

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**THE PLEASURE OF WATCHING AND THE POWER  
OF WATCHING**

“I watched you. I watched you and Sophie and the baby. There was even a time when I camped outside your apartment building. For two or three weeks, maybe a month. I followed you everywhere you went. Once or twice, I even bumped into you on the street, looked you straight in the eye. But you never noticed. It was fantastic the way you didn’t see me.”

*-The Locked Room (The New York Trilogy)*

Next day, after twelve hours of sleep and no dreams to speak of, Oedipa checked out of the hotel and drove down the peninsula to Kinneret. She had decided on route, with time to think about the day preceding, to go see Dr Hilarius her shrink, and tell him all. She might well be in the cold and sweatless meat-hooks of a psychosis. With her own eyes she had verified a WASTE system: seen two WASTE postmen, a WASTE mailbox, WASTE stamps, WASTE cancellation. And the image of the muted post horn all but saturated the Bay Area. Yet she wanted it all to be fantasy—some clear result of her several wounds, needs, dark doubles. She wanted Hilarius to tell her she was some kind of a nut and needed a rest, and that there was no Trystero. She wanted to know why the chance of its being real should menace her so.

*-The Crying of Lot 49*

## I

The aim of this chapter is to examine how the entire idea of crime and punishment gets implicated in watching as a fact and figure. In fact in some variants of the detective novels written in the twentieth century the traditional omniscience of the detective gets translated into a narrative monopoly of watching over crime(s) and criminals, often combining with the narrative voice or the wisdom of the frame narrator. In some other variants, especially in the postmodernist detective texts, the knowledge economy associated with the genre—linking codes of power to codes of pleasure through iteration or reflection—undergoes structural changes. Unlike the detective in the traditional detective text, where the detective has the last laugh in the fabled chase, the

postmodernist detective text dissolves the distinction between the pursuer and pursued, thereby suggesting that the structures of power that ideologically contain the detective novel get unhinged in certain linguistic, narrative and social circumstances. The uncertainty surrounding the postmodernist text is manipulated by the narrative by shifting the power of watching from the detective not just to the smart criminal but also to the narrative process itself. The novels discussed in this chapter show the detective novel responding to the postmodernist breakthrough by adopting mutant features, sometimes by suggesting that in a detective story the detective and the criminal are both manufactured by the narrator's gaze or will.

The chapter begins with the following hypotheses:

- (a) that detective novels affirm the ways of knowing as absolute power, mediating political, moral and epistemological queries or truths through surveillance and rationalistic interpretation of investigators;
- (b) that watching as an act gives a new pattern or meaning to power as it derives not from a centralized aesthetic and ideological mediation but as a negative hermeneutics of power;
- (c) that pleasure is not necessarily produced across all detective texts by withholding the end, but is circulated by playing on the pleasure-power relationship;
- (d) that the detective novel not only inscribes the consolidation of authority but also the subversion of established notions and mechanics of power.

Detective texts that follow formal/conventional structure produce and circulate pleasure through the detective's action of keeping an omniscient watch over the guilty other in order to preserve social order and harmony of community life. In contrast, in some variants of the detective novel, the divide between the detective's world and the criminal's world is blurred by blurring the knowledge of who is watching or pursuing whom. To this extent, narrative pleasure is circulated through the reversal of usual order. This chapter examines the following narratives: Agatha Christie's *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (1926), Alain Robbe-Grillet's *The Erasers* (1963), Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* (1965), Paul Auster's *New York Trilogy* (1985), and Peter Ackroyd's *Hawksmoor* (1985), which analyze the autonomy and authority on watching and surveillance.

The chapter contends that the politics of watching circulates and produces politics of power in the formal detective fiction which is directly responsible for generating narrative pleasure. ‘Watching’ in these types of texts is a one-way thoroughfare where ingenious efficiency of the detective/investigator is always made possible through monopolized and autonomous system of policing, surveillance and authority of the ideologically reliable agent of any established belief system. On the other hand, in some other detective texts the detective is no longer seen as the preserver of the logical and rational order of a perfect cosmos, rather he gets entangled in an ontological query of reality and illusion. To this end, the autonomous and monopolized pleasure and power of watching becomes a double-edged game of anonymous gazing bordering on a paranoiac world.

#### **4.1.1. Formal Detective Fiction and the License to Watch**

Formal detective novels, popularly known as the “whodunit,” affirm social structures, moral codes, assumptions about the world’s intelligibility and truth as givens through its narrative intention and design. William W. Stowe in his essay “Critical Investigations: Conventions and Ideology in Detective Fiction” (1989), explains:

[I]n conventional detective stories crime is usually seen as a symptom of personal evil rather than social injustice, and the detective is depicted as an ideal incarnation of competitive individualism. The truth in these novels may be elusive, but it is ultimately knowable and always worth knowing. The hero’s goal, simply put, is to right wrongs by uncovering facts. (Stowe 570)

In this sense, the likes of Hercule Poirot, Sherlock Holmes, Lord Peter Wimsey etc. assume the role of social, cultural and political authority. In other words, crime symbolizes violation of order and the detective/investigator is symbolic of a type of power that is responsible for maintaining an ideally innocent society. It is interesting to see that in such forms of narrative, unquestionable authority and power of watching is invested in the detective—allowing him to access a type of fatal secret and making him an extraordinary mortal possessing panoptic power. In the venture to restore order and harmony from the state of chaos, the narrative offers an invincible and unchallenged knowledge of truth derived from his ingenious watching and eventual deciphering of crime and its cause. To this end, the necessity to ‘watch’ allows the investigator the

license to transgress official periphery or sanctions him the power to define the legitimate.

The formal detective texts purposefully build the “dilatory space”—the space of suspense or temporary vagueness between fabula and sjuzet—to empower the investigator with the pleasure of watching that leads to the deductive pleasure of knowing. The detective becomes an agent of the narrative’s omnipotent gaze that resonates the politics of unverifiable narrative codes in a given society. The faith in these normative codes is aroused through what Ian A. Bell terms as “psychic protection” (see Bell, *Cambridge Companion* 8) provided by the narrative through the idea of a heroically equipped detective. Bell explains:

In the nineteenth century, the role of the newly-fashioned detective as an agent of consolation or security is ... ideologically central to the subsequent project of popular crime writing.... In a meticulously detailed and internally plausible textual-system, designed to reinforce the ... sense of security, the detective becomes the ... personal custodian, guaranteeing safe passage and neutralizing the threat of even the most cunning criminals. (Bell 8)

It is usually seen that the formal detective narrative necessarily segregates the plot into two camps—(i) those who represent a given social order and the implied value system that helps sustain it. In other words, those who are legally and ethically considered ‘good,’ and (ii) those who are considered as transgressors or criminal ‘others’. In this context, what Dennis Porter discusses about these narratives’ limited scope for raising questions concerning codes and accepted law (Porter, *Pursuit* 121), can be seen as a point of contention to understand how these texts negotiate power of the ruling class over socially excluded criminals. Thus, the detective/investigator becomes a hegemonic representation empowered with his unsurpassing license to gaze without ever having the need to justify his surveillance or watching.

#### **4.1.2. The Detective/Investigator as Custodian**

George Grella compares the formal detective narrative to the plots of comedy, to the romantic subplot and to the comedy of manners for its endorsement of a “stable and numerous society ... in which the moral code can in some way be externalized in the more or less predictable details of daily life” (Grella, “Murder and Manners” 34). To this

end, the detective/investigator is assigned the duty of preserving innocence and harmony of community life and his omniscient surveillance infallibly observes “variations of human behaviour to be translated into the significant clues of criminal investigation” (Grella 34). This can be further elaborated by Dennis Porter’s comments on the structuring of the whodunit narrative:

The deep ideological constant of the genre ... is built into the action of investigation. The classic structuring question is always “whodunit” and ... how will justice be done. In the beginning of a detective story is a crime that implies both a villain and a victim of villainy, but the action itself always focuses on the acts of a herd who is summoned in order to pursue and punish the villain and, wherever possible, to rescue the victim and restore the status quo ante as well. Whether the emphasis is placed on the problem of solving the puzzle of the crime or on the difficulty of the pursuit, on ratiocination or on the virile prowess demanded by a protracted search, the action of heroic investigation is unvarying. The point of view adopted is always that of the detective.... In a detective story the moral legitimacy of the detective’s role is never in doubt. (Porter 125)

The detective/investigator’s monopoly on the pleasure of watching/surveillance necessarily empowers him as the social and moral police of a given society for detecting any kind of “transgressive otherness.” Grella comments:

[A] minute flaw in breeding, taste, or behaviour—the wrong tie, the wrong accent, ‘bad form’ of any other sort—[is] translate[d] as a violation of an accepted ethical system [where the detective] provides grounds for expulsion or condemnation.” (Grella 34)

In this context, in a formal detective narrative, the detective and his uncensored gaze is always “socially acceptable and comprehends the code of the society he investigates—he can question with delicacy, (and exceptionally) notice ‘bad form’” (Grella 34).

#### **4.1.3. The Postmodernist Detective and Paranoid Watching**

The scope and perspective of investigative watching in postmodernist detective fiction becomes an antithesis of the security of rational order proposed by the formal detective text. William V. Spanos in his essay argues that the postmodern imagination is

compelled to undertake the subversion of plot by violently frustrating detection and refusing to solve any crime or mystery (see Spanos, “The Detective and the Boundary”). This implies a refutation or negation of the “social and political organization that finds its fulfilment in the imposed certainties of the well-made world of the totalitarian state, where investigation or inquisition in behalf of the achievement of a total, that is, pre-ordained or teleologically determined structure—a final solution—is the defining activity” (Spanos 154). To this end, these narratives present a fragmented world where fragmentation is symbolized by the disarrayed, dispersed and ambiguous meaning and interpretation of apparent crime and mystery, and also by the fragmented identity of the detective/investigator.

It is clearly seen that the detective/investigator’s watch metamorphosizes into a paranoiac decipherment of the specular and the visible, or in Jean Baudrillard’s words:

[P]ostmodern paranoia may be considered as a special case of the specular imaginary called ‘hypervisibility’—the pre-eminence of the virtual in the millennial era, accompanied by an increasing blindness to the real material conditions that ground us. (Flieger, “Postmodern Perspective” 88).

In other words, the narrative renders the detective’s surveillance elusive along with the elusiveness of real world, and he is overpowered and haunted by a cryptic and secret all pervading eye. These narratives contend the conventional interpretations of what is usually defined as illegitimate, penal justice, state order and the purpose of social existence. Textual reality becomes gradually ambiguous with the narrative functioning as a powerful medium of surveillance over the investigator’s actions. Crime and criminal become intangible in order to nullify the legitimacy of the detective’s power of watching. In this connection what Stephano Tani comments in his work *The Doomed Detective* (1984), that the link between the detective and criminal in postmodernist detective narratives is important:

In a very Poesque way, the confrontation is no longer between a detective and a murderer, but between the detective and reality, or between the detective’s mind and his sense of identity, which is falling apart, between the detective and the ‘murderer’ in his own self.” (Tani 76)

Thus, the elusive reality of a well-made world is foregrounded by thwarting Aristotle's causal plot through subversion of the investigator's authorized watching and uncertainty of inculcating the criminal. This fragmented and virtual reality creates a fragmentation within the detective/investigator's mind resulting in a paranoid perception of being watched by the devil himself. Postmodernist detective narratives delimit the authoritative power by creating a hypervisible power that haunts the legitimacy of the detective's imposition of meanings and interpretations of solving the mystery. It means that the presence of this hypervisibility is designed by these narratives as uncatchable, illusive and that which pushes the authoritative surveillance "in a crescendo of abandonment to darkness" (Tani 77). Watching in this case is not centralized on the aesthetic and ideological mediation of discipline and social surveillance. It is placed on the side of a negative hermeneutics of power—power that is not monopolized by the official justification of good and evil. In other words, good and evil are not necessarily separate entities, rather two sides of the same coin. This is explained by what Tani says about the ambiguity of the detective's quest about the mysterious and evil:

Strangely enough, the devil is quite similar to the detective himself ... or perhaps the devil is a projection of the detective's hallucinations ... the devil does exist and tricks the detective, who has always been devil-ridden without knowing it. (Tani 77)

Following the notion above, these narratives disturb the sense of totality in the ideal social/political authority/power by blurring the divide between what is defined as "civil" and "barbarous" thereby dissolving the knowledge of "who" is "watching" or "pursuing whom." Zizek in his work *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (1989), explains "the postmodernist detective's symptoms of dispersion as the 'phenomenon of so-called totalitarianism'" (Zizek 27). He writes:

[T]he source of totalitarianism is a dogmatic attachment to the official world... An excessive commitment to Good may in itself become the greatest Evil; real Evil is any kind of fanatical dogmatism, especially that exerted in the name of Good. (Zizek 27)

The intention is seen as anti-totalitarian, where a dogmatic belief of goodness transforms into a psychological malady. Paradoxically, the doubts and fear of being watched and



pursued turns the authoritative figure of the detective into “a kind of living dead ... certainly not a person representing the existing social and political powers” (Zizek 28).

To this end, pleasure in these narratives is circulated through the possibility of reversal of usual order and assuming that the politics of power can be controlled by almost anyone who has access to watching. This can be best explained by J.L.Borges’ “Death and the Compass” where the murderer Red Scharlach lures the detective Lonrot into a mortal trap. In fact, the narrative reverses the traditional role of the “pursuer” and “pursued.” The usual reconstruction of clues left by the assassin through the detective’s rational “watch” and “surveillance” ends in an annihilative logic with the murderer assuming the detective’s role of pursuing and watching.

## II

### **4.2.1. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd: An Outré***

Edmund Wilson is critical of a certain cluster of detective fiction and its invariable links with country side life. In fact, his criticism of detective fiction, extreme as it is, seems to justify his own Marxist leanings whereby the class and status of the detective and the affected gentry would be anathema to him. He is also interested in looking at crime fiction in terms of its ideological imperatives. His essay titled “Who Cares Who Killed Roger Ackroyd” (1950), indicates how class is a major issue in Agatha Christie and Dorothy L. Sayers. Edmund Wilson may not have “cared” (see Wilson, “Who Cares” 35-40) who killed Roger Ackroyd, but in order to understand Gramsci and Althusser’s hegemonic domination and popular culture as superstructures in ensuring the reproduction of existing power relations in society, it is indeed necessary to find out the murderer of Roger Ackroyd. What Michel Foucault writes in *Discipline and Punish* (1977), about sobriety in punishment leads to the radical revision of the penal codes by the end of the nineteenth century with constant surveillance or Bentham’s Panopticon “as the system of control established in the new age” (Porter, *Pursuit* 124). Porter further explains that the rise of human sciences is indispensable for the establishment of the disciplinary society as well as for the new police in understanding human behaviour

through comprehensive surveillance and bureaucratic reporting. This becomes relevant in crime literature of the times which takes a stand to defend the established societal order. Porter writes:

Thus, by the time of Doyle, the Great Detective of fiction had himself the essential qualities of the unseen seer who stands at the center of the social Panopticon and employs his “science” to make all things visible on behalf of the forces of order.... It represents in its way the exercise of lucid power over an identified enemy of society. The detective story promotes the “heroization” of the agent of surveillance in his struggle against threats from within. (Porter 124-25)

The narrative of *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (1926), is outré given that most formal detective texts do not produce the circumstances of murder and inquest from the evidence provided by the murderer himself. Interestingly, the narrative is steered forward by Dr. James Sheppard, but the facts and truth are always verified by Poirot’s watchful and covert surveillance. Apparently the narrative converges Sheppard’s observations and opinions with Poirot, but Poirot secretly maintains his own data through his surveillance and private investigation. Moreover, the introduction of Poirot as Sheppard’s neighbour, and Caroline Sheppard’s unusual interest in Poirot empower the detective to function as the overseer and secretly surveil the guilty. How in extremely queer circumstances—Poirot’s self-grown vegetable marrow becomes the reason for his interaction with the proposed murderer of the narrative—the narrative brings together the murderer and investigator with the intention of preparing the ground for gazing into the private affairs of the criminal. Further, Dr. Sheppard’s comment can be seen as a fore-signifier of how the narrative mediates truth through the investigator’s rationalistic interpretation despite the narrator-criminal’s covert interpretation of the events of murder: “The strange little man seemed to read my thoughts” (*Murder* 33).

#### **4.2.2. Poirot and the Benevolence of Omniscience**

Poirot’s omniscience while examining the crime scene, that is, Roger Ackroyd’s home and specifically the study along with the persons directly involved on the night of the murder establish the ways of knowing as a given. The change in the position of the chair, the marks on the window-sill, the impression of the rubber studs in the shoe marks, the fire in the grate and every little clue and evidence is looked at by the detective in a very

different light from what apparently appears to Inspector Davis, Inspector Raglan and the Chief Constable Colonel Melrose. Poirot's "eye travelled round, searching everything in the room with a quick, trained glance" (*Murder* 111). His method-extraordinaire evolves from his ability to observe and watch minute details and discrepancies without anyone realizing or noticing anything: "One must always proceed with method.... To each man his own knowledge.... To find about the fire, I must ask the man whose business it is to observe such things" (*Murder* 112). Further, Poirot maintains that: "Everything is simple, if you arrange the facts methodically" (*Murder* 115).

To this end, however insignificant the position of a chair in Ackroyd's study may seem to the others, it does not miss the penetrating gaze of Poirot. This develops a necessary narrative link between the discrepancy in the position and the possibility of the presence of a Dictaphone in the room. Poirot's acute surveilling assumption is confirmed in the later part of the narrative:

"Now that table was completely hidden by the drawn-out chair—and immediately I had my first shadowy suspicion of the truth.

Supposing that there had been something on that table not intended to be seen? Something placed by the murderer?" (*Murder* 353)

In this connection, Poirot further argues: "We know that a dictaphone was supplied to Mr. Ackroyd. But no Dictaphone has been found amongst his effects. So, if something was taken from the table—why should not that something be the dictaphone?" (*Murder* 354).

#### **4.2.3. Poirot as the "Social Panopticon"**

The narrative design and intention of bestowing the status of the "social panopticon" to the detective is seen in Poirot's superhuman ability of collecting circumstantial evidence. Poirot's own comments on his penetrating gaze and extraordinary talent of tracing clues are important to understand narrative complicity with the power of authorized surveillance: "But it is not easy to hide things from Hercule Poirot. He has a knack of finding out" (*Murder* 134). The discovery of the wedding ring at the Goldfish Pond further shows how the narrative invests the power of watching and legitimacy of knowing exclusively to the detective. Quite clearly, the wedding ring in the pond is first

noticed by Major Hector Blunt, but he is not authorized to know the mystery behind the abandoned ring or how it could be relevant to the larger design of the murder: “There’s something bright down there. Wondered what it was—looks like a gold brooch. Now I’ve stirred up the mud and it’s gone” (*Murder* 139).

The narrative not only affirms Poirot the ways of knowing, but also the technique of a temporary clue cover-up, only to be revealed with the purpose of attributing him with the role of the invisible social panopticon:

[Poirot] knelt down by the pond, baring his arm to the elbow, and lowered it in very slowly, so as not to disturb the bottom of the pond. But in spite of all his precautions the mud eddied and swirled, and he was forced to draw his arm out again empty-handed. (*Murder* 143)

Further, how Poirot’s piercing gaze detects the little quill and fragment of a handkerchief in the summer house anticipates the possible connection in settling the various queries of the mystery. In fact, it suggests the narrative intention of interpreting the detective’s capacity not only in surveilling, but also in perceiving the subconscious and the psychological. Poirot’s own comments justify his method of deciphering: “The thing is to get a clear history of what happened ... always bearing in mind that the person who speaks may be lying” (*Murder* 196).

Poirot’s extraordinary gaze into the private lives of various characters and extracting their secrets may be seen as a necessary hint in connecting the chain of sequence required to restore the disturbed social order. For instance, Poirot’s discovery of Dr. Sheppard’s interests in machineries by way of his expertise in covert means, fore-sees the link between the moved position of the chair and exact time of murder. Poirot’s surveillance clearly involves a method of discreetly mingling among individuals and closely gazing into the hidden crevices of their psyche.

In this connection, the little reunion arranged by Poirot in his sitting-room at the larches is suggestive of the narrative’s forces of order through the detective’s omniscient, panoptic watch over anything that appears as a threat to the harmony of communal life. The fact that the detective keeps a secret watch over all the individuals concerned with the case of Roger Ackroyd’s murder shows that at no point in the narrative has he been waylaid or deceived by either the narrator-murderer, Dr. Sheppard, or the others, with

their lies and secret lives. Poirot's role in surveillance actually supports the narrative apparatus as social panopticon mediating social/moral/penal norms and clearly distinguishing between the innocent and guilty, thereby establishing a disciplinary society. To this end, Poirot is seen as the heroic agent of surveillance whose unbeatable watching traps everyone with skeletons in their cupboards:

There was a ring of satisfaction in his tone. And with the sound of it I saw a ripple of something like an uneasiness pass over all those faces grouped at the other end of the room. There was a suggestion in all those faces grouped at the other end of the room. There was a suggestion in all this as of a trap—a trap that had closed. (*Murder 333*)

This detective text introduces a departure from the formal technique of placing detectives and criminals as opposing forces. Interestingly, Poirot considers Dr. Sheppard as his assistant and confidante in investigating Ackroyd's murder, and quite a few times, he even depends heavily on his opinions. To a certain extent, it also seems that Poirot believes in whatever evidence is given by Dr. Sheppard in connection to the murder. He is actually presented by the narrative as the co-investigator and has been approved by the detective himself: "You must have indeed been sent from the good God to replace my friend Hastings," he said, with a twinkle. "I observe that you do not quit my side ..."  
(*Murder 130*).

This camaraderie between Poirot and Sheppard can be seen as a device not apparent, but covert, that collaborates and co-operates in the detective's authoritative close watch over the supposed murderer. Sheppard's ploy of following Poirot like a shadow in order to learn the latest developments and discoveries about the case, apparently looks like a narrative technique to bar the detective's surveillance. But it is only a temporary narrative arrangement to actually enhance and confirm Poirot's superiority. Dr. Sheppard says:

I was at Poirot's elbow the whole time. I saw what he saw. I tried my best to read his mind. As I know now, I failed in this latter task. Though Poirot showed me all his discoveries ... he held back the vital and yet logical impressions that he formed. As I came to know later, this secrecy was characteristic of him. He

would throw out hints and suggestions, but beyond that he would not go. (*Murder* 203)

Clearly, by giving investigative responsibilities to Dr. Sheppard, Poirot gains his confidence and provides him the chance to gaze into his private affairs and hideousness. It is not hard to see that Poirot does not personally visit Marby Grange to enquire about Ursula Bourne: “I wondered very much what Poirot expected to find out. He had entrusted the job to me. Why?” (*Murder* 167). He rather utilizes the time in paying a call to Caroline, Dr. Sheppard’s sister apparently with motives of having a closer look at the murderer’s life.

It can be suggested that the narrative of *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, to a large extent, offers autonomy on the power of watching and power of knowing to the murderer, Dr. Sheppard. But like all formal detective novels, moral and epistemological truth is eventually sought out by Poirot through rationalistic interpretation against the murderer’s ambiguous narrative:

Everyone had a hand in the elucidation of the mystery. It was rather like a jig-saw puzzle to which everyone contributed their own little piece of knowledge or discovery. But their task ended there. To Poirot alone belongs the renown of fitting those pieces into their correct place. (*Murder* 204)

#### **4.2.4. A Labyrinth without a Labyrinth-Solving Great Mind**

The postmodern detective/investigator’s power of surveillance can be understood by what Stephano Tani says in his work *The Doomed Detective* (1984): “The detective is unable to impose a meaning, an interpretation of the outside occurrences he is asked, as a sleuth, to solve and interpret. Reality is so tentacular and full of clues that the detective risks his sanity as he tries to find a solution” (Tani 76). A point made by Porter is helpful here. In the canonical detective narrative pleasure circulates through detective surveillance. The detective assures that there is a return “to the safety of [the] point of departure once the thrilling circuit is completed ...” (Porter 246).

However, in the postmodernist detective text, the investigator’s activity of authorized watching is deprived of any sense of completion or any assurance of the restoration of status quo. In Porter’s words: “The end brings neither revelation and the relief of a

concluded sequence nor, a fortiori, the return of order to a community and confirmation of human mastery” (Porter 246). Porter describes these narratives as projecting a vision of a labyrinth in the absence of a labyrinth-solving great mind. He explains: “If [the postmodern investigators] find a path through the labyrinth, it is only to discover that the exit is really an entrance, that the labyrinth solved is no more than a labyrinth within a greater labyrinth. Problem solving is shown to occur ... only within predetermined and therefore artificial limits.... There is, perhaps, pattern without design, symptoms without causes, fortuitous order” (Porter 256).

#### **4.2.5. Wallas, a Departure from Heroic Agents of Surveillance**

Alain Robbe-Grillet’s *The Erasers* (1963), plays with the power and position of the canonical investigator-hero. Wallas, who is introduced as the authorized investigator, appears as an ordinary mortal and whose power of watching is lower than what is usually seen in heroic agents of surveillance. The narrative intends to convey an atmosphere of uncertainty and alienation in Wallas’s investigative jurisdiction. This special investigator’s authority and power is limited and conditioned by the narrative and is antithetical to any superhuman or omniscient ability. His ordinariness or mediocrity is revealed in his customary perception of situation and events and his less than perfect status in his capability of ‘labyrinth-solving.’ This is quite evident from how Wallas ‘gets used to things’ when the narrative refers to his unpredictable wrist watch and this can be seen as an anticipatory precedence of his frustrating surveillance in knowing the truth:

[I]t stopped last night at seven thirty ... It stops every once in a while, he does not really know why, sometimes after a shock, not always—and then starts again afterwards, all by itself, with no more reason.... It is unpredictable, which is rather annoying at first, but you can get used to it. (*Erasers* 31)

Further, the narrative design of aimless and repetitive walking is symbolic of the futility of pursuit which ends in nothingness and jumbled reasoning. Holquist in his essay “Whodunit and Other Questions” (1971), regards this narrative technique as a means to “use as a foil the assumption of detective fiction that the mind can solve all; by twisting the details just the opposite becomes the case” (Holquist 155). To this end, these strange and exploratory winding walks through these mean streets do not end in desired

destinations but reverberate unsolved signs and secrets that trap eternally the seeker of ontological knowledge. As references, Oedipa Maas in Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* (1965), and Peter Quinn in *The City of Glass* (1985), are seen to get trapped in the labyrinthine interpretive walking and pursuit that is only indicative of a hoax or hallucination which challenges their sanity. Laura Marcus explains in her work "Detection and Literary Fiction" (2009), that "Quinn seeks to locate meaning in Stillman's perambulations mapping the old man's wanderings and finding in them shapes equivalent to alphabetical letters" (Marcus 259-60). Thus, Quinn's walking in order to follow Stillman and make sense out of his obscure perambulations ultimately get more arbitrary and undecipherable.

These examples help to elaborate further Wallas's walking and his attempts to surveil, watch and decipher signs and inscriptions that appear from time to time which simply increases his loneliness in the solitary streets. Wallas's rationality is seen to get caught in the illusiveness of repetitions, circularity and continuity of the riddle. It is interesting to see how the investigator initially feels that he is the master of his action or "his own free will" (*Erasers* 36), and that he proceeds towards order and perfection. However, "Wallas's assumption of free will is illusory, and that continuity and rationality to which he believes he has acceded are belied by the circularity of the plot in which he is thoroughly caught. Signs, clues and characters remain opaque, and the narrative disrupts chronology, repeatedly reverting to events that subsequently turn out to be imaginings or speculations" (Marcus 256). Wallas's confusing and purposeless watching is evident in his circular, repetitive and an almost never-ending walking:

Wallas finally turns into a wide avenue that looks much like the Boulevard Circulaire he left at dawn, except for the canal ... Since he has crossed the street to turn right in this new direction, he reads with even more surprise the words "Boulevard Circulaire" on the building at the corner. He turns back disconcerted.

He cannot have been walking in a circle, since he had gone straight ahead ever since the Rue des Arpenteurs; he has probably walked too far south and bypassed a segment of the city. He will have to ask his way. (*Erasers* 37)



#### 4.2.6. Wallas' Unreliable and Opaque Surveillance

In formal narratives, reasoning and solution of the detective directly depends on his authority of watching and surveillance, and his power provides him access to almost any unlicensed or uncensored territories and legitimacy to every action. This happens because conventional detectives are required to meet normative expectations that “everything hangs together, everything can be comprehended in time” (Spanos 155), and that the detective “keeps moving forward one step at a time, tracking down the extraordinary” (Spanos 155). By contrast, Wallas’s surveillance of Daniel Dupont’s murder mystery seems to bear no definite direction or significance in the total narrative design. Even after being a special investigator, Wallas does not gain any advantageous position in his act of watching and has to encounter usual obstacles which an ordinary civilian faces:

Wallas again considers the isolation of his situation.... Standing alone, leaning on a railing, he abandons this support as well and begins walking through the empty streets ... Apparently no one is interested in what he is doing: the door remains closed, no face appears in the windows....

The Commissioner ... (with) hostility perhaps ... turns his head away: [Wallas’] role is already over; he has no access, on the other side of the brick walls ... the sole purpose of his speeches is to make Wallas feel the virtual impossibility of entering it. (*Erasers* 50-51)

Further, the authorized gaze through which the narrative usually preserves truth and order becomes unreliable and opaque in Wallas’s case. He has neither omniscience nor superhuman ability. In order to turn his position more vulnerable, the narrative at times creates queer circumstances where Wallas becomes the “suspect. Instead of making Commissioner Laurent and Wallas allies, the narrative arouses doubts regarding Wallas’s credentials in Laurent’s mind. Laurent says: “Well ... we would have to admire your perspicacity having found the only clandestine rooming house in the town so quickly ... you’d be the first serious suspect I’ve found—recently arrived in town, living twenty yards from the scene of crime, and completely unknown to the police!” (*Erasers* 54).

#### 4.2.7. Hoax Murder, Doppelganger and Confused Identity

To this end, it's worth speculating the narrative intention of designing a murder which supposedly never happens and where even the killer Garinati is not certain whether his bullet hit Dupont fatally. In fact, the newspaper contains the news of Dupont's death which actually surprises the killer himself: "'It must be a mistake,' Garinati says. 'I only wounded him'" (*Erasers* 77). The narrative design of engaging a surveillance of a non-existent crime eventually turning futile with the private investigator being watched establishes a negative hermeneutics of power where "authority" metamorphizes into the "victim." Interestingly, the narrative blurs any distinction between detective and presumptuous suspect through evidence provided by a drunk, who believed that he already knew Wallas since the evening before and that he had wanted to kill him:

[Y]es, he met Wallas yesterday at nightfall, leaving this very cafe; he followed him, caught up with him and accompanied him, despite Wallas's unfriendliness; the latter was wearing a pale-grey felt hat slightly too big for him and a tight raincoat with a small L-shaped rip on the "right" shoulder. (*Erasers* 91)

In this context, only a few paragraphs earlier, the narrative corroborates the fact that the drunk follows a tall man wearing a raincoat too tight for him and a pale-grey felt hat with the raincoat having a tiny L-shaped rip on the "left" shoulder. This situation can be seen as the narrative design of producing an almost immaterial suspect as the investigator's hypothetical double and mirror image. The detective is seen to be alienated or dislodged from his familiar role of keeping a watch over the guilty while becoming a subject of surveillance himself. The narrative purpose of subverting authorized roles can be explained by what Spanos discusses in his essay "The Detective and the Boundary" (1972):

[T]he postmodern strategy of de-composition exists to generate ... pity and terror; to disintegrate, to atomize rather than to create a community. In the more immediate language of existentialism, it exists to generate anxiety or dread: to dislodge the tranquilized individual from the "at-home of publicness," from the domesticated, the scientifically charted and organized familiarity of the totalized world.... (Spanos 155)

In *The Erasers*, each character in some way plays up the role of the other, that is, the narrative intends to jumble the identities of the victim, murderer, and investigator/detective. The notion of truth and knowledge, and the official and non-official is redefined by subverting the regular notional tags. To this end, the apparently innocent victim Daniel Dupont is actually the mastermind behind the hoax of his death in which he involves state authority like the leader Roy-Dauzet. Moreover, it seems that the narrative pre-conditions the fakeness of the police's involvement in the investigation of Dupont's death: "Since They All Agree, it's perfect. Commissioner Laurent closes the dossier and lays it with satisfaction on the pile to the left. The case is closed. Personally he has no desire to get involved with it" (*Erasers* 24). The fact that the intended victim no longer remains so and is rather enshrouded in the essence of "dumminess" is noticed in the confusion between the identities and deaths of Daniel Dupont and Albert Dupont. In this context, the narrative view is important: "No one has seen anything, heard anything. There is no victim. As for the murderer, he has fallen from the sky and must be far away by now, well on his way back to wherever he came from" (*Erasers* 25). Further, this opinion is focused by Wallas's remark: "The death of Daniel Dupont is no more than an abstract event being discussed by dummies" (*Erasers* 65).

#### **4.2.8. Oedipa's Illusory World**

The narrative of *The Crying of Lot 49* designs the quest of the investigator Oedipa as an apparatus of autonomous interpretive power. It negates the possibility of interpretation by either the protagonist or any other character within the text. All the characters connected with Oedipa's world are actually extensions of her uncertainty and confusion thereby confirming the illusoriness of apparent reality of existence and the futility of its deciphering by individuals. The enigma surrounding Trystero and the WASTE system anticipated by Oedipa functions as a small cog in the machinery of thematic disintegration, intended by narrative construction of projecting multiple illusory images and meanings. This can be further explained by Borges' suspicion that "there is no universe in the organic, unifying sense ..." and "it is doubtful that the world has a meaning; it is more doubtful still, the incredulous will observe, that it has a double and triple meaning" (Bennet, "The Detective Fiction of Poe and Borges" 265).

Oedipa's paranoiac urge for finding clues of a supposed underworld can be seen as the power of the narrative's "hypervisibility" (see Flieger, "Paranoid Eye" 88), projecting a

“hypersymbolic” (see Flieger 88) world that is anticipated only in narrative interpretation of the protagonist’s paranoiac investigative events. The authority over the virtual or the authentic in Oedipa’s ubiquitous search for an answer depends completely on the narrative guarantability of existence of a meaning or meanings. To this extent, narrative subsumption of the power struggle between Oedipa’s surveillance and reality of an underworld is achieved through paranoia, characterized by the rejection of authority and “a disbelief, an incredulity concerning the guarantability of the Symbolic Order” (Flieger 90). In other words, paranoia can be translated as the hypervisibility or omnipotent gaze of narrative interpretation which is “the unconscious source of the knowledge ... a truth impervious to the test of the Symbolic social reality ...” (Flieger 90).

In *The Crying of Lot 49*, Oedipa Maas is presented as the investigator involved in investigating facts that are at no point in the narrative confirmed. In this case, surveillance is neither social nor corporate, rather it is at the level of a personal quest. The notion of established authority, social responsibility and omniscient power of the detective is subverted by the narrative. The credibility of Oedipa’s investigative discovery of the existence of an underground communication network is questioned by the narrative. The negotiation of power between Oedipa’s belief in the existence of an underground world and recession of this world from the reach of her knowledge upholds the narrative’s subsuming of power struggle. Thus, the narrative does not intend to establish Oedipa’s perception or the tangibility of a secret world.

The fact that people like Metzger and Roseman, both lawyers, who are supposed to help and advise Oedipa is presented by the narrative as unstable and confused. The dissolution of any power and authority of characters belonging to the juridical apparatus questions the requirement and efficiency of such an apparatus in the social world. Roseman is an infirm and dissatisfied professional who aspires to be somebody else. In fact, the narrative subverts the social/moral expectation by presenting Roseman’s desperate mental condition when he proposes to Oedipa: “Run away with me” (*Lot 49* 12). Further, Metzger the co-executor of Pierce Inverarity’s will along with Oedipa is presented as unsure and unconfident due to his fear of his mother. He tells Oedipa:

My mother was really out to basher me, boy, like a piece of beef on the sink, she wanted me drained and white. Times I wonder, if she succeeded. It scares me. You know what mothers like that turn their male children into. (*Lot 49* 18)

Metzger's participation in Oedipa's quest to find answers for the muted post horn symbol and the search for Trystero is abandoned abruptly by running away with a young girl. The narrative design of the futility of the relationship between Oedipa and Metzger reflect the futility of his co-operation in her investigation. Moreover, his sexual exploitation of Oedipa questions the conventional notion of power and authority of the investigator as well as the quester's motive and certainty in the quest.

Further, the narrative intention of Dr. Hilarius' derangement and his failure to help his client Oedipa reflect her abandonment by her psychiatric deliverer. It can be argued that Dr. Hilarius' paranoia raises doubts about his client—Oedipa's mental health—that is directly relevant to the validity and certainty of her power as an investigator. Moreover, Dr. Hilarius' paranoid suspicion about the police when Oedipa tells him "Don't shoot at the cop, they're on your side" (*Lot 49 93*), presents the narrative design of questioning the judiciousness of the state apparatus. He says: "I can't guarantee the safety of the 'police.' You couldn't guarantee where they'd take me if I surrendered, could you" (*Lot 49 93*). In this connection, the power struggle is evident between the psychiatrist and his client when he tries to cheat Oedipa with his experiments treating her as another human guinea pig. The fact that Dr. Hilarius performs dehumanizing experiments on women and Jews, questions the security of the existence of capitalism, its weaker sections and racial minorities. His hallucination of Israelis trying to kill him for his inhuman treatment of the Jews is a narrative apparatus of subsuming Hilarius' power of exploiting the weak, suggested by his complete mental collapse. The narrative does not provide any logical explanation or any social, legal and political judgment on the situation of Dr. Hilarius and his relationship with his clients. The narrative neither conforms with nor disrupts the mechanics of power and established social formations. Rather, it engulfs within itself any possible conclusive judgment by opening up doubtful possibilities.

#### **4.2.9. No Apparent Power Struggle between the Social World and Secret World**

Like formal and other detective texts written in the twentieth century, *The Crying of Lot 49* does not reflect complicity or resistance to the relation of power between the social world and a supposed secret/underworld. There is no apparent power struggle to assert dominance and control of one over the other. Further, the symbol of the muted post horn and the questions of Trystero's existence and identity are clues to the supposed presence of a secret world. But the narrative does not present this world as tangible or real.

Neither does it reject the possibility of its existence. Oedipa's belief in this mysterious world is reflected by the narrative both as hallucinatory as well as real based on her investigative clues. Her investigation of this secret world is initiated by her association with Mike Fallopian. The narrative design of linking the post horn to the possibility of a system of private mail delivery in the U.S. establishes the possibility of an underground social system that is covert beneath the real world. The narrative refers to Oedipa's search: "So began, for Oedipa, the languid, sinister blooming of The Tristero.... as if a plunge towards dawn indefinite black hours long would indeed be necessary before Tristero could be revealed in its terrible nakedness" (*Lot 49* 36).

Oedipa's association with Stanley Kotex, John Nefastis and C. Morris Schrift heightens the possibility of sly functioning of this other world, where people choose not to communicate by U.S. mail. However, the narrative technique of presenting withdrawal from the life of the Republic and its machinery does not reject the established social world either by treason or defiance. When the narrative describes, "Since they could not have withdrawn into a vacuum (could they?), there had to exist the separate, silent unsuspected world" (*Lot 49* 86), it suggests that if this world exists, there is no negotiation and power struggle with the world that is apparent to everyone. In other words, the covert world is exclusive, reclusive and non-communicable with the social world. Oedipa's investigation to discover and access into this mysterious world becomes uncertain when the clues provided by the narrative are engulfed by it. The fact that the link among the various clues like the muted post horn, W.A.S.T.E., Trysterero, Thurn and Taxis, Driblette's death, destruction of Zapf's Used Books store by fire and Mike Fallopian's indifference to co-operate with Oedipa establishes the narrative intention of negating what it had confirmed earlier. Thus, by questioning the existence of the secret world, the narrative dissolves the possibility of any power struggle between opposed worlds.

#### **4.2.10. Mundania, Paranoia, Hysteric Obsessions and Intangible Clues**

Oedipa's obsession with the character of Trysterero in *The Courier's Tragedy* directed by Randolph Driblette drive her to believe in the existence of a secret Trysterero system of communication. But the narrative intention of questioning the power of the investigator is reflected by the irrationality of the clues upon which the case is sought to be constructed. Oedipa's quest to investigate the text of the play is frustrated when the

scripts are “all purple, Dittoed—worn, torn, stained with coffee” (*Lot 49* 53). Moreover, the narrative intends to deny Oedipa access to the original copy when Driblette tells her: “Somebody took it. Opening night parties. I lose at least half a dozen every time” (*Lot 49* 53). The technique of Driblette’s refusal to provide an answer to the investigator’s query about the Trystero episode in the play confuses her further with no answers. The fact that Oedipa’s urgency to get a copy of *The Courier’s Tragedy* from Zapf’s Used Books store is answered by Zapf setting fire to his store for insurance presents the scheme of negating any tangible clue. Later, when she desperately wants an explanation, her quest is again incomplete with the narrative design of Randolph Driblette’s suicide. Oedipa is informed of his death as: “Randy walked into the Pacific two nights ago” (*Lot 49* 105).

Oedipa’s discovery of the waste symbol, the Thurn and Taxis post horn, the deliberate transposition on U.S. postage and forgery in Pierce Inverarity’s stamp collection provides her with investigative cues of a postal fraud. However, the narrative does not provide the investigator with any concrete evidence to testify the clues. Her enquiry to the philately expert about the initials W.A.S.T.E. is also returned with a negative answer or perhaps a lie. Oedipa’s belief in the secret communication by W.A.S.T.E. is confirmed by the member of the Inamorati Anonymous who reveals to her the history of the post horn and its founder. But her investigative power is frustrated when the narrative suspends any further information about the founder. The narrative describes: “He shook his head, smiling, stumbled off his stool and headed off to take a leak, disappearing into the dense crowd. He didn’t come back” (*Lot 49* 80). The fact that Oedipa’s frantic search for the image of the Trystero post horn and finding it in different parts of the city without any means to solve its mystery leads her to follow a carrier of letters of the W.A.S.T.E. system. But an investigative dead end is presented when the narrative describes: “Oedipa followed. Halfway up Telegraph the carrier got off and led her down the street to a pseudo-Mexican apartment house.... She was back where she’d started, and could not believe 24 hours had passed” (*Lot 49* 90). Oedipa’s failure to arrive at a rational conclusion designed by the narrative disturbs, confuses and raises doubts regarding the authority and power of the investigator. In this novel, the narrative not only targets Oedipa’s perceptive capability, but also on the real as well as the hallucinatory/paranoid existence of the case.

To this end, Oedipa's sanity is questioned when the narrative subverts the conventional notion of omniscient power of the detective. The fact that she is not mentally sound can be established from her psychotherapy sessions with Dr. Hilarius. It is observed that the narrative presents her paranoid mind from the fact that she is even suspicious of her psychiatrist. It can be argued that since there is no crime or any apparent anti-social motive, her investigation initiated by a mere symbol of the muted post horn is a consequence of her paranoia. The fact that she tries to decipher hieroglyphs which are perhaps obsolete, and trace identities of non-existent historical figures (Trystero, and Thurn and Taxis) presents the narrative design of suggesting the investigator's deranged mind and hallucination of a secret world. Her desire for adventure and escape from her mundane life into a world that in some way is different makes her already paranoid mind hallucinate. Her boredom is described by the narrative: "One summer after Mrs. Oedipa Maas came home from a tupperware party whose hostess had put perhaps too much kirsch in the fondue ..." (*Lot 49 5*).

The narrative also describes the daily routine of her life as caring for the herb garden, grocery shopping to the Sounds of Musak in a California supermarket, and preparing dinner for her husband. Each day of her married life "seemed (wouldn't she be first to admit it?) more or less identical" (*Lot 49 6*). Therefore, by making her the co-executor of Pierce Inverarity's will, the narrative intends to make some changes into her drudgery by making her feel important, but at the same time reveals her disturbed state of mind. In this connection, Oedipa's perception of links between coincidental events reflects her disorientated condition. The fact that she relates the W.A.S.T.E. symbol on Mr Thoth's ring, on Inverarity's stamp collection, the Trystero post horn on the lapel pin of a person in a San Francisco night club etc., to the existence of a secret system operating in an underground world suggests an investigation that has an unreal or doubtful ground. Moreover, Oedipa finding the Trystero post horn at several places in the night she spent at Chinatown and the circle of children singing a song using words "Tristoe" and "Turning Taxi" which she translates into "Thurn and Taxis" is suggestive of hallucination. The fact that this could either be an imaginary or real perception is not directly suggested by the narrative. This, in fact, is an imaginary situation and Oedipa is in a state of drunkenness and her spending the night in buses refers to her dreams:



She stayed with buses after that, getting off only now and then to walk so she'd keep awake. What fragments of dreams came had to do with the post horn. Later, possibly, she would have trouble sorting the night into real and dreamed. (*Lot 49* 81).

Further, the belief in a society that is hallucinatory, Oedipa's decision of consulting her psychiatrist, Dr. Hilarius, and her uncertainty about the W.A.S.T.E. system as real or fantasy reveals Oedipa's psychotic mind:

She might well be in the cold and sweatless meat-hooks of a psychosis.... Yet she wanted it all to be a fantasy—some clear result of her several wounds, needs, dark doubles. She wanted Hilarius to tell her she was some kind of a nut and needed a rest, and that there was no Trystero. She wanted to know why the chance of its being real should menace her so (*Lot 49* 91).

Therefore, pleasure of the text depends on the anticipation between narrative certainty and uncertainty of investigative power of the investigator.

#### **4.2.11. Pseudo Power vs. Pseudo Surveillance**

The *New York Trilogy* as a detective narrative subverts established authority and power in order to question its legitimacy and its mechanics of maintaining social order. The narrative designs effacement and construction of pseudo power vis-à-vis pseudo surveillance. Interestingly, in all the three cases of investigation, the narrative negates the production of any power struggle, and in the process of cancellations and annihilation, affirms its power of interpretation. In the case of the Stillman family and the investigator Quinn, the narrative intention of dissolving any possibility of negotiation among them is achieved by creating blockades for circumstance and denying free will to the characters. By refuting the rational and the linear through an ambivalent power of language, the narrative assumes power of an omnipotent overseer. In this connection, Stillman, Jr's., rambling speech, the twin reflection of Stillman, Sr., Quinn's displacement from his own apartment and belongings, and his eventual effacement altogether create a narrative space of uncertainty and erasure of a possible answer for re-establishing harmony and order. Similarly, the case of Black, White and Blue also assures a dominant narrative power by effacement and assigning them very uncertain and unstable identities. Rather, they are labelled as colours symbolizing dissipation rather than confirmation.

The pseudo power of surveilling is also stripped off from Blue and Black by White, symbolic of the colour's power to neutralize and identifiable with the narrative's neutralizing capacity of dispersing circumstances from any power struggle. Further, Fanshawe's disappearance leading to his narrator-friend's investigation to relocate him is an interesting case, where Fanshawe omnisciently keeps an eye on his ex-wife, Sophie, and friend's lives. Through Fanshawe's power of manipulating the purpose of existence for other characters, the narrative establishes its position of superiority by cancelling, erasing, negating, annihilating and subsuming events, characters and circumstances within the textual body, thereby affirming universal chaos and rejecting power structures. Thus, in all the three texts of the trilogy, power of surveillance is refuted in order to establish that social order is temporal. To this extent, the purpose of investigation in all the three cases is unreliable, unreal and undecipherable. Interestingly, the narrative constructs its power by relegating decipherment beyond the texts' social/moral/penal periphery by way of metaphysical speculations, self reflexivity and interpretations that open up infinite possibilities of a ceaseless quest.

#### **4.2.12. Cross Connection, Confused Identity and Disappearance**

The narrative design of *City of Glass* dissolves and exhausts the investigator's surveillance through a cross connected phone call that hints at the existence of a secret leading to the investigator's effacement. Daniel Quinn's acceptance of the case by concealing his identity and pretending to be the detective Paul Auster, is a narrative design that manipulates each and every moment of his existence as a detective. The subversion of the social responsibility of a detective is presented by Quinn's casual attitude towards the phone call, and his visit to the Stillman residence signifying chance and curiosity. In fact, the game of hiding presented by the narrative conditions the preservation of a secret in order to overpower the real and pseudo self of Quinn. In other words, both the real and pseudo identities of Quinn are dissolved by his quest for the secret involving the Stillman family.

The fact that Quinn encounters Peter Stillman, Sr. in the Grand Central railway station along with his twin reflection can be seen as a narrative technique to disillusion him. Quinn's selection of following the first figure of Peter Stillman, Sr., and not the second, renders his surveillance doubtful. The narrative does not support any rationale behind Quinn's decision of rejecting the second figure of Stillman, rather it is a conjectural

design which establishes Quinn's uncertainty of his strategy to follow Stillman: "What happened then defied explanation. Directly behind Stillman ... another man stopped, took a lighter out of his pocket, and lit a cigarette. His face was the exact twin of Stillman's" (*Trilogy* 55). Quinn's dilemma is described as: "Quinn froze. There was nothing he could do now that would not be a mistake. Whatever choice he made—and he had to make a choice—would be arbitrary, a submission to chance. Uncertainty would haunt him to the end" (*Trilogy* 56).

Further, Quinn's tail job of observing Stillman's movements, conversations and deciphering the geographical pattern of his wanderings end in a fiasco. Quinn's assumption that "Stillman was far more dangerous than previously imagined" (*Trilogy* 71), and "that Peter had to be protected" (*Trilogy* 71), is worth noticing because the narrative abruptly engulfs the possibility of any conclusion with Stillman's disappearance. Moreover, Virginia Stillman's hiring of Quinn and then abruptly abandoning his services by not answering his calls can be seen as the arbitrariness of Quinn's surveillance. Quinn's helplessness by losing both Virginia Stillman and Peter Stillman, Sr. turns into his obsession with the secret and near insanity on discovering that it does not really exist.

#### **4.2.13. Manic Desire and Personal Quest**

In the *City of Glass*, the detective is no longer a superior figure possessing power, authority, and entrusted with social/penal responsibility. Rather, it turns into a personal quest for the secret or a manic desire to the extent that Quinn is almost reduced into a stray animal, living each moment in a dump of garbage. Thus, the narrative subsumes Quinn's identity and his derelict condition is described as:

He had turned into a bum. His clothes were discoloured, dishevelled, debauched by filth.... It had been no more than a matter of months, and in that time he had become someone else. He tried to remember himself as he had been before, but he found it difficult.... He had been one thing before, and now he was another. It was neither better nor worse. It was different, and that was all. (*Trilogy* 118)

To this end, the detective is deceived by his client with a pseudo cheque payment, a pseudo case and pseudo surveillance, when there is perhaps no secret or genuine threat

from Peter Stillman, Sr. The narrative subverts the authoritative image of the detective into someone with an irrational existence and disoriented identity.

Moreover, the narrative takes away what little stable existence it had given to Quinn in the form of a comfortable shelter (his apartment) and his personal belongings. Further, by rejecting Quinn from his own space (his books, furniture, papers etc.), the narrative intends to disintegrate the detective and present his insignificant quest for the secret as an almost non-existent state. The exhausted and failed condition of the detective is described as: “Quinn let out a deep sigh. He had come to the end of himself. He could feel it now, as though a great truth had finally dawned in him. There was nothing left” (*Trilogy* 123).

This state of nothingness and the question of the detective’s existence are taken to full extent by negating the possibility of any secret for Quinn to investigate with the empty Stillman apartment: “The place had been stripped bare, and the rooms now held nothing.... He was exhausted, and the only thing he could think of was closing his eyes” (*Trilogy* 124). When Quinn strips himself of all his clothing and decides to live in a single room in that apartment, detached from society, the worldly wise, suave and materially secure image of the detective is subverted into that which is primeval, non-materialistic and detached from the knowledge of power and authority. Further, Quinn’s disappearance reflects the narrative subsuming the stated events by raising doubts about Quinn’s mental stability and significance of his status as a detective. The suspended design of the narrative does not support any evidence to confirm the reality behind the episode of Peter Stillman, Sr’s. return and threat to his son’s life, whether it is a hoax to subvert Quinn’s power, or simply the imagination of Quinn’s deranged mind.

#### **4.2.14. Hoax Surveillance**

In *Ghosts*, the detective, Blue, is employed by White to investigate the secrets of Black. But the entire episode of Blue keeping round the clock watch over Black is a hoax. The reason why Blue is engaged in a somewhat purposeless tail job and denied any contact with the world outside is not made explicit. Moreover, the identities of White and Black are not certain and it is neither denied nor accepted at any point in the narrative whether they are the same person or separate individuals. The fact that Blue makes up his own theories about White and Black confuses him further. It is seen that the detective is not

allowed to decipher anything or succeed in drawing any conclusive explanation of either White's intentions or Black's activities. Blue's decision to observe White at the Brooklyn Post Office on the sly that ends in a setback with the masked man's escape is a ploy to exhaust the detective's power. The narrative describes this unsuccessful trail:

Blue runs after him, hoping to catch him from behind and tackle him, but he gets tangled momentarily in a crowd of people at the door, and by the time he manages to get through it, the masked man is bounding down the stairs, landing on the sidewalk, and running down the street... and Blue is left in the lurch, all out of breath and standing there like an idiot. (*Trilogy* 164)

The possibility of the detective Blue being watched by Black when he informs, "I'm a private detective" (*Trilogy* 176), and White and Black being accomplices from the fact that White comes to know about Blue's meetings with Black, reflects the redundancy of the detective in the text. The gradual disclosure of Black's identity as a detective who is also spying on Blue presents the futility of detection with no apparent secret to investigate. Moreover, the fact that the narrative neither confirms nor rejects the existence of White makes Blue's surveillance futile. White can be considered as a device of bringing the two detectives one against the other to strategically subsume the power of surveillance.

The fact that Blue is unable to find a resolution about the case of White and Black drives him to a state of desperation. He is further puzzled when he breaks into Black's room and gets the manuscript: "He picks up the paper he has stolen... But this only compounds the problem, for once he begins to read them, he sees they are nothing more than his own reports" (*Trilogy* 185). Thus, the narrative intends to disintegrate the image of the detective and threatens his power by making him a subject of surveillance. The effect of the revelation on Blue is described as: "It is not certain Blue ever really recovers from the events of this night... several days go by before he returns to a semblance of his former self... It's finished now, he says, kicking one of the old reports on the floor, and I'll be damned if I ever write one of those again" (*Trilogy* 185). Black's murder by Blue and his subsequent effacement destroys and negates the notion of power, detective and detection, and social/moral/penal responsibilities associated with it. In this case, by effacing characters like White, Blue and Black, the narrative proves its superior

power by manipulating the existence and terminating any other kind of power within the text.

#### **4.2.15. Biographical Research Turned into Personal Quest and Obsession**

In *The Locked Room*, the investigator's power is frustrated and exhausted by cancelling Fanshawe's rescue from his reclusive existence. In this connection, the three letters addressed to the investigator function as a prior narrative arrangement to subvert his quest. The first letter from Fanshawe's wife Sophie, serves as the apparatus of acquainting the writer, who is Fanshawe's childhood friend, to a peculiar situation responsible for transforming him into an investigator. In this text, there is no apparent crime involved, and a layman turned into an investigator. The fact that the investigation does not follow from a juridical enquiry, and rather from a biographical research of a writer that eventually becomes his personal quest and obsession, points at the narrative's subversion of established notions of crime, investigation and legitimate power of the detective/investigator.

The investigator describes his quest as:

I was gathering information, collecting names, places, dates, establishing a chronology of events.... Everything had been reduced to a single impulse: to find Fanshawe, to speak to Fanshawe, to confront Fanshawe one last time.... I knew that I had to find him—that nothing would be settled until I did. (*Trilogy* 264)

His quest turned into an obsession is described as:

It was not enough for me to let things take their course.... Because I still doubted myself, I needed to run risks, to test myself before the greatest possible danger. Killing Fanshawe would mean nothing. The point was to find him alive—then to walk away from him alive. (*Trilogy* 264)

The investigator's effort to track down Fanshawe's whereabouts from his friends, colleagues, private letters etc. is each time rendered futile to the extent that he is left in a void like state: "I kept trying to leap into the unknown, but each time I landed, I found myself on home ground, surrounded by what was most familiar to me" (*Trilogy* 277).

In this connection, the two letters sent by the supposed Fanshawe promise a secret which needs to be unravelled. But, the investigator's interview with Fanshawe hidden behind closed doors, Fanshawe's confession of his plan of using the investigator and keeping a close watch on him without being detected leads to a dead end with no hidden truths to expose. Further, the narrative intention of pulverizing the notion of the investigator's mental and physical infallibility is seen in the investigator's breakdown at Paris by hallucinating as well as being physically assaulted.

The narrative, therefore, intends to create a crisis that is beyond the comprehensibility of the investigator and then revealing that there is no crisis at all. When Fanshawe threatens by saying, "I'm already dead. I took poison hours ago" (*Trilogy* 306), the narrative rejects the possibility of exposing a secret with Fanshawe's oncoming death. Further, the futility of investigation is described in Fanshawe's words: "You can't possibly know what's true or not true. You'll never know" (*Trilogy* 306). Moreover, Fanshawe's red notebook containing a text resembling a madman's ramblings makes it impossible for the investigator to decipher its meaning. Its cancellations, sentences erasing out each other and questions answered with another question is suggested as a narrative technique to subvert an expectation, a conclusive answer or a final decipherment by the investigator's power. Apparently, what looks like a mystery can be considered as merely a game of hide and seek that the deranged Fanshawe plays with his childhood friend. In other words, the entire purpose of detection is frustrated by the narrative's negation of a secret.

#### **4.2.16. Subversion of Power through the Technique of Transposition**

In Peter Ackroyd's *Hawksmoor*, the detective does not get any clue as to the multiple murders and finally ends up doing nothing. The fact that the novel ends without any resolution and Hawksmoor merging with a mysterious being demands different interpretive protocols. The familiar power of the detective and the even more familiar omniscience are challenged from within. The text ends in such a way that the revelatory ending offers absolutely no clues and no solutions. Instead, the novel reproblematises the entire process of reading and interpretation. To this end, the structure and function of the social power structure and its ideological equivalent are hollowed out. The novel seems not to have begun at all at the end. In this connection, it can be said that this detective text functions as a subsumptive apparatus using techniques of time-shifting and submerging two individuals into a single image, while rejecting the distinctive notion of

social authority/power, surveillance and its relation to crime and criminal. The usual search for solution and order is suspended by subverting the regular relation between the authority of the “seeker” and the evasive nature of the “pursued”. The narrative’s transposing technique can be considered as having within “itself a language, with its own code and its own rules for forming messages from the code, a hypothesis that probably does not hold up to inspection because narrative appears always to depend on some other language code in the creation of its meanings” (Brooks, *Reading* 4).

In this sense, the detection of crime and criminal is related to the narrative’s power of transmitting an infinite coded language that obliterates the chance of a solution, thereby negating the coercive forces of order and harmony. Moreover, narrative power can be better explained by what Barthes describes in his book *S/Z* as the hermeneutic code which “concerns rather the questions and answers that structure a story, their suspense, partial unveiling, temporary blockage, eventual resolution, with the resulting creation of a ‘dilatory space’—the space of suspense ...” (Brooks 18). To this end, the hermeneutic code of *Hawksmoor* creates an indefinite suspense by blurring the identities of detective and criminal, thereby cancelling eventual resolution which is further responsible for creating a permanent dilatory space opening up scope only for questions rather than answers. The repetitive design of *Hawksmoor*’s narrative can be explained by Brooks: “[R]epetition speaks in the text of a return which ultimately subverts the very notion of beginning and end, suggesting that the idea of beginning presupposes the end, that the end is a time before the beginning, and hence that the interminable never can be finally bound in a plot” (Brooks 109).

Therefore, the final submerging of Dyer and Hawksmoor is actually the submerging of time and space within the narrative as an intention to subvert the notion of universal cosmos. The narrative establishes its superior position by creating a confusion of time through repetitions, similarities and re-enactments, thereby subverting the power struggle between the social and anti-social. In this connection Brooks’ idea is helpful in understanding narrative power as the apex over any other power:

The understanding of time, says Lukacs, the transformation of the struggle against time into a process full of interest, in the work of memory—or more precisely, we could say with Freud, of “remembering, repeating, working through.” Repetition, remembering, re-enactment are the ways in which we



replay time, so that it may not be lost. We are thus always trying to work back through time to that transcendent home, knowing, of course, that we cannot. All we can do is subvert, or perhaps better, pervert time: which is what narrative [*Hawksmoor*] does. (Brooks 111)

#### **4.2.17. Power Struggle Effaced between Antisocial and Social World through Time-Shifting**

In this novel, power struggle between the antisocial and social/penal world is effaced by submerging two different eras into one—where the crimes perpetrated in the eighteenth century seem to have a negating effect on the authority and power of the detective in the twentieth century. The diegetic frame of the novel alternates between the odd numbered chapters that deal with Nicholas Dyer’s homicidal adventures related to his Satan-worship, and the even numbered chapters dealing with the investigation by Nicholas Hawksmoor of murders committed in twentieth century London in the churches built by Dyer. David Richter in his essay “Murder in Jest: Serial Killing in the Post-Modern Detective Story” (1989), writes that: “[Hawksmoor] becomes caught up by the pattern, noting that each of the London victims has been successively strangled in or near one of Dyer’s churches by a tall elderly stranger [“The Architect”] who thereafter apparently vanishes into thin air” (Richter 106-115).

To this extent, the present murders coinciding with the homicidal locations of the past and the mysterious killer “The Architect,” bearing an uncanny familiarity with the eighteenth century architect Nicholas Dyer, frustrates the surveillance of Hawksmoor and draws him into a web of confusion and disturbances. Further, the narrative bridges the past and the present through identical words and phrases at the end of one chapter, for instance, “at noon” of chapter one, “the face above him” of chapter two, with the beginning of the consecutive chapters suggesting that Dyer and Hawksmoor operate within the same timeless narrative space. To this end, the narrative designs the subversion of the usual power struggle between the criminal and detective/investigator by transposing the crimes of the past world into a present reality that turns into an obsession for Hawksmoor, and the obliteration of the self.

The fact that there are parallels concerning characters, situations and locations in the crime world of Dyer and the penal world of Hawksmoor is worth noticing. By providing

an identical name “Nicholas” and similar place of work “Scotland Yard” to the murderer as well as the authority of juridical apparatus, the narrative questions the penal structure of a given society that separates criminals from guardians of penal/social/moral world. Moreover, Thomas Hill, the mason’s son who is the first victim of Dyer, bears a resemblance to the murdered Thomas Hill, the baker’s son in the present. When Dyer narrates: “The Mason his Father calling for Help rushed in the direction of the Pyramide, where now Thomas lay, and the workmen followed amaz’d. But he had expir’d at once” (*Hawksmoor* 27), the narrative produces a mirror image of Thomas Hill’s death in the present. The narrative describes the death in the present as: “But he was falling from the tower as someone cried, Go on! Go on! And then the shadow came. And when he looked up he saw the face above him” (*Hawksmoor* 49).

Similarly, the narrative technique of presenting the murder of Ned, the tramp from Bristol in both the centuries is interesting. Dyer narrates Ned’s murder as: “[Ned] was as like to fall into a Melancholy fit, but I have more Mercury in my temper and I guided his knife till he fell” (*Hawksmoor* 80). Ned’s murder is again repeated in the present times: “[Ned] had come to the flight of steps which led down to the door of the crypt and, as he sensed the coldness which rose from them like a vapour, he heard a whisper which might have been ‘I’ or me’. And then the Shadow fell” (*Hawksmoor* 105). From these evidences, it is seen that this is a narrative device to fuse worlds two fifty years apart, submerging the antisocial world within the penal world, and thereby subverting any power struggle between the two.

Further, the narrative’s reference to Dyer’s occultism while dealing with Ned in the past generates confusion and doubt regarding the murder of Ned in the present. Dyer says: “But I put my Finger to his Cheek, to still its Motion, and his Storm soon blew over. He was mine, and as I spoke my Eyes were brisk and sparkling” (*Hawksmoor* 79). Therefore, the narrative parallel of the tramps’ identities and circumstances of death, and Dyer’s occultism cancels any rational explanation of Ned’s murder in the present. Moreover, by rejecting explicitness about the murderer’s identity, the narrative intention of rendering the detective/investigator susceptible to being a “suspect” further obscures the nearly invisible line that distinguishes the identities of Dyer and Hawksmoor. To this end, the narrative repetition of events and characters intend to dissolve the distance

created by time, thereby subverting the distance between the established notions of criminal and investigative authority.

#### 4.2.18. Occult vs. Rational

The fact that the narrative is suffused with supernatural overtones is suggestive of a device that cancels the possibility of answers and solutions. Nicholas Dyer's and Sir Chris' visit to witness the Demoniack in Bedlam subverts the "rational" through the "occult." Dyer narrates his interview with the Demoniack which brings forth some inexplicable facts:

Then he began to speak: The other day I lookt for your Worships Nativity.... At this I laugh'd and the Madman turned to me crying: What more Death still Nick, Nick, Nick, you are my own! At this I was terribly astounded, for he could in no wise have known my name.... Hark ye, you boy! I'll tell you somewhat, one Hawksmoor will this day terribly shake you! (*Hawksmoor* 123)

Interestingly, the narrative almost towards the middle of the text makes Dyer confront the name of Hawksmoor indicating not only time-shift, but also drifting towards uncertainty and irrationality. This circulates pleasure in perceiving that the conventional negotiation of power between criminal and authority is subsumed by the illogical and arbitrary, and signifying the cancellation of any credible answer.

Further, pleasure of the text is derived from perceiving the reversed status of power and authority. Moreover, the detective Hawksmoor stands at a disadvantageous position in his investigation and is always a step or two behind what is usually expected from a powerful representative of the penal world. The narrative design of subverting the established notion of power and surveillance is shown by creating a somewhat direct communication between Dyer's fear of being watched and traced in his perpetration of crime, and Hawksmoor's obsession in tracing the murderers. The narrative provides evidence of Dyer's fear in the form of anonymous letters: "I have sin yr work in Gods name. I am hear this fortnighet, and you shall hear from me as soon as I com into Whytehill. I ham with all my art your frind and the best frind in the world if I get my service for all is due and my mouth quiet" (*Hawksmoor* 127). Similarly, the other letter says: "This his to let you know that you shall be spoken about, so betid you flee the

Office by Monday next or you may expect the Worse as ever as ever you was born” (*Hawksmoor* 160).

In this connection, the reference above can be treated as a technique to focus on the narrative link with Hawksmoor’s investigation. After the three murders, when he asks, “And why do they think there’s a connection?” (*Hawksmoor* 133), his assistant answers, “The connection, is, sir, that they were all strangled, all in the same area, and all churches” (*Hawksmoor* 133). The narrative suggests the influence of Dyer’s crime in the world of Hawksmoor and some inexplicable connection between the two. Moreover, through the “supernatural,” the narrative intends to make Dyer move through the world of Hawksmoor and haunt him to insanity. When Dyer confirms the power of satan-worship: “I have built an everlasting Order, which I may run through laughing: no one can catch me now” (*Hawksmoor* 232), the detective’s corresponding intention in the following lines answers the criminal’s intention that also confirms Hawksmoor’s obsession: “And Hawksmoor laughed at this. ‘You can see things in whatever order you want ... we’ll still catch him ...’” (*Hawksmoor* 233). By placing Dyer and Hawksmoor in a corresponding situation, the narrative bridges the gap and places one against the other, to realize the final subsuming of the power of surveillance.

#### **4.2.19. Hawksmoor’s Failed Investigation and Derangement**

In this text, the narrative frustrates the investigator’s power by highlighting a quest that remains a “secret.” Therefore, the pleasure-power relation depends on the quest for the “secret” which has no formal end or logical solution. The narrative presents a series of murders that remain undetected by the investigator. The narrative intention of dispossessing Hawksmoor of his authoritative power is achieved by unsuccessful investigative ventures. To this extent, the corroborative evidence of “a tall man with white hair” (*Hawksmoor* 205), and the mysterious “Architect” hint at the supernatural that is anti-rational. Further, it is this anti-rational tone of the narrative that presents the detective from any kind of logical deciphering. The authoritative position of Hawksmoor is shaken and he is eternally baffled with certain questions. The fact that even science cannot trace any clues left behind by the murderer frustrates the whole investigative procedure: “Exhaustive forensic tests had also failed to identify any prints, marks or stains which might be connected with the perpetrator of these actions” (*Hawksmoor* 234). The narrative further disorients the investigator by anonymous letters and packages

with cryptic symbols and drawings, that further draws him away from any conclusive result. Hawksmoor's frustrated trail of an abstract figure whom he believed to be the "Architect" can be seen as the narrative intention of stripping away the conventional heroic and omniscient status of the detective: "Hawksmoor's position was made all the more precarious by the fact that, after exhaustive searches and enquiries, no trace of the man had been discovered" (*Hawksmoor* 247).

Hawksmoor's gradual drifting into a disturbed state of mind owes to his obsession with the murders, and the detective's most prized weapon that provides him power and authority is seen to be going defunct: "But the oddity of Hawksmoor's behavior in recent days—his sudden rages and no less abrupt retreats into silence, his tendency to walk off by himself as if walking away from the case altogether ..." (*Hawksmoor* 209). In this connection, the narrative technique of turning around the conventional notion of the "pursuer" and the "pursued" dissolves the omniscience of the detective. Rather the figure of authority is transformed into a paranoid. Hawksmoor's inquest does not lead to any discovery, but as an unyielding circular path that has no beginning or end. The narrative describes his condition as: "[H]e knew that the murderer was closer to him than ever. There were even occasions when he believed that he was being followed.... He took long walks in the evening ... he found that he was treading the same paths before" (*Hawksmoor* 248). The fact that Hawksmoor is ultimately dismissed from the case relates to the postmodernist detective's problem, where the narrative does not leave any scope for him. Michel Holquist's reference to the detective's logical mind in his essay "Whodunit and Other Questions: Metaphysical Detective Stories in Post-War Fiction" (1971), is essential in understanding Hawksmoor's problem. According to Holquist, the detective is "the instrument of pure logic, able to triumph because he alone in a world of credulous men, holds to the scholastic principle of *adequatio rei et intellectus*, the adequation of mind to things, the belief that the mind, given enough time, can understand everything. There are no mysteries, there is only incorrect reasoning" (Holquist 141). Contrary to Holquist's opinion, the narrative does not allow Hawksmoor to triumph over the mystery, rather it transforms into eternity, and he is not "the Columbus who lays open the world of radical rationality which is where detectives have lived ever since" (Holquist 141).

#### 4.2.20. Doppelganger and Subsuming Selves

The usual power struggle between crime and surveillance is subverted by the narrative design of negating the fact that Nicholas Dyer and Nicholas Hawksmoor are two different individuals. Towards the end, the narrative time shifts and subsumes Dyer within Hawksmoor and vice-versa. When Dyer says: “Then on this very Morning in my own Chamber I saw an Image again before me—a species of such a Body as my own, but in a strange Habit cut like an Under-garment and the Creature had no Wigg” (*Hawksmoor* 257), this is technique which suggests that both Dyer and Hawksmoor have been transposed from their own time for the subsuming of two different selves into one. This idea is further enhanced through the narrative design of Hawksmoor encountering his own image in Little St. Hugh Church:

And his own Image was sitting beside him, pondering deeply and sighing, and when he put out his hand and touched him, say that they touched him.... They were face to face ... and who could say where one had ended and the other begun? And when they spoke they spoke with one voice. (*Hawksmoor* 270-71)

Therefore, the narrative design of the final dissolution questions the accepted notion of crime, criminal and authoritative surveillance. The fact that the criminal and detective are reflections of each other raises doubts about the innocence of Hawksmoor, subsuming all distinctions between what is believed to be the archetypal criminal and detective. When “Murderer and detective, hider and seeker, are absorbed into one self” (Richter 110), the narrative engulfs all possibilities of negotiation of power between the “pursuer” and “pursued.”

### III

This chapter suggests that in novels like *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, the innocence and harmony of community life is implicitly resolved through narrative design and intention by way of giving absolute power of surveillance to the authoritative figure of the detective/investigator. But in postmodernist texts like *The Erasers*, the collapsing of the intended victim and the conspirator as well as the intended investigator and the

murderer establishes that normative order and discipline can be thwarted and power can be manipulated by anyone who has the access to watching. It is seen that Daniel Dupont's pseudo death, and a secret eye that watches Wallas's every move entangle him in a web of conspiracies. By making Wallas the ultimate scapegoat in the entire mystery of Dupont's murder, the narrative intends to confirm that power of watching and surveillance no longer remains the autonomous apparatus of authority and social order.

Similarly, in *The Crying of Lot 49*, the narrative functions as an agent that engulfs within itself any possibility of conclusion or resolution of the problem. The subversive pleasure-power relationship is analyzed in the novel by providing narrative pleasure through negating formulaic representation of power. The fact that the narrative provides a vacillating situation in the investigation, results in an inconclusive formal closure and the investigator blankly sits in the auction hall for the revelation of the mysterious bidder. Thus, the detective's power of logical analysis as well as authority of the juridical/social world represented in formal detective texts is subverted by the detective's illogicality, arbitrariness and strange perception. Therefore, the narrative questions the notion of established power and order by foregrounding irrationality, and an investigation that sets disorder with several untied loose ends.

In this context, the given that pleasure of detective fiction depends on suspense, thrill and in withholding the end can be refuted through the study of the postmodernist detective texts. In such texts, pleasure is not seen as a temporary urge to discover "whodunit", rather it is bound with the understanding of the body of the text. This is analyzed through the three texts of *New York Trilogy*, where none of the narratives present a logical explanation of facts leading to solutions, revelations or an end. In all the three narratives, pleasure lies in the textual body signifying a mystery that does not exist. The narratives function as vortices, taking back every fact that is offered, while its intention and design do not steer facts into a rational outcome. The formal closure of the novels either ends in effacement or disappointment. It can thus be suggested that the textual body is powerful than the telos, to the extent that pleasure depends on "what happens" rather than explaining "why or how it happens."

The narrative of *Hawksmoor* also defies the given that discovery and teleological revelations provide pleasure in detective texts. Rather, the element of pleasure depends on the process of understanding power related issues within the corpus of the text. The

narrative does not provide any solution to the mystery related to the events of both the eighteenth and twentieth century London. In other words, the formal closure opens up prospects for further questions. In this sense, the narrative functions as an agent that engulfs all possibilities of rationalizing, familiarizing and assuring of settling confusions and disturbances in the social/penal world.

When criminal and detective are absorbed into a single self, it is the narrative intention of taking back within itself the prospect of any rational outcome. Moreover, pleasure is conditioned in perceiving a subversive textual world, where narrative power dissolves, cancels and erases decipherments, thereby also subverting the power of social surveillance. In this novel, the narrative technique of time-shifting is a subsumptive device to subvert the socially accepted notion of the dynamics of power between crime and state authority. Postmodernist detective texts subvert the power-pleasure relationship and condition pleasure by overturning that which is accepted, established and secure in the social world of the novel. Hence the narrative subversion of power and authority of surveillance is suggested through the criminal and detective being mirror images of one another. Watching is a key but the terms of watching keep changing.

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