

The Interpretations of Eternalism in Reality Club's 2112

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ABSTRACT

This paper exposes the matter of eternalism in the song of 2112 by Reality Club. By accentuating the theory of eternalism by J. M. E. McTaggart, eternalism is underlined in how all existence in time is equally real. In analysis, the song of 2112 depicts a love story that goes on since the couples were teenagers. Things are getting more complicated since they could not be together but they still have feelings of comfort and togetherness as if they live in eternal times. The memories keep going on though the time moves forward. It proves that the block universe of past, present and future events are all on an equal footing. In conclusion, the song reflects the matter of eternalism in the points of memories, not as past understandings, but as an open future towards any determinism in showing that any event is always interpreted through any matter of time.

1. Introduction

Any kind of human thought is always related to time. It is since the mattered body of humans is always placed in conditions of place and time (Emery et al., 2020; Rovelli, 2019). The minds and bodies in its tensional understandings also move within the set ideas. People will never go out or even be so distanced from matter of place and time. Especially in the matter of time, people keep going forward to the future, but they will never forget about the past either (Slavov, 2020). Philosophy of time regards this kind of deed by accentuating relations between being in present and in future.

Moreover, problems of the existence of humans may involve time too. People may argue that existence is defined, but time may speak differently. In ideas of eternalism, all things are so cyclical that the aspects of past-present-future may always relate from one to another (K. Wijaya et al., 2023; T. I. Wijaya et al., 2023). There is no single stop among those three. The matter of being eternal is also shown in the song from the band Reality Club entitled 2112. The number is the date where a couple remembers that crucial event. Though the love may fade, the date keeps being sounded in memories. Through the lyrics, the band highlights the universality of love that may result in pain and heartbreak (CallMeFred, 2020; Wulandari et al., 2023). The repeated lines of the chorus highlight the cyclical leading nature

of life, the vicissitudes coming along with it, and the question of re-examinations of every relation whether the couple was ever meant to be.

This paper answers the question of how may perspective of eternalism be interpreted on reality Club's 2112? By stating the qualitative method, this paper underlines the matter of time in the song of a band. This article is also intended to show the deep philosophical meanings of lyrics of a song that may always correlate to other philosophical ideas of experience of everyday life.

There are three previous studies that have been done regarding eternalism. The first one is written by Dino Estrelinha in 2024 entitled *Loop narratives and eternalism in David Lowery's A Ghost Story (2017)*. The research explains a character of a ghost in a movie that is trapped in a temporal drift. That character lives the looped narratives of his own timeline in eternalism (Estrelinha, 2024). This writing has the similar issue of eternalism in focus, but takes different object as this one analyzes movie while the current article underlines song lyrics.

The second one is composed by Tamer Nawar in 2024 entitled *Temporalism and eternalism reconsidered: perceptual experience, memory, and knowledge*. This research expands ideas between temporalism and eternalism especially in how the former is indeterminate and may change the values over time and the former is determinate and contains such static values (Nawar, 2024). This paper has similar idea of eternalism in its focus compared to the current one while the difference lies on the idea of perspective. Nawar's research underlines philosophical understandings of time while this research gives more perspectives on song lyrics as the object.

The third research is done by A. R. J. Fisher in 2022 entitled *Temporal experience and the present in George P. Adams' eternalism*. This paper accentuates ideas of time in George P. Adams' actualist eternalism. It argues that the past, present and future are all real but only the present is actual so that time is actually so conceptual yet practical after all (Fisher, 2022). Fisher's paper is bringing the same aspect of eternalism compared to the current research while the difference lies on the object being focused. Fisher takes Adams' idea as the standpoint while this research employs Reality Club's song lyric as the main emphasis.

From the three previous studies above, this research finds its novelty in such research gap. The song lyrics of 2112 are rarely analyzed including its analysis on eternalism. Furthermore, the ideas of eternalism alongside other concept of time are also uncommonly used as literary theory to analyze such literary work. By taking those points, this research takes focus more on ideas of cultural studies in which multidisciplinary sense is more explored in literary analysis.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Eternalism and the Senses of Being Relative

Philosophy of time contrasts the meanings of time in matters of the identities of people in everyday life. The concepts in this kind of philosophy are quite abstract but reflected from real concepts in how people embrace identities (Akbar et al., 2023; Slavov, 2020). Indeed, some reductions done by understanding time is situated through universal concepts and particular context in both individual and social relations. The main emphasis in this

philosophy is the truth in time itself. The posture of time is contrasted with the position of time (Bernáth & Inan, 2023; Falcon, 2022). The definition is considered different in its accentuation of meanings. The wholeness of time is also recognized as dissimilar from the idea of particularities of time.

The tensions in philosophy of time above indicates that the truth could be so singular and plural in matter of time. On a hand, it is singular since all people may experience the same indicators of time (Bernáth & Inan, 2023; Emery et al., 2020). People have the same generalized idea of clocks and understand how the earth and gravity emphasize the movement of time. Its singularity makes it more useful for the progress of human beings though it still leaves a gap on matters of being meaningful to human creatures.

On the other hand, time eventually is quite relative and actually more plural. This is seen in how time is widely interpreted by human beings through their meaningful identities. Time is not nothing for human beings, but it is how people count to various objectives in life. People understand that time is always definite but they tend to sense it as indefinite (Bernáth & Inan, 2023; Brenner, 2021). It is since people would always like to seize the best of time that they got. In this sense, the meaning of time is quite relatively cultural and plural. It is cultural since it represents relations between time and identities. It is plural since it includes matters of subjective situations that rather be focused on particularities.

Perspective of time is related to two main indications. The first one is about Static Theory of time. This exposes that time is actually like space that surrounds all creatures. While modernism differentiates space in matter of time and place, this theory emphasizes the abstraction of time in other realms. By indicating its static matter, this theory says that time that people already know is just a matter of name, but not as the essence (Brenner, 2021; Smith et al., 2023). The main essential point is still in the space just like air that everyone breathes. Nothing in this point is irreducible since it exists as it is without any need to be named. This is also such understanding that time is the space itself, therefore, it does not pass and will not end (Emery et al., 2020; Rasooli et al., 2023).

The second one is Dynamic Theory of time. For this theory, as the opposite of the former, time is a matter of real phenomenon. It is not conceptual yet merely a name. Time is more meaningful since it is quite genuine and presently involved in the temporal world (Rasooli et al., 2023; Viebahn, 2020). In this idea, time is three-dimensional in terms of causal effect relations. The idea in this part is quite definitive about the past, present, and future. This view is also emphasizing that essence may change over time as its values may also walk together with interpretations of human beings. There is reality in this dynamicity of time, as the present object may exist alongside its subject and medium of language as well (Emery et al., 2020; Rasooli et al., 2023).

Both aspects of Static and Dynamic Theory of time are separated in their concepts but could be combined in further meanings of realities. From the combined aspects, there are two divisions of perspectives of time. One is about Presentism and the other is on Eternalism. Presentism presupposes that anything is nothing without being present (Rasooli et al., 2023; Viebahn, 2020). In this case, if something is no longer present, then it does not exist at all. Any memory of human beings is only a trace of the past that does not affect present time. Eternalism is wider than Presentism since it covers anything from the past, present, and future aspects (Bernáth & Inan, 2023; Viebahn, 2020). Though human beings

live in the present time, memories of the past and plans for the future could still be intact as emphasis of general and temporal space.

This article underlines more about Eternalism and its relative conditions. Eternalism is the view that all times are equally real. The relativity of this point is so simultaneous that the ontology of time is listed in perspective of being fragmented. Eternalism, as popularized by J. M. E. McTaggart, pinpoints that that time is an independent dimension that exists regardless of human consciousness (Brenner, 2021; Emery et al., 2020). Meanings produced and consumed by human beings could only capture some representations of the time. Its wholeness of time will always exist even if the human race has ended. According to this view, past, present, and future events all exist simultaneously and eternally, and they are equally real (Gołosz, 2019; Viebahn, 2020). In other words, time can be envisioned as a landscape where all events are spread out, accessible from any point in time. This perspective differs from the more common view of time, called presentism, which asserts that only the present exists, while the past and future are mere mental constructs.

Eternalism could also be assumed in time as a block universe. This viewpoint suggests that time resembles a solid block of space-time, with all events, past, present, and future, already fixed in place (Gołosz, 2019; Tarditi, 2020). This perspective considers time as an unchanging whole, where every event is equally real and present. From this exact point, time is not a flowing or moving entity but rather a static and unchanging one. Then, if all events are equally real and present, the distinction between past, present, and future becomes arbitrary (Emery et al., 2020; Tarditi, 2020). This challenges the idea of causation, as it becomes difficult to conceive a cause-and-effect relationship between events when future events already exist. Instead, events may be interconnected in a more complex manner.

The arbitrary points are the disadvantages of the theory. However, there are various benefits in this theory. One of them is that people could understand memories not only as past traits but also as meaningful indications of identities (Djanarko & Pasopati, 2019; Emery et al., 2020). It involves matters of wider disciplines including psychology, sociology, and even literary studies. In other words, Eternalism opens up possibilities for cultural studies to come to surface. Idea of a multi- and inter-disciplinary system may embrace time better than before (Djanarko & Pasopati, 2017; Pasopati et al., 2022). It is since time is no longer seen as a linear progression but is deeply involved in everyday experience in a more logical and consistent view of time. They point out that the block universe view aligns with modern physics, which suggests that time is just another dimension. According to this perspective, time is indistinguishable from space, and all events are equally real and present.

3. Research Methodology

By using a qualitative method, data regarding the song of 2112 is analyzed with the concept of eternalism by J. M. E. McTaggart. This paper employs closed reading as the data collection technique and content analysis as its data analysis technique. The data collection is done through reading McTaggart's theory and song lyrics. The data analysis is done by listening to songs, understanding the lyrics and their meanings, drafting correlations of knowledge between song meanings and McTaggart's theory, writing down the key points from the analysis results, compiling the results of the analysis, and writing a list of

references used. In this particular article, the data is Reality Club's song and the tool to analyze is McTaggart's theory. McTaggart theory is used to give perspective of time analyzed in the song lyrics.

4. Findings

4.1. Love and Memories in 2112

2112 is an alternative rock song by Reality Club from the album of *What Do You Really Know?* released in 2019 (GeniusMedia, 2021; SongTell, 2020). This song tells the story of two people who fell in love when they were young and stayed together for years, but eventually realized that they were not meant to be together. They looked back on their relationship with nostalgia and wondered if they were ever truly meant to be together. Despite this realization, they part ways maturely, acknowledging that it is not rational to ignore each other's true fate (Listyaningsih et al., 2023; Oktafiani et al., 2023).

The full lyrics of the song is in the following:

[Verse 1]

*I'll fully comprehend why the 21st of December,
rings heavy on my battle-worn heart*

[Chorus 1]

*But who are we kidding?
Nobody's winning,
in this tale of past and future love*

[Verse 2]

*They were just 20,
show us the money
A smoke show picturesque affair
It started as all things do,
A simple hello turned to romantic visions,
Far away*

[Chorus 2]

*They were too clever,
for it to be never,
as they sunk into each other's arms*

[Verse 3]

*And this is the part
Where our whole lives collide
The stars themselves fell
Like we did that night
Though it felt like the universe knew*

*A pack of friends who couldn't hold their laughter
They chose to be painfully obvious in front of us
Slightly unaware or in denial of the dangers ahead
We thrust our weary hearts into each other's arms
Content and comfortable
For years to come*

[Verse 4]

*They felt it right and true
Blessings and kisses
as they thought it was the universe's wishes
and though they could feel it then
It's not how they want to end
So they turn their heads away
As if they were to say goodbye*

[Chorus 2]

*But clocks keep on ticking
And life keeps on going
To leave the pair behind at last*

[Verse 5]

*She said to me
And I said to her
To hold back each other's true fate
Is not of our nature
Let's be mature
Maybe you weren't made for me
Nor I for you
But I'd be damn lying
If I think that that's true*

[Bridge]

*We were young and we were old
Life was warm then life was cold
It gets harder, yes you'll see
But were we ever meant to be?*

[Outro]

*We were young and we were old
Life was warm then life was cold
It gets harder, yes you'll see
But were we ever meant to be?*

The lyrics of the song involve two matters of celebration or commemoration. The date as the title of the song is an indication of reversion back to younger days. Yet, the lyrics keep showing such a rather somber tone (SongTell, 2020; Sonichits, 2020). The couple continues to stare at each other about the flashback. They continue to see their younger days when they happily indulged in a romantic bliss. Then, the lyrics come to signs that the couple grew differently to each other (Djibran, 2022; Rovelli, 2019). Both slowly ask through such creeping ideas that may bring consequences of themselves that are not meant for each other.

The lyrics of *2112* are exploring a past romantic relationship. Love keeps being so complex and sometimes a difficult journey may result in heartbreak. However, the song also promotes the idea of accepting and embracing one's true fate, even if that means letting go of someone we once loved. All the verses, choruses, bridges, and outros involve meanings for the protagonists (CallMeFred, 2020; Kumparan.com, 2020). Those may also possibly mark the end of the relationship or a significant moment when things never worked out. Even if it happens, the broken-up will still exist and leaves the condition with no winners at all or happy-endings at once.

5. Discussion

5.1. Memories, Wish, and Remembrance in *2112*

The verses and spoken word in the lyrics of the song describe the relationship between two young people who fall in love. They are aware of the dangers ahead but choose to be together regardless (GeniusMedia, 2021; Kumparan.com, 2020). The couple is described as having such a strong connection, but ultimately both may furtherly realize that they are not meant to be. They come to the ending that holding on to each other and denying their true fates is not natural for love itself. Then, they could only remember any past memory as they may think that it is eternal as reflections of their prolonged wish (Djibran, 2022; Sanjaya, 2020). Here are the listed analyses of the lyrics:

[Verse 1]
*I'll fully comprehend why the 21st of December,
rings heavy on my battle-worn heart*

The lyrics above indicate a sense of sadness and painful memories associated with that date. The lyrics suggest that the love story in question was doomed from the start and ended on that fateful date. The title of the song is the crucial date for the couple. There is such a burden on that date that should always be remembered (CallMeFred, 2020; GeniusMedia, 2021). It mentions love and how it must face a bitter end as fate comes.

The remembrance of the date is ultimately about Eternalism. Though the time has passed to the other date, that date still marks the importance of such a relationship. This is when memories mean not only as a sign of time, but the meanings of the time spent. It is interesting how such a date may trigger past traits of any battle-worn heart in which it is used to love someone but it must end in a bitter situation for both of them.

[Chorus 1]
*But who are we kidding?
Nobody's winning,
in this tale of past and future love*

The section above explains that the decision they made at the time was not what they wanted. They must always face further consequences of any choice they have made. It may make them stronger but the cost of any winning is unamendable. They could not retract time and make it better again (GeniusMedia, 2021; Sanjaya, 2020). The time has passed and left such wounds that would never heal through remembrance of the certain date.

The sign of Eternalism is shown in how the band underlines past and future love in the lyrics. By indicating such past and future love, the lyrics avoid to underline the present time as the main vantage point. It chooses to emphasize the wholeness of time that is located in the former and latter condition. Present time is implicitly such a connection of the past and the future mediated by the commemoration done in present time (Gołosz, 2019; Viebahn, 2020). The eternal points of love are also accentuated to show that their love ended but the feelings may keep going on. It is seen in how both show their regret about the past and hope that the future could be embraced together.

[Verse 2]
*They were just 20,
show us the money
A smoke show picturesque affair
It started as all things do,
A simple hello turned to romantic visions,
Far away*

The lyrics interprets life in 20s as full of turmoil, uncertainty, and contains many decisions to be made. Although the song continues to ask why life is destined to be like that, the song implies that life goes on and there will always be vicissitudes, sadness, and even happiness. The lyrics also explain that the memories of the relationship are full of romantic visions (Djibran, 2022; Kumparan.com, 2020). They imagined good things to be realized in the future, but it has stopped in the present time. It seems that the present time is the main obstacle for them. They could never cope up with the present situation since it has ended in the past before the time passes by. They could not continue their love to today's realm but they still remembered their struggle to pass the point.

The eternal point of the lyrics is related to the romantic vision that keeps being intact though the relationship has ended. The love contained in the vision even still lives and sometimes haunts them (Oktafiani et al., 2023; Sanjaya, 2020). The love also could always taunt them to remember again the romantic memories they have. This aspect shows that any matter is actually eternal though the time has already passed. It is like being saved in the world of *Idea* in the Platonian sense (Emery et al., 2020; Yuliastuti & Pasopati, 2021). It will easily be contacted again if someone related to that event touches the core of the remembered memories.

*[Chorus 2]
They were too clever,
for it to be never,
as they sunk into each other's arms*

The lyrics expose that they thought they were smarter than the situation, for their love affair to not happen as they fell deeply into each other's embrace (GeniusMedia, 2021; SongTell, 2020). The meaning of the statement "for it to be never" is interesting. It is related to the word "never". The sense is not only about denial to the ended relationship, but it also reflects such refusal for it to be in denial forever (Sanjaya, 2020; Sonichits, 2020). There is still a chance for them to be together. This slight chance also reflects the matter of Eternalism. In Eternalism, any hope is sustained waiting to be realized. By stating so, being in eternal matters also underlines that any possible situation could always come to surface though the love has ended and time has passed for them.

*[Verse 3]
And this is the part
Where our whole lives collide
The stars themselves fell
Like we did that night
Though it felt like the universe knew
A pack of friends who couldn't hold their laughter
They chose to be painfully obvious in front of us
Slightly unaware or in denial of the dangers ahead
We thrust our weary hearts into each other's arms
Content and comfortable
For years to come*

This part is quite poetic and sad for the wholeness of the song. It is where everything they have built comes crashing down and even the universe of themselves falls apart (Djibrin, 2022; Sonichits, 2020). It also seems like fate is against them. They were aware of their feelings and unknowingly ignoring the incoming heartbreak. They have found comfort in each other. They ignore any risks to be happy and at ease for a long time. However, the reality speaks otherwise for them.

The main idea that the couple deny any danger ahead is reflection of Eternalism. In this sense, they think that their eternal love could always deal with any difficulty. They assume that any promise is permanent and will never change. However, that is not how Eternalism works. Since time is full of various possibilities, any change is being enabled either (Le Bihan, 2020; Rasooli et al., 2023). Only the eternal point is everlasting, but the essence could always face varying results. Moreover, the memories of their dreams keep haunting them as if the world is totally endless for their denying love.

[Verse 4]
They felt it right and true
Blessings and kisses
as they thought it was the universe's wishes
and though they could feel it then
It's not how they want to end
So they turn their heads away
As if they were to say goodbye

The lines above indicate a sense of sadness and painful memories associated with that date. The lyrics suggest that the love story in question was doomed from the start and ended on that fateful date (CallMeFred, 2020; Sanjaya, 2020). The song goes on to describe the couple's early days, when everything seemed perfect and dreamy. However, slowly but surely, reality sets in, and their love story starts to unravel.

The lyrics above also underline matters of Eternalism. They think that love is eternal for them as a reflection of "universe's wishes". However, the love is indeed still intact but the reality may always change. Even any human being could not totally predict the future ahead (Pujimahanani et al., 2022; Rasooli et al., 2023). They could only embrace the love agreed by both parties tighter than ever. They did not want the love to end but they could not deny that the love is not meant for them to embrace again. They have to let go of the love though the love still exists in the time space and in their hearts either.

[Chorus 2]
But clocks keep on ticking
And life keeps on going
To leave the pair behind at last

The lyrics indeed underlines the matter of Eternalism in which the reality is not in line with the time. The reality keeps going on but the time is always there. Reality may interpret time, but not vice versa. Time could not say yes to anything that human beings want. Time is not God that could fulfill any wish (Djibrin, 2022; Ibrahim et al., 2023). In eternal point, if any love is still intact, it will keep walking together with time. If the love is left behind, it will be reassembled as memories. Time will still assume it is similar to other love, but it will not be the same for human beings, even if they have a chance to resume that love once again.

[Verse 5]
She said to me
And I said to her
To hold back each other's true fate
Is not of our nature
Let's be mature
Maybe you weren't made for me
Nor I for you
But I'd be damn lying
If I think that that's true

The lines above explore that they think they were meant to be. However, bitter fate dictates their love despite their deep connection at the time. It is not how they want their story to end. Still, they choose to move on as if they are saying goodbyes for any contacted truth. They choose not to hold other's fate and let it flow with passage of time (Kumparan.com, 2020; Yuliastuti & Pasopati, 2022). They have to deny that one is not made for the other. They keep denying fate as if it may change. Unfortunately, fate keeps coming and it is still there waiting to be remembered by touching the core memories in eternal time.

[Bridge]

*We were young and we were old
Life was warm then life was cold
It gets harder, yes you'll see
But were we ever meant to be?*

This section is reminiscent of their young past and old present. As the couple progress their relationship, it becomes more difficult to advance their relationship (Djibran, 2022; SongTell, 2020). Time has not changed for both of them as regret still lingers for both of them. Their memories stay in the time when they have romantic events even though their lives remain moving on to further realities. It also discovers that they will never become fully together at all by the time in old age. They must also have to struggle to get away from eternal points of memories that keep haunting them (Kumparan.com, 2020; Millenia et al., 2023). They have to deal with eternal aspects though they know that they could not befriend the time itself.

Compared to other three previous studies, this research agrees that eternalism is not about changing values. People live the eternal side of time by living the memories that are quite static. Its values are stable since no one could change any past. However, the idea of eternalism is actually actual either. Proven by the analysis emphasized in this paper, any memory could always be interpreted alongside different time. The memories are intact but its meanings could always change according to any individual and social experience. In other words, eternalism in this aspect shows that time is static as seen memories, but its reality in its interpretative mode could always progress and yet so flexible in its further accentuation.

6. Conclusion

The lyrics of the song indeed reflect the matter of Eternalism. The couple in the song must deal with the uneasiness of their love that must end before it reaches the end of their ages. As stated by Mc Taggart, Eternalism emphasizes the idea of past, present, and future in which all aspects may still be intact in the time itself. This idea is also seen in the lyrics that the utterance of denying present time is needed to underline the idea of their wants toward better relationships in the future. Though they could not reach the advancement of their love, they still could access the core points of the event in their own memories. However, the memories are eternal in the sense of everlasting indications. They may keep being haunted by their own promises on their love as long as they live in this temporary world.

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