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UDC: 821.111.09-31 Swift G.
DOI: 10.19090/gff.v48i3.2394
Original research paper

NOT SPOKEN FOR – NOSTALGIA AS AN INSTRUMENT OF RESISTANCE IN GRAHAM SWIFT'S *MOTHERING SUNDAY* AND *HERE WE ARE*[**]

It is not an uncommon trope in literature that the past is associated with an unknown or unfathomable realm. L. P. Hartley famously wrote that "The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there." (2002: 11), while Salman Rushdie has argued "the past is a country from which we have all emigrated" (2010: 12). While the term "nostalgia" was at first used to denote an actual illness (Merriam-Webster), nowadays it is mainly associated with a kind of "homesickness" or a desire to return to one's place of origin/belonging. In addition, nostalgia may be perceived as a tool for maintaining one's identity (Davis, 1979: 31-51) and it does not have to relate to real events (Lasch, 1990: 18). So, what if this longing really is felt towards a non-existent past, in an attempt to reclaim a non-existent history? This paper proposes a reading of Graham Swift's two most recent novels as presenting the female nostalgia towards a past that never existed as a form of resistance. While nostalgically recounting their respective pasts, both literally and metaphorically, Jane Fairchild (*Mothering Sunday*) and Evie White (*Here We Are*) will make an attempt at reclaiming their rightful place in history.

Key words: nostalgia, resistance, Graham Swift, *Mothering Sunday*, *Here We Are*

The contemporary British novelist Graham Swift is most famous for his (re)interpretations of the past and its meaning(s) in the lives of ordinary people. For this reason, though his stories remain firmly embedded in the past, they are retold and reexamined from a more recent perspective. As a consequence, his work might be brought into close connection with nostalgia studies. Graham Swift mainly includes male characters in the main storylines of his writing, rarely featuring women as lead actors in the great whirlwind that is history. The female characters, though at times crucial for the story, usually remain on the margins and hold a rather mystical and nature-oriented role. It may be argued that Swift portrays them in the way a typical

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[**] The paper was presented at the 6th International Conference on English Language and Anglophone Literatures Today (ELALT6), conference section *Literature, Culture and Nostalgia*, held online on 29th and 30th October 2022.

20th-century male would see them – as enigmatic, alluring creatures and also mothers. However, Swift's two most recent novels, *Mothering Sunday* (2016) and *Here We Are* (2020)[1], both uncommonly feature women as the main protagonists[2] and also challenge this trend of his. Unfortunately, in them there is no change in the role of women, but there is a nostalgia towards a past that never was. Since both stories are set in the 20th century, and due to the longevity of the two main protagonists they encompass almost the whole of the century, one may interpret them as attemps by women to reclaim their non-existent place in the history of the past century. Swift never gets involved in these stories by providing any kind of social or political commentary, he simply is not that kind of writer and his main focus is on telling a story and the manner of telling it. However, upon closer reading, one may infer a great deal about the social and political aspects of life in Great Britain from his work.

The main protagonists of both *Mothering Sunday* and *Here We Are* are ordinary women, both special in their own way, and they might be taken to represent Everywoman. Subsequently, each one of their stories might represent Herstory. Graham Swift uses several means to this end. Firstly, the two main female characters may be characterized as reliable narrators. Both women have reached an impressively old age and both of them tell stories that are half a century old. In this sense, they exude a sense of trust and reverence from the reader. A half a century of distance appears like an almost objective way to tell a story (despite the fact that a story is always part fiction). Eve (Evie) White, the main protagonist of *Here We Are*, is seventy-five years old in the more recent part of the story which takes place in 2009, and one is not given information as to how old she is yet to become. On the other hand, the reader is informed that Jane Fairchild, the main protagonist of *Mothering Sunday*, will live to be ninety-eight. Next, both heroines have what one would call relatable backgrounds. Though both stories invoke a sense of magic (*Mothering Sunday* contains echoes of the Cinderella story, while *Here We Are* deals with the power of magicians' tricks), both main protagonists come from modest backgrounds. For this reason, their stories echo many real women's lives. Lastly, the two main protagonists may be percieved as quintessential women. Both their names are utterly "feminine". Jane Fairchild has a first name that is a multiple-use placeholder name and thus could be used for "any female", while her last name denotes beauty, an outer quality strongly associated with the female gender. Evie White bears the name of the

[1] The novels will be quoted as *MS* and *HWA*, respectively, and in the reference section they are listed under Swift, 2017 and 2020, respectively.

[2] The only other such instance in Swift's opus was the novel *Tomorrow* (2007) but, theme-wise, this novel is completely different from all of Swift's other work.

"first" or "original" woman and a last name that denotes innocence and purity, both qualities also traditionally associated with women. Though both Jane and Evie will become more independent and successful as their stories progress, neither of them will live up to their full potential or become what they could have become had they been born into a different world or had they been born as men. The unspoken nostalgia of a life never lived is clearly visible throughout both stories, and even though they were written by Swift, they are told from the women's own perspective, as if they are not letting anyone else tell it. In a way, one might say that they are owning a past they never possessed.

The past being associated with an unknown or unfathomable realm is not an uncommon trope in literature. L. P. Hartley famously wrote that "The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there." (2002: 11), while Salman Rushdie has argued "the past is a country from which we have all emigrated" (2010: 12). The past, as a notion, is something that all mankind has in common, as is the inevitable return to it, or the backward gaze. Contemplating times long past often invokes what we call nostalgia. The term was at first used to denote an actual illness (Merriam-Webster), but nowadays it is mainly associated with a kind of "homesickness" or a desire to return to one's place of origin/belonging. Nostalgia may also be perceived as a tool for maintaining one's identity as Fred Davis pointed out in *Yearning for Yesterday – A Sociology of Nostalgia* (1979: 31-51). In it, he describes nostalgia as "one of the means—or, better, one of the more readily accessible psychological lenses—we employ in the never ending work of constructing, maintaining, and reconstructing our identities" (Davis, 1979: 31). It is also of note to add that "nostalgia does not entail the exercise of memory at all, since the past it idealizes stands outside time, frozen in unchanging perfection" (Lasch, 1990: 18). In both *Mothering Sunday* and *Here We Are* these different aspects of nostalgia are clearly visible. There is no denial of the present, there is no escape into the past. The heroines' return is done from a stable point, there is no burden and no discontinuity. Gazing backwards, theirs is an attempt to reclaim space. It is a reconstruction, actually an expansion of past possibilities that had never taken place.

Both Jane Fairchild and Evie White are silent but dutiful bystanders to both life and history. Jane, as a maidservant, was expected to play her part and keep the house in order, while Evie White was expected to keep the show running as its beautiful but silent sidekick. Both women have unclaimed roles in their lives and in their thoughts they return to them. Both used to wear "costumes" while they were young – Jane, naturally, wore her maid's outfit on a daily basis while Evie at first wore the costume of a dancer and then a magician's assistant every night while

performing. Finally, both women experienced an apparent change of heart. They both obviously questioned but silently accepted their position in life. They seem to have been painfully aware of the fact that things were what they were and that they could not be anything else. Still, Swift allows them to play with different possible, if not real, scenarios once they have reached enough of a distance time-wise.

The main events of Graham Swift's *Mothering Sunday* take place on an unusually warm and sunny spring day in the English countryside. The day is Sunday, 30th March 1924, and it is a holiday – Mothering Sunday – a day that will be celebrated by even those who never get time off – servants in large country mansions. Jane Fairchild is working as a maid at the Niven estate, and she is in a secret relationship with the heir to the neighbouring estate, Mr. Paul Sheringham. The day, which starts out in a very unusual manner, will turn out to be quite tragic as the young Mr. Sherigham will lose his life in an unfortunate automobile accident. Before this happens, he and Jane will spend a magical day together, all alone in Paul's enourmous house. It will be a day that will hold a special place in Jane's memory.

Since *Mothering Sunday* takes place in the 1920s, Jane Fairchild faces certain obstacles that Evie White does not face (the Second World War did, slightly, change the role of women in British society, but not as much as it should have). Being a simple maid, and having entered the service at the young age of fourteen, Jane is not expected to be able to read, yet she has a strong desire to do so. The inaccessibility of reading content is an issue she faces on a daily basis. In her youth, libraries were reserved for men:

> Libraries too—libraries especially—had normally to be entered with much delicate knocking and caution, though as often as not, judging by the one at Beechwood, there was actually no one inside. Yet even when empty they could convey the frowning implication that you should not be there. But then a maid had to dust—and, my, how books could gather dust. Going into the library at Beechwood could be a little like going into the boys' room upstairs, and the point of libraries, she sometimes thought, was not the books themselves but that they preserved this hallowed atmosphere of not-to-be-disturbed male sanctuary. (*MS*: 89)

As the reader finds out throughout Jane's story: "everything had a masculine bias in 1924" (*MS*: 169). Jane attempts to dabble into this male space several times – she loans books from her superior, Mr. Niven, even though at first she was too shy to ask. In the library she feels like "some welcome, innocent thief" (*MS*: 90). She enters the library in her clandestine lover's home naked, in what is perhaps the most memorable scene of her attempting to claim space, and in the end she becomes a writer herself, producing a total of nineteen novels.

Jane living in service in the harsh class system is another obstacle she is often reminded of. She encounters barriers not only related to gender, but to class as well. One can clearly see that she knows that on a theoretical level things could have been different had she been born rich, and had been able to marry a rich man:

> And she'd had the clear sharp vision (she would have it still when she was ninety) that she might have gone with him – might still somehow miraculously go with him, just him – to stand at the rail and watch Fandango hurtle past, kicking up the mud and dew. She had never seen such a thing but she could imagine it, imagine it clearly. (*MS*: 4-5)

In addition to this idea being presented at the very beginning of the novel, it is reiterated and revisited at the very end as well, bringing its importance into the foreground:

> She might have gone with him, it might somehow have been magically arranged, to stand, pressed close to him, by the rail, in the chill of the dawn, as the sun unfurled great fiery carpets across the downs and as Fandango drew close, nostrils flaring and steaming, hooves pounding. (*MS*: 175)

The day that Jane spends in her clandestine lover's home, having entered it (unimaginably!) through the front door, she calls an "upside-down day" (*MS*: 46) because "There might have been another world, another life in which all this might have been a regular, casual repertoire. But there wasn't." (*MS*: 66-67). The entire description of that particular Mothering Sunday clearly shows how much of the world was inaccessible to people like Jane. On that day, which breaks a familiar pattern, Jane is a little more aware things do not quite make sense:

> It was called "relaxation," she thought, a word that did not commonly enter a maid's vocabulary. She had many words, by now, that did not enter a maid's vocabulary. Even the word "vocabulary." She gathered them up like one of those nest-building birds outside. And was she even a maid any more, stretched here on his bed? And was he even a "master"? (*MS*: 43)

It is also implied that things might have been different had Jane Fairchild been born a man. Throughout the story, she gives this alternative scenario thought. When her lover leaves, in order to attend a family gathering, at one point: "She wanted to eat this pie, which he hadn't eaten, for him. As if she *were* him." (*MS*: 99). When left alone in the huge empty house, Jane will at first feel very strange. The "essential art of the servant" was "being both invisible yet indispensably at hand" and "She was invisible now." (*MS*: 84). Yet, even though in the grander scheme of things she truly was invisible (as in her daily life), especially because no one, except Paul,

knew that she was there, she would attempt to dominate the space reserved for the male gender and the rich with her mere presence. She wanders around the vast home completely naked:

> She had no particular business in any of the rooms—except the bedroom upstairs, where the business was over. Yet her general and compelling business seemed to be to impregnate with her unseen, unclothed intrusion this house that was and wasn't hers.
>
> And so she did. She glided from room to room. She looked, took in, but also secretly bestowed. She seemed to float on the knowledge that, outrageous as her visiting was—she hadn't a stitch on!—no one would know, guess she had even been there. As if her nakedness conferred on her not just invisibility but an exemption from fact. (*MS*: 85)

With her body, she will attempt to dominate the male/privileged space, even just for a little while. As she is walking the spacious halls and various rooms, she experiences a mix of confusing emotions; on the one hand, she knows she is not in her usual role, but her usual role is not who she really is. When entering the drawing room: "She could not help entering it with the studied deference of a maid announcing a caller or bringing in tea." (*MS*: 86) but some moments later, when she sees her reflection in different mirrors, she will think: "Look, this is you! You are here!" (*MS*: 86) and "This is Jane Fairchild! This is me!" (*MS*: 87) Paul Sheringham had stood in front of one of those mirrors less than an hour before. Jane ponders: "Can a mirror keep a print? Can you look into a mirror and see someone else? Can you step through a mirror and *be* someone else?" (*MS*: 88) so her wish to be someone else, or to be a man, in this, case, is repeated. Jane also compares herself to Joseph Conrad because he surpassed the barrier of language to become a great writer. In Jane's eyes, what Conrad had done "was almost unbelievable" (*MS*: 172); "And it was what she would have to do to become a writer: cross an impossible barrier." (*Ibid.*). In Jane's case, they were barriers of class and of gender.

However, regardless of all the questions Jane poses, and despite her attempt at claiming the physical space of a world which is out of reach, she does not truly question her position. The silent bystander that she is, on that very different day Jane reflects: "It was true of all days, it was the trite truth of any day, but it was truer today than on any day: there never was a day like this, nor ever would or could be again." (*MS*: 44). It is obvious that the day had a great impact on her: "Was there ever such a day as this? Could there ever be such a day again?" (*MS*: 60). She could not thoroughly comprehend all that had taken place. It was almost as if the day was unreal: "It was the profoundest of questions. Had it really happened?" (*MS*: 103).

That Mothering Sunday was the first day on which Jane felt true freedom: "All over the country, maids and cooks and nannies had been 'freed' for the day, but was any of them—was even Paul Sheringham—as untethered as she?" (*MS*: 109). Such a feeling would remain inside of her like a virus she could not get rid of. All her life she would remember that day as the first day of her journey to becoming a different woman. Still, Jane would never cease to see her place next to a man, quietly accepting what she perceives as her female role. She would never forget Paul, her first love, she would toy with the idea of having been in a physical relationship with Joseph Conrad, she would spend twelve years of her life being the devoted wife of a philosopher named Donald Campion, up until death did them part. This is one aspect of her character that makes her very similar to Evie White.

The novel *Here We Are* takes place in England, and it opens in Brighton, in August of 1959, as the theatre at the end of the pier is having a great season. Jack Robinson (his real name and the one he later used was Jack Robbins) is the host of the show and the season's most sought-after performance is a show by a real-life engaged couple who "had 'taken Brighton by storm'" (*HWA*: 5). Their names are Ronnie and Evie, stage names Pablo and Eve. As the story progresses, the reader also learns about 8th September 2009, almost half a century exactly since the last show (performed on Saturday, 12th September), and also the first anniversary of Jack Robinson's death. Due to a tragic turn of events, Evie White would spend almost half a century as Jack's wife, not Ronnie's. Like Jane Fairchild, Evie would also lose two men that she loved.

Evie White lives in very different times and enjoys endless freedoms compared to Jane Fairchild. She walks into Ronnie's life "like a gift" (*HWA*: 63). Ronnie was not much older than her and they met after she had answered his magician's ad that said: "'Suit Young Lady. Previous Stage Experience Essential.'" When Evie met Jack, she and Ronnie were already engaged. Evie's life would have been completely different had she left Ronnie mid-interview when she had the chance. (*HWA*: 65-66) A pretty blonde with "flashing blue eyes" (Swift, 2020: 78), Evie White is also described as a young woman "… who'd never been slow in coming forward and would give anything a go at least once." (*HWA*: 72). One also learns that Evie's mother believed that she would succeed eventually:

> Once her mother had said to her that life was unfair, but her turn would come. And look what a turn it had turned out to be. Fifty years with Jack Robbins. Or not quite. Forty-nine. How unfair. But now, anyway, here she was, sitting pretty in Albany

> Square, guardian, curator and beneficiary of her late husband's shining career. (*HWA*: 77)

The sad and disturbing aspect of this quote is that Evie apparently saw her late husband Jack's "shining career" as her biggest success. Magic was what had attracted Evie to joining Ronnie in the first place, but she always wanted and planned to be part of a duo. In their short but brilliant career on stage together, Evie was a bit of Ronnie's manager as well, and people often noticed her first (*HWA*: 94). In truth, Evie was more than just a pretty sidekick, she had her own ideas about the show (*HWA*: 88). When she ended up marrying Jack, he needed her support as well:

> If Evie was there – with the punters and pesterers, the autograph-seekers – he might feel her little prod, her squeeze of his elbow, but even if she wasn't he would hear her whisper in his ear. 'Go on, Jack. Do it. One more time.' (*HWA*: 97)

Jack would not have been as successful as he was had it not been for her: "But it was Evie White (sometimes known as Mrs Robbins) who'd put him there, Evie White who'd marched him down to Lime Grove and said, 'Sign, Jack, and say thank you to the nice people.'" (*HWA*: 83). On the one hand, Evie loved both Ronnie and Jack dearly, and she misses them dearly when they are gone (*HWA*: 76). On the other, despite her undying love for these men, Evie is clearly aware that she was the best of the entertainment trio:

> It was Evie who you might say chose to live in the real world, when she gave up the stage, where she'd disported and dazzled like the best of them, to become Jack Robbins' wife and, as it proved, rather more than that. What a big gamble that was, and what a big mistake it might have turned out to be. But look how it had paid off. Just look at her now. And all when she might have had her ongoing stage career, not to say marriage to Ronnie Deane, who had even become the 'Great Pablo'.
>
> But who has heard of the Great Pablo now? That magician chap. Whatever became of him? And Jack never became the Great Jack, or even Sir Jack. But life is unfair, you do or you don't have your moment, and if the show must come to an end then there's always the sound theatrical argument: save the best till last. (*HWA*: 157-158)

This is a discrepancy that keeps popping up throughout the story. This is where the nostalgia for what never was comes into play. Only through Evie's musings might one infer that she could have achieved a lot more in life, and yet she maintains that her true place in life was within a couple: "Then Vijay had called anyway, as arranged. He'd said, 'Good afternoon, Mrs Robbins.' She was really 'Evie' or 'Evie White' or 'Ms White' but she'd learnt – in almost fifty years – to accept the frequently conferred title without fuss." (*HWA*: 153) and her true calling was that of a partner:

"Wouldn't 'Eve' always have its immaculate ring? First of women. And did the world need to be told, to have it confirmed, that for him she would always be the great Eve, the wonderful Eve. And, if only for a little while, *his* Eve." (*HWA*: 160). Evie White sees her role of a female as that of a supporter (despite having become the controlling director of a production company), and only by nostalgically looking back does she allow herself to fully perceive her power and her talents:

> Though hadn't she always had it? Long before Rainbow Productions[3] was a twinkle in their eyes (but mainly hers). Hadn't she always wound Jack up and set him off in all the right directions? Just as his mother had done, just as her mother had done with her. The obituaries had simply noted the fact that they'd had no children. No 'survived bys'. Well, need she make any comment? Too busy with Jack, hands full with Jack. If it wasn't obvious. (*HWA*: 86)

Through Swift's choice of words, it almost appears as if Evie is expecting the reader to understand her point of view. It is also noticeable that she can picture an entire vertical or diachronic line of female history in her wake. Tragically, she does not perceive this as a way forward.

Jane Fairchild felt like a stranger in her rich lover's house because her position in life did not allow her to ever belong there. Evie White, even though in a far more advanced position in life also feels that she does not belong: "18 Albany Square was still here – just about, it suddenly seemed to her. And who was living in it? As she looked in her mirror, this suddenly seemed a question you could ask too." (*HWA*: 179). Despite all her success, and despite her taking credit for many of her lovers' achievements (Ronnie's brief but phenomenal success and Jack's life-long career) Evie still does not believe that she belongs in the space reserved for men. On the day of the anniversary of Jack's death "She'd felt a little dizzy and strange, she'd felt a little not herself." (*HWA*: 153) and it is almost as if she needs her deceased lovers to appear from the netherworld and make her feel complete again:

> So the house had entombed her again. Yet there was nowhere, for all the silenced voices, where she would rather be entombed. And the wine had done its work. Now she sat at her dressing table, wondering whether to remove her make-up and half expecting to see in the mirror Jack standing behind her, placing his hands softly on her shoulders.
>
> …

[3] Perhaps named after Pablo and Eve's "Famous Rainbow Trick" (*HWA*: 166).

> But it wasn't Jack that she saw. It was too brief a glimpse for every detail, but he was in his stage outfit, the last thing she'd seen him in, and she'd recognise those eyes anywhere. (*HWA*: 156)

Until the very end of the novel, Evie keeps imagining that Ronnie and Jack can see her or that they are not far away (e.g. *HWA*: 76, 77, 195). She also feels that her entire life has inextricable links to the past, the past in which she was the partner of these two men (*HWA*: 168-169).

However, while exploring the vast realms of her past, Evie, like Jane, will try to reclaim the kind of life and acknowledgement of the self that she never experienced. In both their cases, nostalgia is a tool they use in order to fight back in an unfair world. Their stories are not predictable; there is no villain responsible for their downfall, and in fact there is no downfall and no demise. The tragedy of Jane Fairchild's and Evie White's lives is the fact that they themselves never succeeded in finding and/or claiming their rightful place within them. In the tunnels of history they will try to reconstruct their lives, adding to them a flair of small victories. The fact that they themselves are telling the stories to both themselves and the reader is crucial and this aspect of the narrative was most probably intentional.

In *Mothering Sunday* the epigraph reads "You *shall* go to the ball!" and the opening line is "Once upon a time" (*MS*: 3). This adds to an overall feeling that what the two women are replaying in their minds might not be the full truth. Swift further toys with this idea by emphasizing the unreliability of memory and recounting: "And it might even have happened just like that." (*MS*: 14) and he mentions "All the scenes. All the scenes that never occur, but wait in the wings of possibility." (*MS*: 74) and "All the scenes. All the real ones and all the ones in books. And all the ones that were somehow in-between, because they were only what you could picture and imagine of real people." (*MS*: 175). The description of the magic show and the element of magic provide this same effect for *Here We Are*:

> Then the show was over and the talked-about thing was no more than that, it could only ever exist in the memories of those who'd seen it, with their own eyes, in those few summer weeks. Then those memories would themselves fade. They might wonder anyway if they really had seen it. (*HWA*: 4-5)

Believing in magic requires passing through a certain door which leads "into a new way of thinking about everything around you". (*HWA*: 134) Evie needed to believe in magic in order to make the best of her life. She was proud of the woman she had become:

> … what's more extraordinary, that actors turn into these other people – how on earth is it done? – or that people anyway turn into people you never thought they might be?
>
> Evie White. Chorus girl. Prancer and dancer. Up for anything really. Even one-time magician's assistant. But, as it turned out, hard-headed and sharp-eyed business woman. She could vouch for that too. And Jack Robbins' wife for nearly fifty years. Not Ronnie Deane's. Who would know better? (*HWA*: 84)

Jane Fairchild was also proud of herself and her writer's career: "Telling stories, telling tales. Always the implication that you were trading in lies. But for her it would always be the task of getting to the quick, the heart, the nub, the pith: the trade of truth-telling." (*MS*: 176) Jane's and Evie's truths will always remain ever so slightly out of reach for the reader, as one can never truly walk a mile in their shoes. Perhaps their relationship towards a past they never had could be defined as nothing more than a magical fairytale. Perhaps in their case nostalgia would be, as Svetlana Boym put it, "a romance with one's own fantasy" (2001: XIII). Yet, herein lies the silver lining of these stories about lives unfulfilled; in Jane's and Evie's minds there will always be this path of success that they may have taken, there will always be this space that may be reclaimed by returning to the opportunities that were missed. But who are we as readers to judge, and what is "true", anyway? Reading such stories at the beginning of the 21st century most certainly makes one wonder why Swift had not chosen a different path to explore the female experience throughout history. Writing from a male perspective, even while giving the floor to his heroines, perhaps he provided the answer himself:

> So what was it then exactly, this truth-telling? They would always want even the explanation explained! And any writer worth her salt would lead them on, tease them, lead them up the garden path. Wasn't it bloody obvious? It was about being true to the very stuff of life, it was about trying to capture, though you never could, the very feel of being alive. It was about finding a language. And it was about being true to the fact, the one thing only followed from the other, that many things in life—oh so many more than we think—can never be explained at all. (*MS*: 176-177)

Bojana Gledić

NE U MOJE IME – NOSTALGIJA KAO SREDSTVO OTPORA U ROMANIMA *MAJČIN DAN* I *EVO NAS* GREJAMA SVIFTA

Rezime

Prošlost, kojoj se iznova vraćamo, neretko biva obojena značenjem koje joj tom prilikom dodeljujemo. Moglo bi se reći da predstavlja platno po kojem slikamo iznova i iznova. Tu dolazimo do pojma nostalgija, koji se isprva koristio da označi fizičku bolest, a danas se uglavnom povezuje sa nekom vrstom „melanholije za domom" ili željom da se čovek vrati tamo odakle potiče/gde pripada. U izučavanju književnosti koja se bavi nostalgijom, može se posmatrati kao alatka kojom se održava identitet (Davis, 1979: 31-51) i ne mora da se odnosi na stvarne događaje (Lasch, 1990: 18). U slučaju dva romana Grejama Svifta izabrana za analizu u ovom radu (*Majčin dan*, 2017 i *Evo nas*, 2020), čežnja za prošlošću zaista se odnosi na događaje koji se nikada nisu desili, ali ne u pokušaju da se dođe do utehe, već u pokušaju da se stvori istorija koja nikad nije postojala i povrati zasluženo mesto u istorijskom toku događaja. Dok se kroz nostalgiju vraćaju svojim životnim pričama, i kroz reči i kroz misli, Sviftove junakinje Džejn Ferčajld (*Majčin dan*) i Ivi Vajt (*Evo nas*) pružaju otpor i bore se za svoje mesto u istoriji.

Ključne reči: nostalgija, otpor, Grejam Svift, *Majčin dan*, *Evo nas*

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