

Abstract

Postmodern theorist such as Jean Baudrillard and Fredric Jameson state that capitalism and consumer culture have give rise to the state of postmodern simulation, in which the real no longer exists. The concealed essence of realness is replaced by the state of simulation—a hyper-reality that is neither real nor image. We are now living in the postmodern image world where even a novel is subjected to the influence of the simulation.

The novel in question is Don DeLillo's *Mao II*, which explores the theorists' concept of simulation both literally and metaphorically. The novel tells the story of a struggling high modernist author and the representation of the real, Bill Gray, who is resisting the process of image commodification and simulation. The concealment of the real is presented through the novel's inclusion of photographs and distorted narrative structure. The result is a text that foregrounds the pole of simulation representational meaning excessively over the real.

This thesis aims to prove that after analyzing the terrorists' strategy, the supposed representation of the simulation, it is noticeable that there is a residue of the real residing in their activities. The identification of the terrorists' essence of realness becomes a point of departure that allows us to see *Mao II* as a novel of tension between the real and the simulated rather than an inclination toward one extreme. Moreover, by neutralizing the foregrounding of simulation, *Mao II* could also be found to question its postmodern status. This is because the recovery of the real also triggers the emergence of the high modernist author – a real author that unifies the novel's distorted simulated narrative.