the outlook and review regarding American animation films in modern era, what shapes and how it works as part of modern cinematic literature.

The tenth previous study is a research article *Semiotics of Culture and Language* written by The University of Chicago Press. The article highlights the concept of cultures and languages through the perspective of semiotics.

The difference between this thesis and previous studies lies in the object of the research, data of the research and theoretical framework used. None of the study above focuses on analyzing Gobblewonker in *Gravity Falls* by using Hall's representation theory. Several studies that focus on *Gravity Falls* as research data do not use Hall's theory of representation. Other journals that analyze representations only focus on general subjects rather than specific one like Gobblewonker monster. The studies on myth and folktales also do not put on using the representation systems into cinematic field. Therefore, the writer is firmly determined that this research is, hereby, different and unique from the aforementioned studies.

1.6. Organization of Study

CHAPTER I: Introduction

The introduction gives the writer's background and supporting arguments on the conduction of research through background of the study, research questions, purpose of the study, scope of the study, previous studies, and organization of the writing.

CHAPTER II: Theory and Method

Theory and research methods to support the research are presented here. The theory presented is a representation theory from Stuart Hall and the methods presented are cultural approach and library research.

CHAPTER III: Result and Discussion

Analysis on *Gravity Falls'* Gobblewonker as Loch Ness representation in it with the applications of proposed theory and methods. The discussion is consisted of intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. Intrinsic aspect covers the characterization and setting of Gobblewonker. Extrinsic aspect covers the conceptual map and language representation of Gobblewonker as the Loch Ness..

CHAPTER IV: Conclusion

Research's finalized results that are presented as conclusion in this chapter to elaborate the research the summary of the main points.

BIBLIOGRAPHY