

Re-writing the Histories in Postmodern Sympathy: Parallel Study of Auster's *The New York Trilogy* and Don DeLillo's Select Novels

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Abstract: Paul Auster's *The New York Trilogy* divulges an apocalyptic postmodernism through classical *magnum opus* works. This study upholds the cultural phenomenon through New York City, which is depicted as a trendsetting of urban society and manifesting the beauty of a graphic overview. Paul Auster's fiction resembles the classics of English studies as seen in three novels of the series with three different allusions to that. The first of the trilogy, *City of Glass*, re-emerges in telling of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in one way. *Ghosts*, the second novel in the trilogy, provides much attention to Thoreau's *Walden*; the final novel of the series, *The Locked Room*, provokes the reading of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Auster's writing somewhat extends its metanarratives to address the coercion to intervene. DeLillo's select novels depict the classical decoding of postmodernity. This research paper aims to examine the parallel study of Postmodern detective fiction into classics allusions. This study also looks to exhibit the cultural differences and challenge the ontological construction in the trilogy.

Keywords: Postmodernism, Psychoanalysis, Crime, Detective, Mystery, Anti-Detective, Trauma

Introduction

Postmodern literature stays on top by giving us urban portrayals, acknowledging the huge impact of classics in the newest form. Paul Auster, Don DeLillo and others have eradicated the blending of compassionate with staple literature for its evolution. Detective Fiction is, on the other hand, moulds literature to its suspense; it is actually considered mystery, crime, investigation, whodunit and horror. They are often set in urban cities; for example, Paul Auster's *The New York Trilogy* takes place in New York City throughout the series. It provides a cluster of cultural changes in writers, characters, and even the readers. Detective fiction is the most interesting genre in English literature that brings more thrill to the readers and their cases.

Many movies have been adapted since the genre was introduced into writing; spectators are on the verge of their seats to enjoy the epitome of its creation. Another fact is that detective fiction in postmodern time bring more madness when they allude different classic references to compare. Crime occurs mainly in detective fiction where the story revives with investigation and appropriate resolution of the situation to conclude the tale. According to Martin,

'*City of Glass* and the subsequent instalments of *The New York Trilogy* can be classified 'postmodernist' texts, and publication of the novels would place Auster firmly on the literary map. Although the label 'postmodernist' has remained with Auster, critics are divided as to whether this is an apt classification. (Martin2008,2)

Postmodernism revolves around different contrastive thoughts to noticing the development and cultural disclosures to its readers. New York City stands tall by its beauty, but the puzzling streets and architectural apartments tend to raise the question of 'real beauty' of the city. Sarah Yoon's study brings more comprehension of New York City in a broader way, as she has mentioned the visit of Jean Baudrillard, who made a visit to New York City in the 1980's. He commented on the city, 'sense of utter isolation and paradoxical solitude found among inhabitants of New York'(Yoon2018, 41).

The city has been the symbol of loneliness as seen in Auster's *City of Glass*, where the narrator Daniel Quinn lives alone for no reason. In the beginning of the novel, the narrator wanders around New York City and finds nothing on the way back. It becomes quite interesting to know the readers to understand to his space of the novel whether to look him as a mere character, or writer of mystery novel, or even to the god's sake to see him as a detective. Baudrillard also noted that 'Why do people live in New York? There is no relationship to them. Except for an inner electricity which results from the simple fact of their being crowded together' (Baudrillard1988, 15). New York City people have been cursed to live in solitude; perhaps many writers have dwelt with their exemplary thought to experience the alienation. In Cervantes, Sancho Panza accompanies Quixote throughout his adventures, but he resembles a population we are part of.

Matthew McKean understands that this novel connects with the French Connection as well; Auster is unquestionably a member of the European philosophical tradition. He acknowledges that he

has influenced passion for the avant-garde and European modernism. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, which coincided with the height of French theory, he lived in Paris and spoke French during periods that shaped his intellectual development. It is not coincidental that Auster is associated with France and the French philosophical tradition. Auster earned money while residing in Paris by translating modern French poetry, interviews, book manuscripts, Sunday Book Review articles, and, among other things, opinion pieces by Michel Foucault and Jean-Paul Sartre. Jeffrey T. Nealon rightly points out detective fiction as,

The detective novel is often analysed in terms of its metafictional and metaphysical appeal. Whether consciously or unconsciously, the genre comments upon the process of sifting through signs, and ultimately upon the possibility of deriving order from the seeming chaos of conflicting clues and motives. The unravelling work of the detective within the story mirrors and assists the work of the reader, as both try to piece together the disparate signs that might eventually solve the mystery. (Nealon, 1996, 91-92)

The Red Note Book and Many Colours

The Novel follows where it left off in the first of the series; *Ghosts* repeats the history of *Walden*. *The Red Notebook* of the Protagonists to keep records of the victims and the data of crimes for their client. The story, which is told in the past tense, is one of the historical invasions that gradually and profoundly begin to colour the stopped, present time that is characteristic of *Ghosts*. Furthermore, it contributes to the slow process of providing the biographical and emotional details necessary for us to begin viewing Blue as a character first in the conventional sense of an idiomatic and thus plausible constellation of traits, experiences, and perceptions by dramatizing an affective confrontation with the past. Most significantly, it serves as a reminder to both Blue and the reader that the self is constructed by others and is not substantive.

Blue needs more than this insight to appreciate Thoreau's *Walden*, the book he buys. Blue is unable to understand the connection between literature and his life, in contrast to Black, who, we learn from his limited encounters with Blue, is acutely aware of the emotive benefits of reading, creating Brooklyn as a uniquely literary city through his narratives about Whitman. Rather than seeing reading as an experience of otherness, he has always seen it as knowing. Although reading *Walden*, a book that specifically addresses loneliness and community, offers a chance for atonement, Blue becomes impatient despite the sporadic glimmer of comprehension.

From the very start he has been the man in the middle, thwarted in front and hemmed in on the rear. Oddly enough, this thought reminds him of some sentences from *Walden*, and he searches through his notebook for the exact phrasing, fairly certain that he has written them down. (Auster, 1987, 170)

Just as the father does not totally connect with the son, *Walden* is more than just a mirror or metaphor of Blue's circumstances; it speaks to his circumstances, but Blue's reading alters *Walden*. However, Blue cannot understand this because he is too enmeshed in his behavioural and epistemological beliefs. Indeed, James Peacock in his study on Auster's characters shows the exact shadow of classical texts that "Reading *Walden*, a book expressly concerned with solitude and community" (Peacock, 2011, 368).

As a postmodern author, Paul Auster has used an empathetic linguistic framework that enables him to appropriate styles from several historical periods and combine them in a way that echoes their historically complex surroundings. In its numerous allusions to a wide range of literary works, from *Don Quixote* to Edgar Allan Poe's detective fiction, Auster's iconic postmodern triad, *The New York Trilogy*, takes advantage of an interdisciplinary framework. Nevertheless, Edgar Allan Poe's well-known use of the ratiocination technique in his detective fiction is one of the most important influences on the trilogy in general and *The Locked Room* in particular. Zoreh Ramin & Mona Jafari critique that Auster's approach to *The Locked Room* provides a lucid picture of classics of Poe, Cervantes, and even Thoreau.

Poe's technique of ratiocination also presupposes that there is a single unified truth that can be reached by a prodigious intellect that penetrates into the perpetrator's mind. (Ramin & Jafari, 2019, 2)

In Edgar Allan Poe, ratiocination is the process of applying precise thought, logical inference, and analytical reasoning to solve a crime or problem. Poe established the foundation for contemporary detective fiction by introducing this idea through his fictitious detective C. Auguste Dupin in tales like "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841).

In "The Names," Don DeLillo uses a story full of metaphorical and enigmatic aspects to examine the confusing connection that exists between linguistics, culture, and identity. The book explores the

lives of businesspeople and expatriates negotiating the turbulent terrain of global politics and interpersonal relationships. DeLillo creates a story that encourages the reader to think about the strength and limitations of language in an uncertain world through its complex plot and thoughtful characters. Paula Bryant remarks that, "DeLillo's characters themselves are, in fact, literal characters, hieroglyphs within the larger text of the novel". (Bryant, 1987, 18).

The protagonist of the book is James Axton, a risk analyst for the Northeast Group, a conglomerate whose job it is to forecast the performance of businesses operating in problematic areas. The complicated geopolitical conflicts that surround Axton's career include terrorism and petroleum politics. While working on archaeological excavations in the Aegean, he finds himself in the Middle East, attempting to stay in touch with his estranged wife, Kathryn, and his son, Tap. "The Names" presents a universe where language and identity are entwined in a complicated dance, challenging readers to stay interested in its complex narrative. The novel's depiction of contemporary nomads raises questions about whether the patterns that influence their lives are planned conspiracies or just coincidental events. DeLillo's story allows for perspective as it develops, reflecting the complexity and uncertainty of everyday life.

Similar to the following novel by DeLillo, whose ideas depict the miniature of classical writing, we could see the evidence in DeLillo's *White Noise* highlights that Hitler Studies, Darwinism, and many classical texts have been interpreted in the postmodern stereotypes. It's a novel of noise; we would say most of the scenes are claimed to show off odd things in a greater community of racial discrimination between American White versus American Middle Class White. How come these identities are investigated when their country lauds their own fall?. Raising the concern over sporadically appearing the context of protagonists, showing the attitude of differences. Hitler studies have been taught by a non-German-speaking tutor Jack, who is secretly learning German at his residence.

He asked me why I'd chosen this year in particular to learn German, after so many years of slipping past the radar. I told him there was a Hitler Conference scheduled for next spring at the College-on-the-Hill. Three days of lectures, workshops, and panels. (DeLillo, 1985, 39)

DeLillo's eleventh and such a long-running novel, *Underworld* is a novel of numerous underworlds in DeLillo's eleventh and longest book, *Underworld*, both real and imagined, mythological and every day. Joe Rollins, in his research, finds out the superstructure, a novel of experimentation and the base of *Underworld's* secrecy,

The structure of *Underworld* is cyclical, its chapters arrayed in a management. Like the narrative itself, DeLillo's position in relation to the question of art as a mode of Marxist critique collapses and folds back on itself, and at the end of the novel, while the shadow of a decision is visible, this question is ultimately left unresolved. (Rollins, 2019, 14).

Christian hell, the first underworld to appear in *Underworld*, is also the most representative of the many secret societies, buried wastes, sublimated networks, and suppressed passions. FBI director J. Edgar Hoover watches the 1951 Giants vs. Dodgers baseball game that concluded with the well-known "shot heard round the world" in the novel's prologue, which was first published as the stand-alone novella *Pafko at the Wall* in 1992. This juxtaposition, which eventually tends to favour the radical over the modernist, is important for DeLillo's larger project because it implies that *Underworld* is entangled in the contradictions and oppositions of the last fifty years, as well as the transparency and ambiguity noted in Wegner's account of the 1990s. "The knife grinder came and went" (DeLillo, 1997, 696), Postmodernity is explicated in these novels through the classical regime and power of its language and structure to mould the writers' postmodernity anxiety of the writers.

Conclusion:

Postmodernism has brought many changes in writing, narrative techniques, character shuffling, and thematic interchange. But writers like Auster and DeLillo give life and remembrance to the classical writings by giving examples from the greats of American Literature like Thoreau, the English legendary writer Defoe, the ever-forgotten Spanish writer Cervantes, and the German great Hitler and his ideologies. This study has brought detective fiction that compares many ways to deliver the concept of crimes, classics, investigations, and more reliable ways to solve the puzzle of crimes. It is, in fact, Postmodernism that has moulded people's minds and destiny to unravel the support of classics.

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