

1. INTRODUCTION

People inevitably suffer a variety of losses during their lives. These could be losing loved ones, significant possessions or status, and eventually losing self by passing away. The term "grief" is frequently applied to relate to the common experience that a person or group has after experiencing a loss. The experience of grief is not a momentary or singular phenomenon. Instead, it's systematic and predictable. Additionally, it is a multifaceted process with biological, psychological, spiritual, and social components, similar to many phenomena within the range of human experience (Rodriguez, 2001).

The concept of progressive feelings towards death was originated by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in her book titled *On death and Dying* (1969). She suggests the concept of stages that was initially built to identify patient's mental phases who experienced loss. Long after Kübler-Ross's passing, her co-author, David Kessler, adds more to the topic that led him to write a book titled *On grief and Grieving* (2005). This book holds the same topic and interpretation of five stages of grief as Kübler-Ross's. However, he reveals the answers to ambiguities and misconceptions toward the predecessor book, such as how denial stage is often misinterpreted as it only focuses on the dying person.

Literary works often delve into the human experience, including the emotional journey of characters as they navigate significant events such as loss and grief. Kennedy and Gioia (2009) states that literature is about anything written, a kind of art, which offers pleasure and illumination. With that being said, animated movie is one of literary works which involves visual and audio media that is recorded to tell a narrative story (Furniss, 2008). As a literary work, animated movies also contain intrinsic elements which present the contents of narrative. It involves plot, character, setting, theme and point of view that are put together to make a coherent storytelling. Those elements have a crucial role in portraying moods and nuances of a story as well as delivering values and meanings through the flourished visual direction. *Mise-en-*

scene and cinematography play a critical role in illustrating complicated emotions like reaction towards grief (Bordwell and Thompson, 2003). The phases of grieving, including denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance, are frequently portrayed in anime through distinctive visual styles and compositions.

Bordwell and Thompson (2003) suggest that a film is a text which should be analyzed both in its narrative and cinematography. Bordwell and Thompson's approach to film analysis involves examining each of these components to understand how they work together to create the overall film experience. The breakdowns of their methods are: narrative analysis, cinematography analysis, *mise-en-scene* analysis, editing analysis, and sound analysis. However, they emphasize that these elements should not be analyzed in isolation. Instead, a comprehensive analysis of a film text involves understanding how these components interact and complement each other.

The impact of postmodernism on media studies has been a major component in legitimizing the study of popular entertainment forms. People also realize how vital it is to analyze previously marginalized fields, such as animation movies. (Furniss, 2008). When compared to live-action movies, anime movies have several differences. The most recognizable one is the appearance of live items and continuous filming that suggests "live action." In contrast, the usage of inanimate objects and specific frame-by-frame filming techniques suggest "animation." Aside from the distinction, anime movies also share similarities with live-action movies since both of them are packed with narrative structures, character developments, and genre varieties. Furthermore, both anime movies and live-action movies aim to evoke emotional responses from the audiences. Both cinematography and *mise-en-scene* can intensify the viewer's emotional engagement, making the portrayal of grief appear more vivid. Such anime with the portrayal of grief is *Evangelion: 3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon A Time* (2021). By understanding its cinematography and narrative elements, we can have insight into how the filmmaker manipulates visual elements to connect with the audience on an emotional level which revolves around the area of grief. Hence, the writer utilizes mise-

en-scene and cinematography to indicate movie aspects that resemble the stages of grief of the characters in *Evangelion: 3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon a Time* (2021). *Mise-en-scene* signifies the director's narrative mastery and the way the elements of the frame are arranged takes into account the characters' interactions with each other, the décor, the shot, and ultimately the audience's perspective (Gibbs, 2001) while cinematography focuses on the angle, framing, and every camera works that plays a crucial role in how a story is told visually, influencing the audience's perception and emotional engagement. *Neon Genesis Evangelion* originated as an anime series aired from 1995 to 1996. This series is known for its complex characters, deep psychological themes, and intricate plot. It revolves around the issues of existentialism, nature of humans, and religion. Twenty-five years after the end of the first anime, the *Evangelion* saga is still hugely popular. Therefore, as his final entry in the *Neon Genesis Evangelion* franchise, Hideaki Anno and Khara studio agreed to make the rebuild movies of Anno's predecessor series which consists of four movies. *Evangelion: 3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon a Time*, as the conclusion of the *Evangelion* rebuild movies, became Anno's highest-grossing film after earning 8.28 billion yen (75.7 million USD) from about 5.4 million admissions in the 59 days since its Japanese premiere. This movie has now surpassed *Stand by Me Doraemon*, the twenty-first film, with just 100 million yen (917 thousand USD), making it the twenty-second highest-grossing movie of all time at the Japanese box office. This anime movie, however, is heavily influenced by the author's personal struggles in the past when he was diagnosed with depression. Moreover, Anno included his erratic personality to enrich the conflicts between characters (Sterwart-Ahn, 2019). The complexity of the plot and characterization is why this movie is interesting to analyze.

Many studies concerning grief have been conducted in various literary works. As a part of story development, narratives within novels, dramas, and movies introduce grief to their characters. The tragic losses that occur in characters in literary works have taken some scholars' interest in the field of literature study. Wang and Wang (2021)

analyzed *Manchester by The Sea*, a film about grief. Their findings show that several characters within the movie suffer through different stages of grief: the main character experiences denial, the main character's wife experiences anger, and the main character's nephew shows the act of bargaining. Subsequently, due to varied reactions from the other characters, the main character demonstrates depression which is concluded with acceptance from every character in the movie. Thus, the research claims that there could be more than one character who experiences the stages of grief in a story. Moreover, every character in a story can influence each other and emerge from any stage of grief. Another research with the same framework by Kübler-Ross discussed how grief is addressed in liminal space. Madden (2023) states that the main character in the novel *The Gathering* (2007) utilizes liminal space to reject the normal regularities of ordinary society (Ní Éigearthaigh, 2022). In this study, Madden also mentions that the author of *The Gathering* uses a non-linear story, which involves the depiction of a fictional flashback, to illustrate the five stages of mourning. Through her analysis, she found out that even though Kübler-Ross's stages of grief model emerged controversial discussion, it also launched a narrative that continues to be relevant today as part of literary works that present mourning in a more nuanced way. She also agrees that the story of grief after the loss of a loved one can be broadened by the subtle changes between the phases of mourning. In the other study, Ribeiro et al. (2017) found that grief occurs in a drama named *My Life* (1993). Furthermore, they found out that grief is not only caused by death and loss but also by the announcement of a lethal illness diagnosis. Also, Ribeiro et.al. claim that through the analysis of stages of grief within a movie, it is possible to identify the characteristics and discuss the importance of proper management of each stage. Again, he focuses on how grief analysis can give education for identifying real-life grieving victims.

The previous studies share similarities with this research since they all utilize Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's model of five stages of grief (five stages of death and dying) to analyze literary works: novel, drama, movie. Both Wang's and Madden's study

agreed that the transition of grief may vary on people since the stages of grief momentum is not always linear. Even though Wang and Wang's study (2021) also concerns a movie, the study did not include any film theory to concede stages of grief elements. Therefore, with the intention to find how these are used to represent grief, the researcher includes *mise-en-scene* and cinematography theory. Furthermore, the gap of this research is also located in the object of research, an animated movie by Hideaki Anno entitled *Evangelion: 3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon A Time* (2021). Thus, the purpose of this research is to illustrate the portrayal of the stages of grief in *Evangelion: 3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon a Time* (2021) by identifying the *mise-en-scene* and cinematography aspects which are applied in the movie.