

Simulations and Hyperreality in the Return of the King: A Postmodern Critique

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Abstract

The Novel *The Return of the King* by J.R.R. Tolkien's has been analyzed using Baudrillard (1994) model for Simulations and hyperreality to explore how reality and hyperreality is blurred. The results show that the novel's settings, characters and actions are designed to create a sense of reality through simulation, exemplifying the concept of hyperreality. Character's dialogues and actions are portrayed in a way that enhances the sense of hyperreality, providing readers with an alternative perspective on reality. Overall, the study suggests that "*The Return of the King*" employs hyperreality as a narrative strategy, using simulated environments, characters, and scenarios to challenge conventional notions of reality and offer readers a different way of interpreting the world portrayed in the novel. The study will help the academia in reading simulations and hyperreality blurred with reality in literature. This research presents a framework for future studies investigating related topics in literature and gives useful insights for scholars, educators and enthusiasts interested in the convergence of literature and postmodern thought.

Keywords: Simulations, Hyperreality, Return of the King, Postmodern, Critique

Introduction

Postmodernism is a critical response to modernism, representing a time that questioned modernist thought and action principles from the early to mid-twentieth

century. A lack of certainty marks postmodernism, irony and a sceptical attitude towards universally accepted facts. Its definition is complicated by its widespread use in many social and intellectual groups since the 1970s, which reflects a time of cultural and societal creativity (Woods, 1999).

Hyperreality, within the context of postmodernism, denotes the state in which the boundaries between reality and fiction are obscured, resulting in a fabricated or magnified representation of reality that is frequently perceived as more authentic than actual reality. This concept posits that in modern society, experiences that are mediated, such as those encountered in mass media, advertising and virtual environments, have the potential to overshadow or supplant authentic experiences. This can result in a diminished connection with the tangible world and a perception of living in a hyperreal domain where simulations are indiscernible from reality (Baudrillard, 1994).

Simulacra and simulation are terms used in postmodernism to describe a concept established by the French theorist Jean Baudrillard. Simulacra are replicas or portrayals that lack a foundation in actuality, frequently attaining a higher level of reality or importance than the genuine items or events they mimic. Simulation, however pertains to the procedure via which these duplicates or portrayals are generated, frequently utilizing media, technology, or societal constructions. Baudrillard contends that in present-day culture, simulacra and simulations have supplanted actuality, culminating in a condition where discerning between reality and simple representation becomes progressively arduous, finally depriving significance and veracity (Baudrillard, 1994).

In the postmodern era, the importance of the real is reduced as print and electronic media become the main means of representing reality and identity through different codes and signs. Often, something may appear more authentic than its original, leading to a blurring of the distinction between reality and representation. There is no such study analyzing the novel *The Return of the King* to find out the representation of hyperreality and simulation. This is as unique as it has explored the simulation and hyperreality from a distinct perspective (Rospigliosi, 2022).

Purpose of the Study

The study was aimed to analyse and explore the novel *The Return of The King* by J.R.R. Tolkien's for comprehension of simulations and hyperreality in postmodern era. The study was aimed to explore simulacra and Hyperreality is constructed to influence readers.

Research Questions

How simulacra and Hyper-reality are different from the reality in *The Return of The King* by J.R.R. Tolkien's

Significance of the Study

The study will help the academia in reading simulations and hyperreality blurred with reality in literature. This research presents a framework for future studies investigating

related topics in literature and gives useful insights for scholars, educators, and enthusiasts interested in the convergence of literature and postmodern thought.

Literature Review

Postmodernism is a very broad phrase which covers diverse parts of literature, counting philosophy, art, architecture, fiction and culture. The attitude basically involves espousing the confidence of empirical and scientific actions to articulate truth. Postmodernism posits that reality is more complex than the human mind sees. Reality is shaped by human perception and their efforts to develop a unique and personal perspective. This technique is highly questionable as it purports to be universally applicable to all cultures and traditions, but actually concentrates on the specific circumstances of individuals. The critic asserts that the notion of postmodernism is now not widely embraced or comprehended (Jameson, 1985, p. 111).

This movement emerged in the latter half of the 20th century and encompassed several forms of artistic expression, including painting, architecture, fiction, and literary criticism. It serves as a response and interruption to the contemporary era and its conventions. Postmodernism rejects the existence of any profound and immutable principles. One critic, Hinman (1982), states that establishing a genuine relationship between metaphor and truth is a challenging endeavor because they appear to have nothing in common, especially in a conventional context (p. 179).

This section of the research study is dedicated to completing a comprehensive literature assessment on the notion of hyperreality, which has become more important in multiple academic fields. The concept of hyperreality, derived from the theories of Jean Baudrillard, continues to be relevant in current discussions, as demonstrated by recent academic research. Discussions regarding the metaverse, which is a digitally facilitated cosmos made possible by the internet, have gained prominence in 2022. Scholars like Rospigliosi (2022) have highlighted its close association with the notion of simulacra.

This connection is characterised by negative intentions and it elicits all the negative emotions.

Baudrillard's (1981) apprehension about the world of technology. Undoubtedly, Technology has indeed facilitated the lives of humans. It has demonstrated remarkable achievements in various domains. Rospigliosi (2022) argues that virtual reality has severed the connection between individuals and their actual existence. There are fragments of evidence indicating a lack of validity. There is a growing trend of people placing greater trust in artificial intelligence. Realities and simulacra are causing a detachment from their natural environment. The user's text is straightforward and precise. The individual responsible for writing the post is the author. The utilization of virtual reality in education, socialization and work has initially elucidated the genesis of this technology. The rapid evolution of the gaming world. The rapid advancement of technology in the internet realm .The gaming industry has experienced exponential expansion over the years. Likewise, the realm of social media is not lagging behind in

this technological competition. The Covid-19 pandemic has brought forth the widespread adoption of online platforms. Convening at a magnitude so significant that there is no possibility of reversal. Human-Computer Interpersonal engagement has become an undeniable aspect of our present-day existence (Chukhin, 2021).

In his work published in 2022, Rospigliosi referenced Baudrillard's (1994) assertion that computers are a simulacrum of humans. Rospigliosi further suggests that this artificial representation is not inherent to human nature and may not fully capture the complexity of human reality.

Ekstrand (2021) explores simulacra analyzing the complexities of understanding worldly realisms and organizations actions. The writer highpoints the significance of exploring simulation and simulacra in order to comprehend hypothetical dominions and capture realities. Simulacra are utilized as tools for copying realities. Contemporary simulation programme utilize algorithms for analyzing human consumption designs, which in turn has a direct impression on user attitude.

Chukhin (2021) explored the effect of simulacra on Russian community with special focus on how Russian youth develop their identities in political evolutions. The transition towards constitutional democracy is transforming the social structure, affecting different demographic segments, especially young people and students who are experiencing several models of civic society, resulting in perplexity. The study seeks to find sociocultural representations within Russian civic society, uncovering the presence of many civic models influenced by societal demands. Schools have a vital role in developing student identities by providing opportunities to practice simulated identities, which helps to prevent possible identity crises in real life. Patra (2021) examines the portrayal of virtual reality in Ernest Cline's novels *Ready Player One* (2011) and *Ready Player Two* (2020). The scholar has employed Baudrillard's theory of 'Simulacra and Simulation' to analyze and interpret the novels. The aim of this research was to illustrate how, in a hyperreal setting, all distinctions between reality and imitation become indistinguishable when a major transformative change takes place in the form of the virtual. The impact of this virtual phenomenon on society is so significant that it undeniably surpasses the influence of the tangible world. This occurs because in a hyper-immersive virtual environment, artificial reality becomes the dominant role and starts shaping the actual reality in accordance with its own design.

Simulacra and Simulation also possess a political dimension. The researcher has constructed an argument in their research paper titled "Baudrillard in Ankara: Mainstream Media and the Production of Simulacra in the Turkish Public Sphere," focusing on the Turkish political environment. He has linked Baudrillard's theory of Simulacra and Simulation to the political narrative of Turkey.

In their study, Grigoriadis and Karabicak (2021) discussed Baudrillard's theory and provided an explanation of it within the framework of the postmodern, post-positive period. The participants have engaged in a discussion regarding the significance of media, communication, and digitalization in the present era, followed by an analysis of

Turkey's political landscape. The impact of technology and media on the Turkish populace, as well as Turkish mainstream media, has been thoroughly examined.

Ismailoglu and Besgen (2019) explored duplicated simulacra spaces. They explored the notion of remaking in regard to actual settings and their replicas. Furthermore, their research focused on examining the reconstructed spaces to see if they were authentic or mere replicas. The renovated areas have been examined in relation to the existing spaces. Analyzed were several spaces, and subsequently selected were their simulacra. The study evaluated several buildings, including the replica of the Statue of Liberty in Japan, the Taj Mahal in India, the replica of the White House, and the Simulacra of Pisa tower in Illinois. Nevertheless, the investigation revealed that the simulated replicas of the building were unable to replicate the same level of excellence as the authentic ones.

The literature review of this research has examined the simulacra from several perspectives. This study has already addressed the political landscape, the civic viewpoint, the influence on online gaming, and the architectural aspect. Another study has been conducted on the subject of simulacra, approaching it from a different perspective. This study focuses on the concept of accountability simulacra.

Costa (2019) categorizes this particular form of Simulacra as encompassing instances of corporate fraud. Numerous instances of fraud go unreported, resulting in significant financial losses for investors. He conducted an extensive analysis of multiple cases to examine how fraudsters evade control mechanisms and carry out criminal activities. The fraudulent activities carried out at the corporate level are often executed with such meticulousness that they remain undetected. Fraudsters may be perceived as geniuses, yet this assumption may not hold true since fraudsters excel in the art of deceiving and creating illusions. Individuals conceal their true circumstances by deceptive tactics or illusions; however, the researcher suggests that this can be prevented by implementing essential steps and precautions.

Methodology

The research methodology employed by the study is qualitative, which is consistent with its naturalistic approach to data interpretation. The interpretative paradigm is picked in order to provide the chosen data context and help make sense of the outside world. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggest using this paradigm, which enables contextual understanding of data. Furthermore, as recommended by Smith (2015), content analysis is used as the research design, which allows an emphasis on the text's deeper meaning and helps the study achieve its goals. The text of the novel *The Return of The King* has been analyzed in accordance with the theoretical framework presented by Baudrillard. The four stages of Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality are as follows: in the first, reality is faithfully represented through signs and symbols; in the second, reality is masked, so that signs no longer accurately represent reality but instead simulate it; in the third, signs simulate an absence of reality, resulting in a hyperreal environment where simulations are indistinguishable from reality; and in the

fourth, the difference between reality and simulation dissolves, leaving no meaningful distinction between the two.

With its representation of hyperreality idealized and synthetic representations of reality in its numerous themed attractions—Disney stands as the pinnacle of Baudrillard's theory of simulacra. Disneyland embodies the stages of simulacra, from the faithful portrayal of reality to the dissolution of distinctions between reality and simulation, by constructing immersive environments that blur the lines between fiction and reality. This exemplifies Baudrillard's idea of hyperreality in modern society.

Baudrillard's model of simulacra comprises of four levels each represents a step towards the disintegration of reality into hyperreality. Symbols and Signs depict actual things or experiences at first level. It ensures a clear link among reality and sign. At the Second Order signs mimic reality instead of expressing it explicitly. They start losing their authenticity and conceal the lack of a genuine referent. As the process proceeds, a hyperreal environment where simulations are indistinguishable from reality itself is generated, known as the Third Order of Simulacra. It is characterized by signs that mimic an absence of reality. The line among simulation and reality finally dissolves in the Fourth Order of Simulacra, resulting in a situation in which society is fully submerged in hyperreality and there is no discernible difference between the two.

Analysis

Infusing fairytale themes into his fantasy novels shows Tolkien's ability to blend truth and fantasy. In "The Return of the King," the third book in "The Lord of the Rings" series, Tolkien brilliantly tackles hyperreality and simulation. The tale begins with Gandalf and Pippin visiting Minas Tirith in Gondor and meeting Denethor, the steward. Aragorn seeks help from the dead as the city is shrouded in shadow. The Riders of Rohan arrive to help fight Nazgul and the Mordor army, which threatens the city. Aragorn takes over after King Theoden dies, and Merry and Eowyn help vanquish the dark King. Denethor dies after Gandalf and Pippin stop him from hurting his son. Sam and Frodo navigate Mordor while the western troops leaders plot to distract Sauron. Frodo's refusal to give up the ring leads to a fight with Gollum on Mount Doom. Frodo and Sam are saved by Gandalf, ending Sauron's darkness. After peace, Aragorn marries Arwen and the hobbits rebuild Shire. Frodo sails West with Gandalf and Bilbo, as Sam finds bliss in marriage. Tolkien expertly depicts his characters hardships and achievements against hyperreal and artificial backdrops. "The Return of the King" showcases Tolkien's fantasy storytelling skills, from Pippin's fear of the scorching sun to the epic conflicts against dark forces.

Hyperreality and Imaginary Elements

"A light kindled in the sky, a blaze of yellow fire behind dark barriers. . . Frodo from far away looked on that same moon as it set beyond Gondor ere the coming of the day" (Tolkien, 1955, pp. 977-979).

The passage depicts a scenario in which Pippin, escorted by Gandalf, gazes at the sky as it gradually brightens, mistakenly perceiving it as flames at first. The current period

is replete with hyperreal features, indicating a fusion of actuality and deception. Pippin's apprehension regarding the territory they are about to enter contributes to the feeling of uneasiness. Gandalf elucidates the function of the beacons of Gondor, which serve to communicate a call for assistance during times of warfare. The depiction of fire takes on a metaphorical significance representing strife. The presence of spectral equestrians enhances the bizarre ambiance, accentuating the otherworldly quality of the environment. Gandalf's expertise and commanding presence enhance the hyperreal notion, as he skillfully and fearlessly handles the issue. Within the scene, the interaction between genuine and imaginary aspects intensifies the suspense and ambiguity, demonstrating Tolkien's expertise in constructing hyperreal storylines.

Pippin glanced at it as he hurried after Gandalf. It looked mournful he thought and he wondered why the dead tree was left in this place where everything else was well tended. Seven stars and seven stones and one white tree. (p. 985)

The passage depicts a scenario in which Pippin joins Gandalf into a location permeated with grief and enigma. Notwithstanding the magnificent backdrop, Pippin discerns certain features that allude to a realm beyond the confines of reality, such as a barren tree amidst the lively surroundings. This contrast implies a combination of genuine and man-made elements, emphasizing the extremely realistic quality of the surroundings. Moreover, the inclusion of seven stars, stones, and trees serves as a representation of regal ancestry, so enhancing the complexity of the story. The work is abundant in war scenes, showcasing individuals like as King Aragorn, whose actions and descriptions enhance the hyperreal atmosphere. The utilization of appellations such as "Snowmane" and the portrayal of individuals like Halbarad serve to augment the mythical aspects. The protagonists' conversation exhibits a blend of genuine concerns and exaggerated inclinations as they discuss their goals. Aragorn's choice to embark on the path of the dead demonstrates this, as it merges pragmatic factors with fantastical features. Aragorn's unwavering determination stands in stark contrast to the fear felt by his comrades, highlighting the dynamic relationship between truth and imagination throughout the story. The scene is marked by an atmosphere of apprehension and ambiguity, as the characters confront both tangible dangers and imaginative obstacles.

The township and the fords of Ciril they found deserted, for many men had gone away to war,...But the next day there came no dawn, and the Grey company passed on into the darkness of the Storm of Mordor and were lost to mortal sight; but the Dead followed them. (p. 1034)

The passage portrays a situation in which the King of the Dead, symbolizing death, is portrayed alongside his army, creating a sense of ambiguity between what is real and what is illusory. This depiction highlights the exaggerated and extremely realistic

quality of the event, similar to imaginary worlds such as Disneyland. The coexistence of contradictory aspects, such as light and darkness, enhances the feeling of unreality. As the routes converge for war, Pippin witnesses the approach of the King of Rohan, taking note of the day and surroundings that display hyperreal characteristics. The scene combines realistic and mythical aspects, resulting in a vivid yet bizarre mood.

Days was waning...And suddenly there rose a great chorus of trumpets from high above, sounding from some hollow place, as it seemed, that gathered their notes into one voice and sent it rolling and beating on the walls of stone. (p. 1035)

The passage depicts the shift from daytime to nighttime, as the diminishing sunlight creates sharp shadows in the quiet surroundings. At dusk, the setting is enriched with hyper realistic elements, depicting the king's trip across a landscape adorned with exaggerated characteristics. Trees are anthropomorphized as sentient entities, embodying veracity and integrity, whereas depictions of the night time conjure an aura of artifice like a product of technology, similar of environments encountered in Disneyland. The utilization of language and visual representation amplifies the perception of hyperreality, as allusions to Middle Earth and the interplay of illumination and darkness contribute to the otherworldly ambiance. In general, the scene is distinguished by a fusion of genuine and synthetic components, resulting in a vibrant and engrossing encounter for the reader.

The Reflection of Profound Reality

It was indeed in deepening gloom that the king came to Edoras, although it was then but noon by the hour... All the lands were grey and still; and ever the shadow deepened before them, and hope waned in every heart (pp. 1051-1053).

The passage depicts King Theoden's entrance at Edoras, the capital of Rohan, against a somber and mournful atmosphere. Although the valley is aesthetically pleasing, the ambiance is permeated with sadness. The king makes a brief stay at Edoras to strengthen his army, while Merry is strongly advised not to be away from him. The utilization of intricate terminology, encompassing convoluted appellations and allusions to archaic English, enhances the perception of hyperreality, so obfuscating the distinction between actuality and illusion. The text portrays the preparations for war in an exaggerated manner, emphasizing the significance of acts in establishing a surreal atmosphere. Merry is approached by a rider who proposes concealing him beneath his cloak and escorting him away from his residence. This encounter demonstrates the dynamic relationship between reality and fantasy, as the rider represents a mythical monster. As the journey progresses into the night, the narrative is filled with hyperreal and synthetic aspects, including mentions of fairytale-esque locations like Snowbourn. The act of leaving Edoras, with its winding roads and elevated hills with beacons, brings to mind imagery that is reminiscent of a Disney theme park. Overall, the text

oscillates between emotions of sorrow and the imaginative, constructing a narrative abundant in hyperreality and artificial components.

But we have suffered much loss in our battles with Saruman the traitor,... So great a power as the Dark Lord seems now to wield might well contain us in battle before the City and yet strike with great force across the River away beyond the Gate of Kings. (p. 1046)

The passage depicts Saruman's character as a treacherous individual, consumed by feelings of envy towards Gandalf the Grey. He personifies the quintessential image of a malevolent ruler, displaying his wicked characteristics and formidable abilities that transcend the boundaries of the tangible world. Saruman's portrayal symbolizes his true nature and his deliberate aim to extend his poisonous influence to neighboring territories. The way he represents anything serves as a perfect example of the initial level of simulated reality, causing the distinction between what is genuine and what is not to become unclear. Currently, the necessary arrangements for the impending conflict in the Siege of Gondor are being made, with Gandalf and Pippin taking the lead. Pippin, experiencing a sensation of confinement indoors, investigates the surrounding area and takes note of the hyperreal ambiance, which represents a feeling of being trapped amidst the safety measures. Pippin's motions and gestures serve as a representation of hyperreality, emphasizing the magical aspects inside the narrative. The book highlights the relationship between reality and fiction, as characters like as Pippin and Gandalf engage in conversations with inanimate things, revealing the artificial nature of their interactions.

Suddenly as they talked they were stricken dumb, frozen as it were to listening stones... Pippin knew the shuddering cry that he had heard: it was the same that he had heard long ago in the Marish of the Shire. (p. 1058)

During the conversation, Pippin and the others notice a disturbing silence that resembles motionless people, highlighting the complete lack of vitality. This visual representation illustrates the disparity between contemporary society's capacity to perceive inaudible phenomena while remaining oblivious to the visible suffering of others. The concept of hyperreality is seen in the portrayal of Pippin, a figure depicted as a hobbit, who exhibits human-like qualities but differs in physical size. He feels dread and covers his ears, suggesting his tendency to engage in simulations. Pippin remembers a trembling scream that was previously heard in the Marish of the Shire, a place that resembles Disneyland and symbolizes a magical realm inside the story. The Marish Shire represents the manifestation of imagination inside the realm of reality, exemplifying the initial level of simulacra. Nevertheless, the current condition of the Shire clearly demonstrates the widespread destruction resulting from the influence of power and animosity, resulting in a significant increase in homelessness and a sense of powerlessness among its inhabitants. This emotional occurrence takes place in an

environment that resembles a fairytale, similar to the integration of technology in society. Pippin's interpretation of menacing shadows and the swift advance of darkness further demonstrate hyperreal characteristics, similar to encounters in Disney and hyperreal realms.

Events are Based on Perversion of Reality

"Black Riders!" muttered Pippin 'Black Riders of the air! But see, Beregon!" he cried. *They are looking for something surely?"* (p. 1058).

During this stage, Pippin discreetly mentions the foreboding "black riders of air," implying a connection to industrialization and the second stage of simulacra. These riders symbolize the outcomes of an industrialized society, obscuring the boundaries between different entities and suggesting the decline of fundamental reality. Beregon, the commander of the white company, acknowledges their quest for an unidentified object, displaying a feeling of apprehension and foreboding. The riders capacity to annihilate all things emphasizes the second level of simulacra, in which technological progress intensifies their effectiveness, molding the fabric of existence. Pippin is startled by the imminent presence of a dim light and the resounding sound of a loud voice, which creates a heightened environment and prompts him to cry out in reaction to these uncomfortable occurrences. *"Gandalf he cried. Gandalf He always turns up when things are darkest. Go on go on White Rider! Gandalf, Gandalf he shouted wildly like an onlooker at a great race urging on a runner who is far beyond encouragement"* (p. 1059).

Gandalf's character embodies hyperreality, as he possesses exceptional abilities that beyond those of regular persons in the real world. His physical appearance and skills correspond to the idea of a fictional universe and are consistent with the second level of representation. Gandalf's imposing height and extraordinary qualities challenge the conventions of ordinary humans, indicating his mythical existence. When portrayed in historical accounts, he is invoked for assistance by hobbits such as Pippin during times of trouble, demonstrating his status as a distinguished sorcerer committed to the well-being of his country. Gandalf, portrayed as the white rider, distinguishes himself from other riders, emphasizing the juxtaposition between righteousness and malevolence. Pippin's need for assistance highlights the perception of deception and dependence on imaginary characters when confronted with peril, symbolizing the second instance of simulacra. The foreboding existence of the Nazgul intensifies the novel's hyperreality.

The Nazgul gave a long wailing cry and swerved away; and with that the four others wavered, and then rising in the swift spirals they passed away eastward vanishing into the lowering cloud above; and down on the Pelennor it seemed for a while less dark. (p. 1059)

The ominous presence of the malevolent lord Nazgul fills the atmosphere with a mournful wail, enveloping everything in a terrifying gloom. The being known as Ringwraith, or Nazgul, epitomizes malevolence and symbolizes the decline of reality, serving as a prime example of simulacra. The Nazgul and his team swiftly manifest and

vanish on the battlefield, embodying the creation of the hyperreal world by obscuring reality and fabricating an artificial setting. The conflict that takes place on the Plennor field in close proximity to Minas Tirith showcases a fantastical realm, effectively illustrating the manipulation of mass media and the incorporation of simulated components. Meanwhile, Orcs, which are brutal humanoid beings, wander about the hills and forests, symbolizing the influence of industrial culture on the second stage of simulations. The nocturnal encounter between the king and Eomer symbolizes the fractured awareness of the postmodern individual, as portrayed through the characters' internal conflict and isolation. Merry attempts to find comfort in talk, but the anxiety intensifies, reaching its peak when a camp prepared for the king is found, featuring elements that are hyperrealistic in the environment. A large lantern, covered above, was hanging from a bough and cast a pale circle of light below. They're sat Theoden and Eomer, and before them on the ground sat a strange squat shape of a man, gnarled as an old stone, and the hairs of his scanty beard straggled on his lumpy chin like dry moss (p. 1087).

The image depicts a lantern that shines light on a tree, creating peculiar circles of light. These circles symbolize the creation of hyperreal qualities through technological progress. While King Theoden and Eomer are seated, a peculiar individual resembling an ancient stone suddenly emerges. The way he is described gives off an eerie and supernatural vibe, demonstrating Tolkien's exceptional skill in crafting vivid and surreal elements. Meanwhile, the inhabitants of Rohan participate in musical performances, eagerly anticipating the upcoming conflict, as issues arise within the city. The Nazgul, adorned with a metallic crown and menacing gaze, represents the second level of simulacra, showcasing a combination of genuine and fictional attributes that cannot exist in reality. With the reappearance of the Nazgul, it serves as a representation of devastation and the loss of hope, symbolizing contemporary digital characteristics that are prepared to cause chaos. The sounds of death reverberate throughout the battlefield, eliciting tears from the hobbit and highlighting the narrative's deep engagement with hyperreality.

And still Meriadoc the Hobbit stood there blinking through his tears, and no one spoke to him...He brushed away the tears, and stooped to pick up the green shield that Eowyn had given him, and he slung it at his back. (p. 1105)

Tolkien explores the concept of hyperreality by depicting the hobbit character, Meriadoc, as an example of the second stage of simulacra, in which reality is nonexistent and industrial culture dominates. Meriadoc's tears remain unobserved, emphasizing the lack of actuality and the heightened and artificial flow of events in the narrative. The interaction between Eowyn and Merry serves as another illustration of this phenomenon, as Eowyn, a courageous woman, places her shield in the care of the feeble hobbit, highlighting the exaggerated amalgamation of characteristics. Gandalf remains at the door while Pippin quickly informs him of Denethor's insanity,

representing the occurrence of simulations and hyperreality in the scene. Upon entering the entrance and stepping into a meandering road, the representation of individuals moving akin to pale apparitions strongly captures an intense and lifelike embodiment, depicting Tolkien's adept synthesis of reality and fantasy. The mysterious component of Denethor's persona is further highlighted by his unexpected laughing and proud posture, highlighting the hyperreality of his traits.

The representation of Denethor, the leading steward, presents a multi-layered man caught among insanity and sagacity highlighting the lack of truth and the dawn of postmodern societal practices. Although Gandalf recognizes Denethor's active leadership, his undue pride and unpredictable attitude ultimately consequence in his decease, denoting the third stage of simulacra where the distinction among reality and simulations becomes blurred. Following Denethor's demise, Merry comes upon the decimated city of Minas Tirith, which serves as a stark reminder of the destructive consequences of power and suggests elements of hyperreality and simulation. The mist in Merry's eyes represents the fatigue caused by war, exposing the brutal truths of conflict in a contemporary culture where emotions are desensitized. The damaged entrance of Minas Tirith and the medical facility located within the city serve as prime examples of hyperreality, effectively obscuring the boundaries between the actual and fictional elements in Tolkien's storytelling.

After war the soldiers are going for the house of healing and Merry is injures badly. "No, we are going to the Houses of Healing'. They turned out of the lane that ran between tall houses and the outer wall of the fourth circle, and they regained the main street climbing up to the Citadel" (p. 1124).

The novel explores the importance of the houses of healing, which are similar to hospitals, where wounded folks seek comfort during and after battles. This description is characterized by hyperreality, resembling the imaginative realm of Disneyland, where the boundaries between reality and fantasy are blurred. The landscape elicits a perception of postmodernity, with signs and codes alluding to profound insights about society. Ioreth, a sagacious woman employed at the infirmary, contemplates the function of rulers as healers, causing a merging of the boundaries between actuality and deception. The conversation highlights the lack of a distinct boundary between actuality and imitation. Furthermore, the visual representation of the sun descending beyond the horizon represents the conclusion and decline of numerous elements, indicating significant transformations in the world. This depiction embodies the idea of simulacra, where the representation of reality lacks its fundamental nature, mixed with hyperreal components that blur the boundary between what is real and what is not.

There is Total Absence of Reality

Then after war there seems light and sky looks fair and is giving his speech to soldiers about battle and its consequences. "But defenders and foes alike gave up the battle and fled when we came, crying out that the King of the Dead was upon them" (p. 1145).

The story delves into the idea of hyperreality by presenting the "King of the Dead," a character who merges aspects of illusion and reality. This character represents the digital tools of contemporary life and the hazy boundary between the real and the fake. People rush to save themselves as mayhem breaks out, representing the brutal reality of the outside world. The king's function becomes unclear; it could be that of Captain Aragorn. As all of this is going on, Sam and Frodo travel to the tower of Cirith, which the men of Gondor constructed as a representation of a powerful nation. Sam is surprised by red-eye-like lights coming from the orc tower, a metaphor for how object and subject are fused together in the hyperreal world. The tower's menacing presence is a reflection of postmodernity's ascent, which is highlighted by symbols and signs. Sam is frightened, yet he continues movement forward, facing delusions and the weight of the ring a depiction of both illusion and power. This representation highlights the variances among perception and reality while highlighting the complexities of simulacra and hyperreality.

The story explores Shagrat, a big orc captain who represents simulated and hyperreal characteristics in the work of fiction. Shagrat is a major character in the plot, despite his unbelievable appearance. Sauron's evil eye signifies technological manipulation and surveillance, while the Eye of Mordor represents artificiality in the world of simulation. Sam hears sounds reminiscent to video game effects, such the bubbling of the enormous spider Shelob, as he makes his way through the creepy surroundings and pale walls. The realm that Sam and Frodo travel through is made more surreal by their encounters with Shelob and other orc tribes. They continue despite their difficulties and physical anguish, blundering through the hyperreal environment that is full with fantasy and simulations.

There is no Relation to any Reality

"They came to the way-meeting. There was still no sign of orcs, nor of an answer to the cry of the Nazgul; but they knew that the silence would not last long" (p. 1198).

The language conveys a feeling of unsettling stillness, suggesting the lack of threat from beings such as orcs and the malevolent ruler Nazgul. The absence of sound elicits emotions of imminent conflict and devastation, emphasizing the apprehension that humans possess towards such occurrences. The novel delves into the notion of simulacra, where the boundaries of reality become indistinct and inconsistencies proliferate. Frodo's actions involving the ring serve as a prime example of hyperreality, since he experiences a sensation of weightlessness upon removing it, indicating the vanishing of actuality. The shifting sky and the emergence of obscure forms intensify the surreal ambiance, signifying a divergence from reality. This scene represents the

fourth phase of simulations, characterized by the complete absence of reality and the dominance of fantasy, which is completely detached from the truth.

Sam put his ragged orc-cloak under his master's head, and covered them both with the grey robe of Lorien; and as he did so his thoughts went out that fair land, and to the Elves, and he hoped that the cloth woven by their hands might have some virtue to keep them hidden beyond all hope in this wilderness of fear. (p. 1220)

Sam adorns his master's head with an orc cloak, creating an enchanting atmosphere reminiscent of a fairytale in the setting of Lorien. Sam's thoughts lead him to a realm of fantasy, where he visualizes himself in an extraordinary kingdom populated by mythical beings such as Elves with elongated ears. This illustration exemplifies the notion of simulacra and simulation, as Sam's cognitive faculties generate a hyperreal representation of actuality. The portrayal of Lorien as an enchanted woodland adorned with gilded foliage enhances the hyperreal ambiance, underscoring the lack of grounding in actuality. Sam experiences ominous auditory hallucinations and visual illusions that, despite their apparent authenticity, are ultimately illusory, resembling scenes from a cinematic production. The Dark Tower's existence and the Shadow's veils crafted by Sauron enhance the hyperreal quality of the environment, emphasizing the fusion of genuine and imaginary aspects. This excerpt illustrates the fourth stage of simulacra, in which reality is assimilated into simulations, resulting in a completely hyperreal environment.

"Such day-light as followed was dim; for here as the Mountain drew near the air was ever mirky, while out from the Dark Tower there crept the veils of Shadow that Sauron wove about him-self" (p. 1225).

The character depicted in Tolkien's fiction holds great importance and has a major impact. The brightness of the daylight diminishes, allowing mist and fog to emerge, resulting in a hyperreal ambiance. Sauron's fabrication of shadowy veils from the Dark Tower obscures the distinction between actuality and imagination, conjuring visuals reminiscent of Disneyland and digitally-rendered spectacles. The setting, characterized by its hazy atmosphere and indistinct silhouettes, bears a striking resemblance to a fantastical realm, blurring the line between what is tangible and what is imaginary. This portrayal corresponds to the second level of simulations, in which progress leads to the creation of items that are impossible to differentiate. As Sam and Frodo progress on their expedition, they are accompanied by Gollum, a character who represents malevolent characteristics and desires the power of the ring. The story continues to blur the distinction between what is real and what is imaginary, ultimately resulting in a complete simulation where no connection to reality exists.

Precious, precious, precious!' Gollum cried. 'My Precious! O my Precious!' And with that, even as his eyes were lifted up to gloat on his prize, he stepped too far, toppled, wavered for a moment on the brink, and then with a shriek he fell. (p. 1238)

Gollum, a multifaceted figure in Tolkien's epic novel, epitomizes the dichotomy between the tangible and the intangible. The protagonist's fixation on the valuable ring emphasizes his profound attachment to it, depicting him as a slender and avaricious hobbit overwhelmed by moral decay. Gollum embodies the contemporary progressions that give rise to figures similar to him, epitomizing the fourth instance of simulacra where just a simulated model persists, lacking any connection to reality. Amidst the devastation enveloping the hills and the fierce armies of Mordor, the arrival of the Nazgul brings a foreboding presence of death. Aragorn, characterized by his silence and deep thought, is depicted with eyes that gleam like stars, symbolizing the literary technique utilized to develop his persona. Gandalf, positioned on a hill, displays a striking juxtaposition with the gloominess of Mordor, symbolizing the conflict between righteousness and malevolence. The Eagles' entrance holds symbolic significance, connecting the narrative to the hyperreal, as Gandalf's cry conveys a momentous message for Mordor. This depiction exemplifies the fourth phase of simulacra, in which every component adds to its own representation, causing the boundaries between reality and illusion to become indistinct.

Strategy of Real

The subsequent scene is clearly apparent here, showcasing the interplay between hyperreality and illusion, allowing the reader to readily discern the underlying approach of authenticity. The peculiar creature and conversing trees serve as symbolic representations of illusion in the story.

"Orcs, and talking trees, and leagues of grass, and galloping riders, and glittering caves, and white towers and golden halls, and battles, and tall ships sailing, all these passed before Sam's mind until he felt bewildered" (p. 1251).

The essay explores the fusion of reality and illusion in Tolkien's tale, specifically in the portrayal of orcs, sentient trees, and animated grass, which possess a lifelike appearance yet lack tangible presence. The image depicts caves that are both dazzling and shining, creating a resemblance to a fairytale country. This combination of hyperreality and simulation is evident. Significantly, the events occur within Sam's consciousness, where the fabricated scenario appears just as tangible as if it were unfolding in front of him, demonstrating the ability of the mind to generate hyperrealistic encounters. In the city of Gondor, Eowyn, a female warrior, offers her help to Faramir. However, their conversation reveals a stark difference between what is genuine and what is not, emphasizing a deceptive element in their contact.

Then, Eowyn of Rohan, I say to you that you are beautiful. In the valleys of our hills there are flowers fair and bright Halfling that is with us; for he was in the riding of the king, and with the Lady at the end, they say (pp. 1258-1260).

The passage depicts a picturesque setting in which the elegance of a woman is likened to the splendor of hills and flowers, creating a captivating valley reminiscent of paradise. This depiction seamlessly combines elements of truth and fantasy,

demonstrating the capability of technology to represent a stunning location. The debate foreshadows future contrasts, as darkness yields to light, indicating transient obstacles. The lady's assertion of a shadow resting over her appears implausible, as shadows are incapable of trailing folks, nevertheless she exhibits courage in a circumstance reminiscent of warfare. The use of the term "Halfling" serves to obscure the true nature of hobbits, so contributing to the heightened sense of reality in the narrative. The scene progresses with mystical overtones, as characters perch on the walls of Gondor under a powerful gust of wind, signifying a fusion of fantasy and reality. Although the happy days have come to an end, the existence of malevolent personalities continues to maintain the sense of authenticity. If it be truly the last, I am glad,' said Saruman; 'for I shall be spared the trouble of refusing it again. 'It will be a grey ship and full of ghosts'.... He laughed, but his voice was cracked and hideous. (p. 1287)

In this passage, Saruman, portrayed as an influential orator and leader, delivers a speech that embodies the traits of an exceptional fictional antagonist. His discourse seamlessly combines fantastical and real components, engaging the listener with an exploration that penetrates into the realm of the Disney world while maintaining a sense of plausibility. Saruman's reference to a spectral vessel, inhabited by apparitions, enhances the dreamlike quality of the story, implying that contemporary persons possess the ability to fabricate extraordinary and unsettling occurrences that blur the distinction between actuality and hyperreality. The inclusion of ghosts on the ship highlights the hyperreal aspects of the novel, as they transcend the boundaries of the physical world.

Next day they went on into northern Dunland, where no men now dwelt, though it was a green and pleasant country... Far to the west in a haze lay the meres and eyots through which it wound its way to the Greyflood: there countless swans housed in a land of reeds. (p. 1289)

The chapter depicts Dunland as a rich and untamed land inhabited by wild folk. The portrayal of the land seems to be shaped by media screens, movies, and fantasy approaches, highlighting the dominant impact of simulations. The incorporation of golden and silver lights in the depiction of a September night enhances the intricacy of the scene, creating a blurred distinction between the realm of actuality and the realm of hyperreality. The inclusion of Swanfleet River and its ambiguous characteristics further enhances the depiction of hyperreality, where names function as symbols that convey profound significance. Following the tumultuous period of war, the aftermath is characterized by a restoration of tranquility as the protagonists return to their respective residences. The text also addresses the difficulties of post-war cleanup, emphasizing the disparity between the perceived complexity and the real simplicity of the task. Ultimately, the concluding scene portrays Frodo and Gandalf embarking on a

vessel, representing a shift to a new phase, while other characters also rediscover tranquility.

Conclusion

The study applied the Model presented by Baudrillard for Simulations and hyperreality to analyse J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Return of the King. Postmodern literature, including Tolkien's works, is seen as challenging traditional norms and blurring the lines between reality and simulation. Hyperreality, as depicted in the novel, refers to a state where the distinction between reality and illusion becomes blurred, often through the use of simulated models, signs, and characters. Characters like Gandalf are portrayed as realistically as possible despite their fantastical attributes, contributing to the sense of hyperreality within the narrative. The text argues that the novel's settings, characters, and actions are designed to create a sense of reality through simulation, exemplifying the concept of hyperreality. Characters' dialogues and actions are portrayed in a way that enhances the sense of hyperreality, providing readers with an alternative perspective on reality. Overall, the study suggests that "The Return of the King" employs hyperreality as a narrative strategy, using simulated environments, characters, and scenarios to challenge conventional notions of reality and offer readers a different way of interpreting the world portrayed in the novel.

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