

Forgotten (2017): Unease as a Catalyst For Memory Manipulation

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ABSTRACT

Memory is a powerful function that plays a crucial role in shaping human experiences and understanding of the past. There are four types of memory that will be focussed on in this film, which are sensory memory, short-term memory, long-term memory, and explicit long-term memory of the main character, Jin-seok. The concept of memory is analysed through the unease concept as the variable. This study also aims to understand how the unease concept is used as the element of memory manipulation in the film *Forgotten (2017)*. This study argues that unease, characterised by worry and discomfort in the film *Forgotten* serves as a powerful tool of manipulation, manipulates Jin-seok's perception of reality through his memory. The manipulation of unease in memory concept in *Forgotten (2017)* is an effective narrative device that can create a potent storytelling device that drives tension and affect the protagonist perspective of reality in the film.

Keywords: Memory, unease emotion, Manipulation, Korean Cinema, Asian Cinema, *Forgotten (2017)*

ABSTRAK

*Abstrak ini memberikan analisis konsep ingatan dan kegelisahan dalam filem Korea Selatan, *Forgotten* (2017). Terdapat empat jenis ingatan yang akan difokuskan pada filem ini, iaitu ingatan deria, ingatan jangka pendek, ingatan jangka panjang dan ingatan jangka panjang eksplisit watak utama, Jin-seok. Konsep ingatan dianalisis melalui konsep kegelisahan sebagai pembolehubah. Kajian ini juga bertujuan untuk memahami bagaimana konsep kegelisahan ini digunakan sebagai elemen manipulasi dalam filem *Forgotten* (2017). Kajian ini berpendapat bahawa kegelisahan, yang dicirikan oleh kebimbangan dan ketidakselesaan dalam filem *Forgotten* berfungsi sebagai alat manipulasi yang berkuasa, memanipulasi persepsi Jin-seok tentang realiti melalui ingatannya. Manipulasi kegelisahan dalam konsep ingatan dalam *Forgotten* (2017) merupakan peranti naratif yang berkesan yang boleh mencipta peranti penceritaan yang kuat yang mendorong ketegangan dan mempengaruhi prespektif watak utama terhadap realiti dalam filem.*

Kata Kunci: Memori, Emosi kegelisahan, Manipulasi, Sinema Korea, Sinema Asia, Filem *Forgotten* (2017)

INTRODUCTION

Unease is often used to create tension and manipulate audience perceptions. One of the most effective ways filmmakers achieve this is through memory manipulation, which challenges characters' sense of reality, identity and truth. This study explores how unease and memory manipulation function as key elements in the South Korean psychological thriller *Forgotten* (2017) to heighten psychological distress, particularly through the protagonist.

Drawing from Maurice Halbwachs' theory of memory, this qualitative research rests on textual

analysis approach examines how different types of memory—sensory, short-term, long-term and explicit memory—are manipulated to create unease and shape perceptions of reality. Furthermore, the study investigates how the film uses unease as a tool of psychological manipulation, blurring the boundaries between truth and illusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Memory Concept

Memory is a powerful cognitive function that plays a crucial role in shaping human experiences and understanding of the past. According to Grainge (2003), memory functions as both a tool of resistance and a mechanism that can be manipulated. On the one hand, it serves as a means of preserving historical truths and challenging oppressive narratives. On the other hand, it is susceptible to distortion, as external influences may alter how events are remembered. Expanding on this idea, Marita Sturken introduces the concept of “cultural memory,” which highlights the ways in which images, places, artifacts and societal representations shape the process of remembering. Importantly, she emphasises that cultural memory is not simply about celebrating or condemning past events but rather about understanding its complex and multifaceted nature. Similarly, Kendra (2022) describes memory as a psychological process that involves acquiring, storing, maintaining and retrieving information. Specifically, he identifies three fundamental stages: encoding, storage and retrieval. While these processes enable individuals to retain and recall information, memory is not flawless. For instance, people may forget, misremember, or even fail to encode information correctly from the outset. Consequently,

memory should not be viewed as an infallible record of the past but rather as a dynamic process influenced by cognitive limitations.

Moreover, Wang (2021) expands on the understanding of memory by identifying its various forms, including sensory, emotional and linguistic memory. He argues that culture significantly shapes memory representation, affecting how individuals perceive and recall sensory experiences such as color, smell and taste. In addition to sensory influences, memory is also informed by subjective emotions, abstract thoughts and structured narratives. As a result, the process of remembering is not purely cognitive but rather an intricate interplay between perception, emotion, and cultural conditioning. In addition, Ayu Haswida (2023) conceptualizes memory as an essential mechanism for preserving meaningful connections between the past and the present. She distinguishes between two key types of memory: individual and societal. On the one hand, individual memory is personal and private, encompassing one's subjective recollection of experiences. On the other hand, societal memory involves shared remembrance, structured by groups within a specific community or historical context. Thus, while memory may appear to be an individual function, it is deeply intertwined with broader social and cultural frameworks.

Furthermore, Aulich et al. (2023) examine memory within the context of cultural production, particularly in relation to how memory is shaped, manipulated, and utilized in historical narratives. They argue that memory interacts with power structures and ideological frameworks, influencing how events are remembered and interpreted. In this sense, memory extends beyond personal recollection, functioning as a medium through

which historical events are reconstructed and assigned meaning. Therefore, memory is not static; rather, it is continuously shaped by cultural, political, and ideological forces.

Types of Memory

Memory refers to the ability to store and retrieve information when needed. According to Ohwovoriole (2024), memory can be categorized into three main types: sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory. Each type plays a crucial role in how information is processed, retained, and recalled.

The first type, sensory memory, involves the ability to retain impressions of sensory stimuli for a very brief period. This type of memory allows individuals to recall sensations such as a fleeting touch or a sound heard in passing. Sensory memory operates through distinct registers corresponding to the five senses: iconic (visual), echoic (auditory), haptic (touch), olfactory (smell), and gustatory (taste) (Perera, 2023). While sensory memory enables rapid processing of incoming stimuli, selective attention determines which information moves forward for further processing in short-term memory. However, due to the vast amount of sensory input, most sensory memories disappear within seconds (Casey & Kelly, 2019). For example, a person who briefly glances at an image of a beach may instantly recall past memories of a vacation. The sight of the beach can trigger sensory memories of the warm sand, the rhythmic sound of waves, and the salty scent of the ocean air. This rapid yet vivid recollection is a key function of sensory memory, as visual stimuli can evoke past experiences almost instantaneously.

The second type, short-term memory, also known as working memory, retains information for a slightly longer duration than sensory memory. It enables individuals to temporarily store and manipulate information needed for immediate tasks (Casey & Kelly, 2019). However, short-term memory has a limited capacity and duration, typically lasting between 15 to 30 seconds (Ohwovoriola, 2024). For instance, a person may visit a grocery store with the intention of buying eggs, but once distracted by other items, they may forget to purchase them. This example highlights the transient nature of short-term memory, as the intention was not transferred to long-term storage and was easily overridden by new information. Additionally, short-term memory is sometimes referred to as primary or active memory, as it continuously updates and processes information from the surrounding environment.

The third type, long-term memory, stores information for extended periods, often for a lifetime. Unlike short-term and sensory memory, long-term memory has an unlimited capacity and can retain information indefinitely (Ohwovoriola, 2024). Long-term memory is further divided into explicit (conscious) memory and implicit (unconscious) memory. Explicit memory involves intentional recollection of facts and experiences, such as remembering a friend's birthday, a phone number, or significant life events like a graduation ceremony. On the other hand, implicit memory forms unconsciously and influences behaviour without deliberate recall. For example, a person who learned to ride a bicycle at the age of 10 but has not practiced for years may still be able to ride it at the age of 20. This ability is attributed to implicit memory, which allows individuals to retain learned motor skills without consciously recalling the learning process (Ohwovoriola, 2024).

In conclusion, memory is a fundamental cognitive function that serves both as a tool of resistance and a mechanism susceptible to manipulation. It shapes remembrance through images, artifacts, and societal representations. While memory operates through three key stages—encoding, storage, and retrieval—it remains imperfect, often subject to forgetting and distortion. Furthermore, cultural influences play a significant role in shaping how memories are represented and recalled.

Unease

Unease can be described as a feeling of worry and discomfort (Dunham, 2021). According to King (2021) in *The Cinema of Discomfort*, discomfort manifests through expressions such as disquiet, awkwardness, and embarrassment. Films that evoke discomfort can be thought-provoking, yet they also create a sense of uncertainty, leaving audiences without clear guidance on how to respond emotionally. Similarly, Brusberg-Kiermaier (2023), in his research on Highsmith's *Replead* series, argues that Highsmith constructs unease to heighten suspense in her narratives. He suggests that the emotionally charged and suspenseful moments within her stories engage readers' sensory imagination, influencing their mental and physical experiences. This connection between unease and suspense underscores their role in evoking emotional responses from audiences.

Furthermore, discomfort, defined as a state of uneasiness and anxiety, has been explored by Rabecca (2022) within cinematic narratives. Emotional and affective elements, such as anxiety, are crucial to narrative progression. Davydova et al. (2022) identify anxiety as a key aspect of unease, often linked to uncertainty, fear, and anticipation of danger. Their study categorizes anxiety in

film into two types: character anxiety, which stems from a character's emotional state and drives the story, and viewer anxiety, which emerges from the film's narrative structure and stylistic choices, drawing audiences into the emotional experience. While character anxiety is embedded in the plot, viewer anxiety transcends character emotions, shaping the audience's psychological engagement with the film.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology employed in this study is qualitative, utilizing textual analysis as the primary method. The selected text for analysis is the Korean film *Forgotten* (2017), with a specific focus on the main character, Jin-seok. The study examines different types of memory—sensory memory, short-term memory, long-term memory, and explicit long-term memory—as depicted through the protagonist's experiences. The notion of memory in this research is explored through the concept of unease, which serves as the study variable. The theoretical framework is based on memory theory, emphasizing the four key types of memory. These memory types are analyzed in relation to the unease concept, which is categorized into worry and discomfort. Discomfort is further divided into lack of comfort, uneasiness, and anxiety.

By applying the unease concept to the analysis of *Forgotten* (2017), this study investigates how different types of memory contribute to the psychological tension experienced by Jin-seok. Through this approach, the research aims to deepen the understanding of how memory and unease interact within the film's narrative and character development.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Types of Memory and Unease in *Forgotten* (2017)

Forgotten (2017), directed by Jang Hang-jun, intricately weaves its narrative around the concept of memory. The story explores four key types of memory—sensory memory, short-term memory, long-term memory, and explicit long-term memory—through the experiences of its main character, Jin-seok. Additionally, memory is analyzed through the concept of unease, which serves as a central variable in the study. Unease in the film is portrayed through worry and discomfort, with discomfort further categorized into lack of comfort, uneasiness, and anxiety, all of which Jin-seok experiences throughout the story. Jin-seok is a 21-year-old, kind-hearted, and hardworking young man. The film begins with a scene of him waking up in a car alongside his mother, father, and older brother, Yoo-seok, as they travel to their new home. Early in the narrative, the film emphasises the strong bond between Jin-seok and Yoo-seok, with Jin-seok deeply admiring his brother. However, the tension rises one rainy night when Yoo-seok is kidnapped and mysteriously returns 19 days later with no memory of the incident. His odd behaviour upon his return fuels Jin-seok's growing suspicion, leading him to question his brother's identity.

As Jin-seok delves deeper, he encounters unsettling and inexplicable events—his brother secretly meeting men posing as detectives, who turn out to be gangsters, and his own fragmented, disjointed memories. These experiences intensify his unease, making him question his sanity. Determined to uncover the truth, Jin-seok ultimately realizes that his memories have been manipulated, revealing a dark and hidden past connected to his real family.

Unease / Types of memory	Worry	Discomfort		
		Lack of comfort	Uneasiness	Anxiety
Sensory memory	<p>Visual: Jin-seok saw his brother was limping on his right leg rather than his left, reminded him that it was the left leg being affected not the right leg.</p> <p>Auditory: -none</p> <p>Touch: -none</p> <p>Smell: -none</p> <p>Taste: -none</p>	<p>Visual: -none</p> <p>Auditory: -none</p> <p>Touch: -none</p> <p>Smell: -none</p> <p>Taste: -none</p>	<p>Visual: Jin-seok saw his brother with his gang and immediately remembered those guys were the same person who had previously claimed to be the detectives.</p> <p>Auditory: -none</p> <p>Touch: -none</p> <p>Smell: -none</p> <p>Taste: -none</p>	<p>Visual: Jin-seok saw the mechanical pencil's lead on his deck and immediately remembered of the incident where his brother tried to poke his eyes with the pencil's lead.</p> <p>Auditory: Jin-seok heard his brother's statement about taking a taxi, however he remembered he never mentioned anything about a taxi.</p> <p>Touch: -none</p>

				Smell: -none Taste: -none
Short-term memory	Jin-seok was supposedly taken his daily medication but due to his brother's interference, he forgot to take the medication as he dropped medication under the cabinet.	-none	-none	-none

Table 1: Types Of Memory and Unease in The Main Character - Jin-Seok

Long-term memory	Jin-seok remembered his brother went out from the house in the middle of the night.	-none	He recalled himself being tortured by a group.	Jin-seok recalled the moment of his brother trying to poke his eye with mechanical pencil's lead. He recalled that he was clearly following his brother in the middle of the night.
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<p>Explicit long-term memory</p>	<p>He recalled his desperation to earn money by searching a lot of different job but failed during economic failure.</p>	<p>-none</p>	<p>He recalled himself being tortured by a group and being hypnotized by them.</p> <p>Jin-seok recalled having a suspicious conversation on email with someone who asked him to commit murder.</p> <p>Jin-seok remembered asked a little boy to count one to hundred about ten times.</p>	<p>Jin-seok recalled the day his family had an accident which killed his parent and leaved his brother in coma.</p> <p>Jin-seok remembered he accidentally killed two people, a mom and a daughter.</p> <p>Jin-seok recalled the moment he accidentally killed his brother's doctor after he discovered the truth about the email's sender.</p>
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Based on Table 1, *Forgotten* (2017) revolves around Jin-seok's distorted and forgotten memories, making memory a central

element of the narrative. The film highlights four types of memory: sensory memory, short-term memory, long-term memory and explicit long-term memory. These memory types are analyzed using the concept of unease as a key variable, which is categorized into worry and discomfort. For discomfort, data collection only considers the unease elements of uneasiness and anxiety.

Sensory Memory

Sensory memory is the shortest-term form of memory which retains sensory information for less than a second. It is derived from the five senses: sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch.

One instance of Jin-seok's sensory memory activation occurs when he notices his brother limping on his right leg instead of the left, contradicting his recollection of his brother's previous injury. This visual discrepancy triggers Jin-seok's sensory memory, causing his brain to instantly compare the sight to his stored memories, which confirm that it was the left leg that had been injured. This sudden realization creates a moment of confusion and worry, as Jin-seok begins to suspect that something is wrong with his brother's condition. Another instance is when Jin-seok recognizes his brother's gang members as the same individuals who had previously claimed to be detectives during his brother's disappearance. His sensory memory detects their familiar faces, linking them to past encounters. This contradiction between their former identity as detectives and their current role as criminals induces uneasiness in Jin-seok, making him question their true intentions and his brother's association with them.

Jin-seok's sensory memory is also triggered when he sees a mechanical pencil lead on his desk, recalling a traumatic incident in which his brother attempted to stab him in the eye with the pencil during a late-night study session. The visual stimulus of the pencil lead intensifies his anxiety, as he

remembers the precise ticking sound from the previous night. He realizes that the event was real and not a dream, as his brother had claimed. This recognition escalates Jin-seok's fear, making him hyper-aware of the potential threat his brother poses. Furthermore, his sensory memory activates when his brother mentions taking a taxi during an argument. The auditory stimulus triggers a memory, and Jin-seok realizes he has never mentioned taking a taxi to his brother. His immediate reaction is fear and shock, as his brother's unexplained knowledge of this event raises suspicion. The realization that his brother possesses hidden information causes anxiety and a sense of betrayal, leaving Jin-seok mentally distressed.

Short-Term Memory

Short-term memory, also known as working memory, retains information for a brief period, typically lasting less than half a minute.

In *Forgotten*, this type of memory is evident when Jin-seok argues with his brother, who is dissatisfied with his explanation and accuses him of lying. His brother then asks, “*Did you take your medication yesterday?*” This question prompts Jin-seok to realize that he had in fact, forgotten to take his medicine, aligning with what his brother had stated earlier. He can only recall that his medication had fallen under the cabinet and his brother's unexpected interference had distracted him from retrieving it. As a result, he recognizes that he did indeed forget to take his medicine the previous day. This realization causes worry, as he becomes aware of the significance of his medication for both his mental and physical well-being.

Long-Term Memory

Long-term memory involves the storage of information over an extended period and it can be a lifetime.

Jin-seok's long-term memory is activated when he recalls hearing his brother leave the house and the sound of the gate opening. When his brother denies stepping out Jin-seok insists:

“You stepped out last night. You did. I heard you leaving and even heard the gate.”

This contradiction between his clear memory and his brother's denial raises concerns about his brother's trustworthiness making him question why he is lying. Additionally, Jin-seok's long-term memory recalls his past experiences of being tortured. He vividly remembers being splashed with water and repeatedly tormented. These memories provoke extreme uneasiness as they reinforce his feelings of vulnerability and distrust. Another significant long-term memory involves his brother's violent behaviour. Jin-seok recalls his brother attempting to stab his eye with a mechanical pencil lead. The precise details of this traumatic event remain deeply ingrained in his memory, heightening his anxiety and reinforcing his fear of his brother. Jin-seok's long-term memory also retains vivid recollections of following his brother at night and uncovering his true identity. His memory of the event is so clear that he insists it was not a dream:

“Shut up! Dream? No! I remember everything so vividly.”

Despite his detailed recollection his brother's repeated denials frustrate him further increasing his anxiety.

Explicit Long-Term Memory

Explicit long-term memory involves the conscious recollection of facts and experiences.

One such memory is Jin-seok's struggle to find employment. He recalls applying for multiple jobs and facing repeated rejection, which generates a sense of hopelessness and anxiety. His failure to secure a job becomes a defining memory, reinforcing his desperation to earn money and support his ailing brother. Jin-seok also vividly recalls being tortured and hypnotized, which induces a deep sense of uneasiness. The trauma of physical and psychological abuse haunts him, making him relive feelings of terror and helplessness. Furthermore, he remembers engaging in a suspicious email conversation regarding murder. The recollection of this exchange raises profound moral concerns, causing uneasiness as he confronts the possibility of his involvement in a crime. Ultimately, his desperation for money leads him to commit murder, highlighting the extent of his internal conflict.

Another disturbing explicit memory involves Jin-seok repeatedly instructing a young child to count from one to a hundred. This memory generates unease, as it suggests that he was acting under manipulation or pressure, causing him to question his own behaviour and mental stability. Moreover, Jin-seok recalls the tragic accident that killed his parents and left his brother in a coma. This memory evokes intense anxiety, guilt, and helplessness. He also remembers accidentally killing a mother and daughter, leading to overwhelming regret. The realization of these past actions fuels his emotional

turmoil, making him struggle with the weight of his guilt. Finally, Jin-seok recalls killing his brother's doctor upon discovering the truth about the email's origin. The clarity of this memory exacerbates his fear, as he grapples with the reality of being a murderer.

Unease as a Catalyst for Memory Manipulation in *Forgotten* (2017)

In *Forgotten* (2017), unease serves as a psychological force that distorts Jin-seok's memory, erodes his sense of reality and heightens his anxiety. The film masterfully uses unease as a tool of manipulation shaping Jin-seok's perception of events and gradually unravelling his mental stability. Unease functions through conflicting memories, sensory triggers and psychological manipulation, forcing Jin-seok into a continuous state of doubt and paranoia. The more he questions his past the deeper his anxiety becomes, ultimately leading him to an emotional and psychological breakdown.

Unease primarily manipulates Jin-seok's memory by introducing contradictions between his past recollections and his present experiences. These inconsistencies cause him to second-guess his memories, leading to self-doubt and disorientation.

Contradictory Memories and the Breakdown of Trust

A key example of unease distorting memory occurs when Jin-seok notices his brother limping on the opposite leg from what he remembers. His sensory memory which should provide immediate recognition of details, contradicts the visual information in front of him. This moment unsettles him, making him question whether his memories are false or if something has been altered in his

reality. The doubt sown by this contradiction disrupts his ability to trust his own recollection of events, creating a snowball effect in which he increasingly questions every detail of his past.

Gaslighting and the Fabrication of Doubt

Throughout the film, Jin-seok's brother persistently denies events that Jin-seok clearly remembers, a tactic known as gaslighting. Gaslighting is a form of psychological manipulation that causes the victim to question their perception of reality (Conrad, 2024). By repeatedly contradicting Jin-seok's claims, his brother makes him doubt his memories, making him more susceptible to manipulation. When his brother tells him that his memories of following him at night were merely dreams, Jin-seok becomes trapped in a cycle of uncertainty. This mental tug-of-war leaves him disoriented and increasingly anxious, as he struggles to separate truth from illusion.

Interruption and Memory Suppression

Another method of manipulation involves disrupting Jin-seok's memory processes. For example, when he forgets to take his medication due to his brother's interference, he begins to question his ability to recall events accurately. The unease grows as he wonders whether this was an accidental lapse or a deliberate act by his brother to make him lose confidence in his memory. By making Jin-seok forget his routine, his brother slowly strips him of his ability to rely on his own recollections, reinforcing his vulnerability to manipulation.

Sensory Memory and Triggers of Unease

Sensory memory plays a crucial role in reinforcing unease. Visual and auditory triggers cause Jin-seok to

recall traumatic memories that intensify his anxiety. For example, when he sees the mechanical pencil's lead on his desk, he is suddenly reminded of the moment his brother attempted to stab him in the eye. Initially dismissed as a dream, this memory resurfaces with terrifying clarity, forcing Jin-seok to confront the truth that his brother may be a threat to him. The unease caused by this realization alters his perception, making him hyper-aware of the dangers he previously ignored.

Moral and Emotional Discomfort

Another powerful manipulation occurs through moral unease, particularly when Jin-seok recalls an email conversation about committing murder. The very idea of being involved in such a crime shakes his identity, forcing him to question whether his actions were his own or if he was coerced into them. This form of unease leads to an internal conflict where Jin-seok struggles with guilt, regret, and self-justification. The resurfacing of this memory is not just a moment of recollection but an active re-experiencing of trauma that destabilizes his sense of morality.

The Link Between Unease and Anxiety

The manipulation of unease is directly linked to the intensification of Jin-seok's anxiety. As his trust in his memory deteriorates, his mental state worsens, pushing him into paranoia and emotional distress.

Unease triggers heightened paranoia in Jin-seok, making him question everything and everyone around him. His recognition of the supposed detectives as criminals unsettles him, deepening his suspicion of his brother. This visual contradiction amplifies his sense of betrayal, making him wonder if his brother has been lying to him all along. The unease created by this realization

leads to extreme paranoia, making it impossible for him to trust his surroundings. The unease caused by conflicting memories leaves Jin-seok in a constant state of uncertainty. The moment he hears his brother mention a taxi he never told him about shatters his confidence in his ability to recall events accurately. This emotional discomfort manifests as anxiety, as he begins to question whether his memory is reliable at all. The more he doubts his recollections, the more anxious he becomes, ultimately leading him to question his own sanity.

The resurfacing of traumatic memories amplifies Jin-seok's anxiety. His recollections of torture, brainwashing, and the murder he committed come flooding back, forcing him to relive his past horrors. The unease generated by these memories is not just an emotional response but a psychological trap—each memory reopening wounds he had suppressed. His memory of accidentally killing a mother and daughter, and later, his brother's doctor, intensifies his guilt and fear. The realization that he has taken innocent lives adds to his anxiety, pushing him further into emotional collapse. As unease continues to manipulate his perception, Jin-seok reaches a breaking point. The final moment of clarity, when he remembers that his so-called brother is actually the son of the family he murdered, overwhelms him with guilt. This final revelation, built upon layers of unease and manipulation, triggers the ultimate anxiety-driven response—his attempted suicide. The unbearable weight of his resurfaced memories and the realization of his actions leave him with no escape from his guilt and self-loathing.

CONCLUSION

Forgotten (2017) masterfully demonstrates how unease can be weaponized to manipulate memory, create doubt, and trigger anxiety. Through contradictions, gaslighting, sensory triggers and moral discomfort, Jin-seok's perception of reality is systematically broken down, leading him into a spiral of paranoia and self-doubt. The film effectively portrays how unease is not just an emotional state but a powerful tool for memory manipulation. As Jin-seok's memories resurface, they bring not only clarity but unbearable anxiety, ultimately pushing him to his breaking point. The film's use of unease as a narrative device highlights the fragile nature of memory and the devastating consequences of psychological manipulation.

RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION

This research makes a significant contribution to the study of East Asian cinema, particularly South Korean cinema, while also deepening discussions in cultural studies and psychology, especially concerning unease and memory. By exploring these themes, the study provides valuable insights into how the manipulation of memory influences the subconscious and fosters feelings of anxiety.

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