

HISTORICAL REPRESENTATION OF GRAHAM SWIFT'S WORKS



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ABSTRACT

This essay demonstrates that in Graham Swift's *Last Orders*, the past is represented by the figure of Jack Dodds, a deceased man who is perceived as a living presence and whose life is associated with a book of requests, wishes, and unwritten rules regarding the way the living should behave. This essay also demonstrates that Jack Dodds's life is associated with a book of requests, wishes, and unwritten rules regarding the way the dead should behave. This concept is shown by a remark that was made by Linda Hutcheon (2002), who said that "understanding the past becomes an issue of representation, that is of creating and interpreting, not of objective

recording". But the characters in the novel that was written by Graham Swift do their best to understand these requirements and rules, and they abide by them out of a sense of duty and respect for the power that they have. Because these principles do not exist in written form, we have to infer them from the guidance included in Jack's figurative book of life. This is the information that Jack's loved ones and close friends are most likely to recollect and discuss. If the past is depicted as a book of unwritten rules that the contemporary characters are required to discern and obey, then there are a number of different ways in which the past might be understood. It has been shown to us that in order for the world of the present to carry

out its aims and obligations, it only obeys the commands provided to it by the world of the past. The modern civilization that we now inhabit does not put a significant focus

on either the uniqueness of its values or the ideals themselves.

Keywords: historical, representation, themes, book

INTRODUCTION

It makes no difference how significant the principles and goals of this organization are to them. In the novel written by Graham Swift, the narrators put the utmost importance on their obligation to fulfil their spiritual commitments to the times that have passed by behaving in a manner that is congruent with the requirements that have been set out by those times. There are a total of 75 chapters in the book, and the titles of those chapters are either the characters' names, given that those personalities serve as the novel's narrators, or the names of the regions that these individuals pass through on their journey to Margate or Dreamland (Swift 1996:273). These 75 chapters do not present a plot in a sequential order; rather, they only give these people's perspectives on their responsibilities toward the past in relation to Jack Dodds, the deceased man whose intentions they are obligated to take into consideration and carry out.

The story is broken up into three parts: the prologue, the middle section, and the epilogue. We are not provided with any precise information about the time period in which the events take place; instead, we are shown merely the surviving characters' determination and active attempts to pay their last respects to Jack, who is a representation of the past. The only sign that some time has gone is the clock that hangs in the bar where the living people get together to catch up on current events and discuss different aspects of their life and the duties they have. Time may be thought of as an endless string of the present moment. It is completely inactive and does not move in any way. The way Jack views the passage of time indicates his notion of the stalemate that characterises the progression of historical events: "But it aint ever gone somewhere, has it?" (Swift 1996:9).

The book consists of 75 chapters, all of which are presented in a condensed fashion, and there is very little emphasis given on the precise use of language. The narrative of this tale is being told by Ray, Amy, Vince, Lenny, Vic, and Mandy, respectively. Each of them gets their own chapter, and the majority of the attention is placed on dialogues evidencing their present issues

and the moral imperative to perform their responsibility to Jack, whose will tells them to disperse their father's ashes in Margate. The present is tied to these people's travel to Margate, the Canterbury Cathedral, and the Naval Memorial in order to pay their last respects to Jack. Margate is the first stop on their journey, followed by the Canterbury Cathedral and the Naval Memorial. They admire the world as if they had never had the opportunity to know it before, as if the departed had given them a chance to grasp the world in which they now inhabit. They do this while looking out the window of Vince's car. The journey in the automobile to Margate is transformed into a "sightseeing tour" (Swift 1996:107), during which the protagonists gain knowledge about their world and its history in an exhilarating rush that jogs their memories and urges them to honour the past and fulfil their responsibilities with regard to it.

Their words, habits, and attitudes, taken together, portray a picture of a present that is not nearly as important to them as their past. This is the image that is painted when you take all of these things into consideration. They do not share their objectives, guiding principles, or plans for the future; rather, they only talk about pieces of their memories pertaining to the past, such as their youth and childhood, their careers, and their sense of obligation. They do not discuss their plans, guiding principles, or strategies for the future. Because they saw Jack's death as nothing more than a transition to a new spiritual state in the Dreamland of Margate, which is located close to the ocean and is both a paradise world and a part of their current reality, they do not appear to have any regrets over his passing. This could be because the Dreamland of Margate is both a paradise world and a part of their current reality.

SYMBOLIC PAST IN GRAHAM SWIFT’S LAST ORDERS

Last Orders, written by Graham Swift, is a postmodernist novel that encourages readers to provide their own interpretations of the text and to voice their concerns over the topics that are brought up in the book. The reader is tasked with interpreting a sequence of symbols throughout the book in order to get an understanding of the truth behind the events that took place in the past. These symbols take up the majority of the novel's plot. For instance, the opinions that the characters have about their obligations to the past, as shown by Jack Dodds, express the idea that there is power in contrast. In spite of the fact that some of the chapter heads contain their own names, these people have a consistent point of view about the amount of respect they need to have for their own past. They adhere to the theory that "a man is only a name" (Swift 1996:128), which maintains that it is a person's obligation to fulfil the responsibilities that he

or she owes to the past by preserving its memory and showing it a high level of respect. In other words, they believe that "a man is only a name" In addition, the places that serve as the names of a few of the chapters, such as Bermondsey, Blackheath, Dartford, Gravesend, Rochester, Chatham, Wick's Farm, Canterbury, and Margate, serve as symbols of the unity that can be found in variety. These locations include Bermondsey, Blackheath, Dartford, Gravesend, Rochester, and Chatham. Due to the fact that these places stand in for the symbolic aspects of the past that the living characters in the tale need to examine and grasp, it is essential for them to have a consistent point of view in order to demonstrate the proper amount of respect for the past. In addition, these places stand as tangible representations of the unwavering march of time, which is something that people of every generation observe and value. They are only visible by the living characters as they make their journey to Dreamland, which is truly Margate and acts as the destination for all of the ghosts from the past who are on their pilgrimage there.

FUKUYAMA’S THE END OF HISTORY AND THE LAST MAN

The works "The End of History" and "The Last Man," written by the American philosopher Francis Fukuyama and released in 1992, are primarily responsible for the author's widespread recognition. In these writings, he recasts the end of history tradition as an alternative to postmodernism by sharing with the enlightenment of the eighteenth century a trust in the efficacy of reason and faith in progress. This conviction in the efficacy of reason and faith in progress was central to postmodernism. These works are mostly responsible for Fukuyama's fame. Fukuyama contends, based on the fact that liberal democracy has been approved in a number of nations, that this might be the goal of the intellectual growth of humans and the ultimate form of human governance. When he discusses how history has come to a conclusion, he refers to this as the culmination of historical events. He refers to the impending conclusion of historical events with the term "end of history" in his discussions.

In this sense, he thinks that liberal democracy promotes the end of history; nevertheless, he differentiates this from the end of the occurrence of events. In other words, he believes that liberal democracy supports the end of history. In his work, he makes extensive use of Hegel and Marx, in addition to other schools of thought, and he draws attention to the fact that both of these thinkers considered the possibility of a final form of society that would have been satisfactory to the course of historical progression. He does this by highlighting the fact that Hegel and Marx both considered the possibility of a final form of society. In order to have a

better grasp on the present condition of events, Fukuyama places a lot of emphasis on the philosophers who were instrumental in the creation of modernity and utilises their concepts as a kind of blueprint. In addition to his viewpoint of the end of history, which is represented by an end to the fight between ideologies, he believes that such an end would be a positive turn of events. This is an aspect of his perspective on the end of history. Because it asserts that the enlightenment extend has been finally accomplished and that faith in progress has been rewarded by the creation and subsequent universalization of western liberal democracy, his theory can be seen as an alternative to postmodernism. This is due to the fact that postmodernism argues that the enlightenment extend has finally been accomplished. This is in contrast to the postmodernist perspective, which maintains that the enlightened ideal has not been fully realised to its full extent.

POSTMODERNISTS’ VIEWS ABOUT THE END OF HISTORY

Postmodern philosophers revealed an alternative, non-progressive view of history, which postmodern literature analyses and discusses. They accept that history does not make any sense, and they feel that any philosophy of history that strives to interpret history as a progressive one needs to be disregarded. They also believe that history should be taught in a manner that emphasises the importance of the past. Postmodernists disagree with the modernist presupposition that a happy living can be achieved by using reason and science in one's daily life. Postmodernists are known for their commitment to relativism, which requires them to reject the idea that reason is superior, as well as any ideology that claims to be rational. In addition to this, they are against totalizing models and globalisation; as a result, there does not emerge a single fact, with the exception of the absolute knowledge that numerous truths exist. The Russian-French philosopher Alexandre Kojève, who bases his lectures on the phenomenology of spirit on the interpretation of Hegelian logic that he provides in his book *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, has provided some explanations as to how phenomenology of spirit works, and these explanations can be found in his book *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel* (1969). According to him, the law of history is predicated on the human need to be acknowledged and the gratification that comes from achieving goals. People always strive for new methods to accomplish their objectives and gratify their needs, and in the process, they make the world a more unified and similar place. This state is a flexible realm in which people's demands are recognised, given legitimacy, and given protection. This suggests that man behaves in a self-centered way at this moment in history, caring only about his own capacity to survive and his degree of comfort.

POSTMODERN HISTORIOGRAPHY

It has become clear that academic debates in the realm of postmodern thinking and philosophy are indistinguishable from the concept of history. Since the 1960s, there have been extensive theoretical disputes addressing the link between historiography and fiction among historians and philosophers who specialise in the study of history. In addition, the popularity of historiographic metafiction throughout this time period is evidence of the significant impact that postmodern historiography had on the writing that was produced during this period of time. Taking use of Hayden White's theoretical frameworks, the current essay makes an effort to, among other things, provide an overview of the foundations around which postmodern historiography is built. The essay begins by providing explanations regarding the importance of the decade of the 1960s. Subsequently, it discusses a variety of historiographic methodologies in order to get to the bottom of the reasons for the development of postmodern historiography.

In addition to the arguments surrounding Hayden White's beliefs, this page provides a short introduction to the pertinent theories of Friedrich Nietzsche, Michel Foucault, and Roland Barthes.

TRADITIONAL HISTORY WRITING AND CONVENTIONAL HISTORICAL NOVEL

In order to provide evidence in favour of Hutcheon's fundamental assertions, which state that the events of the past cannot be accurately portrayed in the present, we must first examine the evolution of historiography. Historiography has been the subject of commentary from the very beginning of recorded history. In his foundational work *Poetics*, which he wrote between 384 and 322 BC, Aristotle makes a distinction between a poet and a historian. He asserts that the historian "tells of what has occurred" (43), but the poet "tells of the things that could happen" in the future (43). He goes on to claim that "Because of this reason, poetry is something more intellectual and more deserving of serious study than history," explaining that whereas poetry is concerned with universal truths, history is concerned with specific facts.

Aristotle makes the contrast between the historian and the poet by emphasising the expectation that the historian would describe the past exactly as it occurred, but the poet will allow himself to make judgements and will enrich the text with other possibilities. He values literature more

than a simple recital of historical events. In a similar vein, Simon Malpas, interpreting the same distinction in the modern era, asserts that the purpose of the historian is to "chart particular 'facts' and events without drawing more general conclusions about their meanings and connections." In order for the historian to be successful in this endeavour, he or she must become a "mere chronicler who records what has happened without passing judgement."

POSTMODERNIST HISTORIOGRAPHY AND HISTORIOGRAPHIC METAFICTION

Beginning in the second part of the 20th century, the line that has traditionally been drawn between fiction and history is beginning to be called into doubt. It is the poststructuralist school of thought that is responsible for moulding the postmodern interpretation of history and re-affiliating it with literature. Previous understanding of the modernist concept that objectivity is attainable in historical research and the portrayal of true events from the past may be done has been called into doubt. Many modern historians and historians of philosophy, such as Hayden White, Frank Ankersmit, Dominick LaCapra, and Louis Montrose, hold the view that history, much like fiction, is formed via the use of language, and it is the product of an activity that involves writing. Textuality raises questions about the objectivity of historical accounts since they are transmitted via a written process. Understanding the postmodern viewpoint of history requires first and foremost an understanding of language from a poststructuralist point of view. Jacques Derrida decomposes the dichotomous opposition between speech and writing and maintains that speech and writing have the same connotation. This is due to the fact that speech is "structured as writing" and "there is 'writing in speech'," as well as the fact that "What is written is read as speech or the surrogate of speech."

LITERATURE REVIEW

ROMANIAN JOURNAL (2018) This article examines Graham Swift's novel *Last Orders* from the perspective of the notion of the past as it occurs in the book. It demonstrates that the past is portrayed in a postmodernist manner through symbols, and that it is associated with the figure of a deceased character who is perceived as a living presence as well as with a book whose analysis can offer multiple interpretations. In addition, it demonstrates that the past is associated with the figure of a book whose analysis can offer multiple interpretations. This article, which focuses on the symbols of the past and elucidates the metafictional state of Graham Swift's work, makes the observation that the past is available for study and may be

interpreted in a variety of ways by the readers. In addition, the article elucidates the metafictional state of Graham Swift's work.

Dr. DjafriYasmina (2017) This thesis aims to define the relationship between "the End of history" as a philosophical concept and postmodernist critique of history in contemporary English literature, most notably in Graham Swift's *Waterland* as historiographic metafiction, with the goal of exploring the meaning of history and its end, through relying on Fukuyama interpretation to the end of history, in which the research paper shows the difference between his position and postmodern attitudes. In addition, this thesis aims to define the relationship between "the End of history" as In addition, the purpose of this thesis is to clarify the nature of the connection that exists between "the End of history" and In addition to this, the research investigates how postmodern thinkers have reacted to the idea of speaking about history in terms of a grand narrative.

FaribaNoorBakhsh (2020) This essay makes an effort to demonstrate that Tom Crick, the narrator of Graham Swift's *Waterland*, uses the methods of postmodern historiography when telling his story. Specifically, this essay focuses on demonstrating that Tom Crick tells his story in a manner that is consistent with postmodern historiography. In postmodern historiography, the "Grand Narrative of History" is given very little respect, and individual histories, rather than collective ones, are emphasised. According to Hutcheon's definition of the word, historiographic metafiction is a kind of tale that self-reflexively problematizes the link between the real historical world and the referent. This may take place in a number of different ways. *Waterland*, which has a historical self-consciousness, creates an intriguing paradox by juxtaposing the desire for stories with the knowing of their fabricated genesis. This results in the demand for tales being met.

Kate Mitchell (2019) Tom Crick, the protagonist of Graham Swift's novel *Waterland* (1983), is under the belief that there is no historical link between the two events. "The reality is that nothing takes place," they said (40). Nevertheless, stories, histories, and the process of "making things happen" proliferate, circulate, and intertwine in an abundantly fruitful manner all throughout the book. This demonstrates that there is a demand for history that persists and maybe even flourishes despite the fact that there is no history. This want ensures that, despite the fact that logic would suggest otherwise, the very emptiness of history will result in a large quantity of it being produced. Both the attempts to depict history and the need for histories are

certain to fall short, which leads to an excessive quantity of creation and repetition of both sorts of histories.

Bojana Gledić (2019) In addition to being Graham Swift's most well-known piece of writing and most likely one of the most lauded British novels of the 1980s, *Waterland* is regarded as the apogee of the postmodernist book by a large number of literary critics. *Waterland* also holds the distinction of being the most well-known work of writing that Swift has ever produced. The book *Waterland* was first released in 1985. When one considers *Waterland*, they often do so in reference to history and the part that it plays in the lives of everyday people. The phrase "historical metafiction" was first used by Linda Hutcheon, and history is often the first thing that comes to mind when discussing *Waterland*. Hutcheon used the novel as an example to demonstrate this concept. It is interesting to notice that, at first glance, the particular kind of history that Graham Swift is discussing in this book seems to elude both the reader and the critic.

Ali Allaham (2017) The literary genre known as "historical fiction" includes many subgenres, one of which is the historical novel. Historical novels concentrate on particular historical events and make use of fictional elements in an effort to represent those events from a certain perspective. On the other hand, depending on how old it is and the ideas that are now accepted within this field, it may approach history in a number of different ways. As the story unfolds through the eras, there is the potential for the novel's narrative methods and its structure to undergo alterations as well. Therefore, in the historical novel, historiography and narrativity work together to construct the frame in which the historical event is depicted. This frame may be thought of as the historical novel's context. The term "historical novel" might be used to refer to this particular framework then.

OUT OF THIS WORLD

Out of this World is concerned about the intense re-orientation of contemporary culture towards visual representation and the consequential strain it places on our ability to perceive and differentiate the real. Swift's prefatory quote, "What the eye sees not, the heart rues not," is a predicament that predicates this concern. In the quote, Swift says, "What the eye sees not, the heart rues not." An "index of the twentieth century" may be found in the film *Out of this World* in the form of its three major characters: Robert Beech personifies the "age of mud" and sepia,

also known as "that brown, obscure age," which occurred in the early 1900s. His son Harry, a news photographer, lives through the monochrome years of the mid-20th century. Harry's daughter Sophie is a part of the brilliant, blinding chaos of late-20th-century colour, also known as "the days of Kodachrome and technicolour and colour TVs" (OW: 203). As a result, Swift has utilised photographic analogies to represent three generations of a problematic family whose profound psychological strains are implicitly connected with the increasing growth of photography and its expressions, namely film, television, and the media. Swift suggests that photography, along with World War II, has become a major factor in shaping the 20th century. Photography, as a system of mass-image production, has turned the latter part of this century into an age of simulacrum, in which a society that is disillusioned can no longer differentiate between image and reality. 45 The book "Out of this World" suggests that photography is one of the primary elements (together with the so-called "death of God") responsible for the feeling of emptiness that is prevalent in today's postmodern society. In contrast to *Waterland* and *Ever After*, Swift's story is not instructive nor focused on finding a remedy; rather, the structure, characterizations, and material of the work reflect this state and the effects it has. *Out of this World* is therefore portrayed by Swift as a postmodern "artefact," "an symbol, a totem, a curio," etc (OW: 120). It is a narrative that imitates the forms and ideology of photography, which is a documented record of random moments in the past presented subjectively in a 'snapshot' style. However, it resembles realist principles in its attempt to mirror this reality and explain or find logic in experience. This is because it is attempting to explain or find logic in experience. While the characters in *Waterland*, who were disturbed by a flat and soggy environment, turned to the artifices of home-made history and story-telling for reprieve, the characters in *Out of this World* invest their dreams of meaning and order in the empty domain of the photographic image. In *Waterland*, the characters were disturbed by a flat and soggy environment. The irony that is inherent in this dynamic is a reiteration of *Waterland*'s argument that individuals who are trapped in the emptiness of consumerism and apocalyptic excesses in the late twentieth century are reverting to artificial creations of the real.

As a direct result of this, Swift's obsession with both postmodern and classic realist literary forms, as well as his investigation into the intricate link between reality and fiction, are perpetuated. Swift considers photography to be significant due to the significant impact it has had on representation and the manner in which people see reality. First and foremost, the proliferation of images has led to a state of simulacrum, which is defined as follows by the

theorist Jean Baudrillard: "a generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal." This refers to a state in which the original no longer outlasts the simulation; in fact, the simulation comes before the original, which is referred to as "the precession of simulacra" (Baudrillard, Precession:). As a direct result of this, individuals see both themselves and their surroundings through the lens of created stereotypes that are propagated by the media and the film industry. The assumption that the illusion of mimesis that pictures convey would supply the meaning and order that mankind needs is the driving force for their symbiotic relationship with the world of images.

In this sense, photography is associated with the traditional realism ideology because to its seeming collaboration with "reality" and objectivity, sometimes known as its "genuine synthetic" character. The story of *Out of this World* is narrated in alternating narratives by Harry Beech and his estranged daughter Sophie. These tales simulate the dislocation that the characters describe. The interpolated monologues are inspired by a common urge to make sense of a difficult family history that is constituted of dishonesty, misunderstandings, hatred, and violence. The monologues focus mostly on memories of crucial incidents in their past. When the family patriarch, Robert Beech, is murdered in a horrible bomb explosion in the family "fortress," the climax that irreparably shatters their lives and relationships occurs. The physical fracture of this referent is symbolically reflected subsequently in Sophie and Harry's narratives, which chronicle the events leading up to this moment and the years of solitude that follow in the aftermath of this moment. Aposiopesis and a few instances of paratactic speech are used by Swift to demonstrate how narrative collapses and the world becomes figuratively and literally incomprehensible when the author's characters are placed under stress:

Because you don't believe it. You don't believe it one second, then the next, because you don't think it's possible for what transpired to have taken place. Therefore, it continues to take place. till such time as you believe it. How am I supposed to convey to you that I do not believe something? What do you want me to say? That is where I was. Heard. Saw. Right there and there. What exactly does it accomplish?

An entity as fluid and subjective as pure experience or reality, particularly a reality that is immediately distressing like this one, may be difficult to pin down. The artificial relationship between referent and signifier is a handicap for fictions such as language that seek to represent this reality. The emotionally constrained Beech family is the human incarnation of this

handicap, and their surname, "(b)roken speech," may witness to this fact. Due to the absence of any practical means of understanding, comprehending, and reporting such an experience, Sophie's language command of the situation suffers noticeably as a consequence. "Time has a way of having things happen to it. Something disrupts the regular course of things. It will have a hole blasted in it. A cavity that does not have a bottom (OW:).

now a young lady, sets out on a long-awaited journey of self-discovery by travelling to Greece in the hopes of learning more about her family history and discovering who she is. Her aspirations are constructed on the cotton-wool of the dreams, despite the fact that she is well-read in her classics and proud of her beauty from the Mediterranean.

noct and utilise to give our lives purpose and structure are, in some way, reflections of the fundamental truth that we all share. In addition to this, the authors of these works of fiction continue to fight that the realist notion of a "true" and objective history that may be accessed through the pursuit of fact, detail, and impartial evidence are in fact "verbal fictions, the contents of

HISTORICAL REPRESENTATION

The talent of being able to create stories is one that, in spite of the fact that ultimately there is no order or purpose in *Ever After*, yet manages to offer some semblance of both. Swift returns to his concerns regarding the contemporary *Zeitgeist*, in which characters struggle to understand and cope with a reality without theological authority. The result of this absence, as dramatised by the character Matthew Pearce who lives in the nineteenth century, is a demoralising awareness of the arbitrariness, injustice, and pointlessness of life and death without reason. Swift believes that the remedy is to make use of the capabilities of the imagination in order to change perception and, as a result, modify the fictitious fabric that makes up reality. Swift demonstrates that if the absence of God is taken to be the primary cause of the (post)modern feeling of disorder, then this may also demonstrate that reality has become fictitious and is, as a result, subservient to creative re-orderings. *Ever After* is similar to *Waterland* and *Out of this World* in that it combines traditional realism and postmodern literary issues. In this regard, *Ever After* compares well to those two works. Swift provides a remedy to the worries that come along with living in the modern vacuum by championing the advantages of created artifices such as storytelling and romance, while simultaneously

deconstructing these artifices and revealing the illusory nature of these artifices. *Ever After*, much like *Waterland*, is written with the intention of imparting knowledge; it mimics the structures and traditions of conventional story-telling (such as fairy tales), and each chapter of the book consists of "a moral," "some practical counsel," "a proverb or maxim," etc (Benjamin, *Illuminations*: 86).

The narrator of the book, Bill Unwin, "tells" facts of his life and the lives of his ancestors in an effort to make sense of his "self" and, accidentally, to pass on "bits of wisdom" in the tradition of story-telling. Not only does the propensity of the book to reflect self-consciously on its own workings and patterns call attention to the artifice of the real text, but it also establishes a parallel between the topics of *Ever After* and the world of literature. For example, the book investigates the characters' acute knowledge of their own impending death, and it also alludes, via the use of metafictional tropes, to the impending mortality of literature. Another connection that can be seen between the narrator's identity crisis and the artificial nature of literature is that while Pearce's "fall" from God in the nineteenth century may be seen as a parallel to the disintegration of the realist paradigm in art, the narrator's identity crisis can be seen as a connection to the artificial nature of literature.

The most significant comparison that Swift makes is between the narrator's eventual acceptance of make-believe as a construct to live by and the contradictory dynamic that is operating within this text, in which realist 'illusionism' is paradoxically upheld. This is the most important comparison that Swift makes. The narrator queries, "So why all this acting stuff?," while also asking, "Why all this poetry?" Why do you keep thinking that it is anything else? (EA: 116) - The impetus for the production of creative projections of our fundamental reality is the desire to combat the basically mundane and repetitive quality of that reality. A gold 'marriage' clock, which is the embodiment of this unchanging cycle, is passed down through the generations in the Unwin family. This clock serves as a symbol of the family's unwavering determination that a transcendent, 'epiphanic,' moment will eventually be wrested from an otherwise repetitive, timelocked existence. Therefore, to re-present the actual is to magnify, improve, and add meaning to it, even if this is done in a fake manner.

Therefore, Jonathan Swift's characterization of the latter half of the 20th century as a "plastic" period filled with "substitoots" is appropriate (*Ever After*: 7) 2 is an example of what Jean Baudrillard refers to as the "precession of simulacra," which he defines as "the development

by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal" (Precession: 253). In these simulated times, when imitations of reality have replaced the genuine thing and left a void in its place, the characters strive to establish 'truths' such as those of identity and the purpose of life for themselves. *Ever After* makes the argument that there is a requirement for fictions such as story-telling, which, despite the fact that they are illusory, provide a much-needed sense of catharsis, joy, and understanding; words impose the perception of order on disorder and 'link terra firmawith terra firma;... [they] throw a path across a void.' (EA: 141). The first line of the book is a translation of a Latin phrase taken from the *Aeneid* that reads, "... et mentemmortaliatangunt." This phrase translates to "mortal affairs touch/affect the mind," and it is used to introduce the fundamental concern of the novel's two main characters, Bill Unwin and his predecessor, Matthew Pearce, who lived in the nineteenth century. Swift is suggesting that once human beings become aware of the fact that their death is imminent, the need to discover or manufacture some sort of significance in their limited lives may often become an obsessive search for such people.

CONCLUSION

Ever After, *Waterland*, and *Out of This World* are all focused with reflecting the current human condition, and it would seem that this condition has paradoxically become one of representation. According to Swift, reality is not a particular or tangible entity but rather a perspective, a built model, or a product of one's own imaginative construction. The late twentieth century was propelled into disorder by the decline of religion, the advancement of technology, the rise of photography, and the occurrence of two particularly sobering world wars. This has eroded all foundations, destroyed the delineation between true and false, and deprived a society that is disoriented of notions of order and meaning. Swift positions his three male narrators, who are all middle-aged, middle-class, and middle-aged, who are all presented with a significant personal crisis, inside this post-structural "vacuum." They have created a thorough explanation of the nature of truth and fiction via the educated and perceptive representations they have provided of their past and current situations, which they have combined to form. In every instance, Swift comes to the same conclusions, and those findings lead to three interconnected concepts. The first concept is that history is a series of cycles, consisting of ongoing advancement and regression as well as degeneration and regeneration. Second, that the human animal is not adapted to this repetitious and futile life; and hence, third, that mankind is continually obsessed with building myths of purpose and order in attempt to

cure the fact that it is not suited to this existence. The pretence of mimesis, or the capacity to reproduce or represent reality in an accurate manner, is something that all of these fictions share in common; this is what ties them together. Their efforts are all for naught because, according to the novels, reality is not a substance that lends itself easily to reproduction; on the contrary, *Waterland* describes it as that which "has no taste or colour of its own... [it is a] form of Nothing" (WL: 11). Reality's transparency and frustrating elusiveness is the basis upon which the three novels build their illusory structures.

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