

A Study of Postmodern Element Intertextuality in Don DeLillo's *Libra*

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Abstract: Following John F. Kennedy's death in November 1963, the United States entered, as per Don DeLillo, a domain of haphazardness and vulnerability—a postmodern world. In his novel *Libra*, DeLillo accentuates America's new way of life as the creator utilizes particular scholarly gadgets to embody postmodern attributes in both the characters and certain plot components. *Libra* is an endeavor to disentangle the secret of post-death America. DeLillo's novel intends to comprehend the change in outlook that occurred following the John F. Kennedy kill by utilizing artistic components and philosophical hypotheses. The present research paper attempts a Study of Postmodern Element Intertextuality in Don DeLillo's *Libra* to see how DeLillo comprehends the postmodern condition.

Keywords: Don DeLillo, Postmodernism, Intertextuality, *Libra*, postmodern condition.

DeLillo's 1988 novel *Libra* passes on the tale of the Kennedy death and a hypothesis of intrigue behind it. It is both true to life and anecdotal and is postmodern in its topic and its style. DeLillo's exceptional utilization of scholarly gadgets, for example, intertextuality and schizophrenic written work, I contend, proclaim *Libra* as a particularly postmodern content, which catches the contemporary American soul by underscoring the disconnection the Assembled States felt following the death of President John F. Kennedy.

Intertextuality is a typical and critical topic in postmodern writing; subsequently, DeLillo's utilization of the strategy and the incorporation of Oswald's diaries and the Warren Reports sets up the idea that the Kennedy death was the principal postmodern occasion. DeLillo's motivation for utilizing Lee Harvey Oswald's diaries is quite certain. By perusing his private contemplations and conclusions, the peruser can take in the murder's brain science; what pushed him to slaughter the most intense man in the nation? One reason is his longing to be truly well known—a man whom the world perceives from pictures in course readings. Oswald needs a name for himself, however he is "a zero in the framework," (151), so he finds an approach to ascend from the abyss of secrecy. As Heinrich says to his progression father in DeLillo's past novel *Background noise*, execute one acclaimed individual, get saw, influence it to stick," (45). Another intention in Oswald is his money related circumstance. Naturally introduced to destitution, he feels as though his vagary is specifically identified with his absence of cash. Amalgamating these two methods of reasoning makes a photo of lucidity: Oswald is the direct inverse of John F. Kennedy. JFK, who was naturally introduced to notoriety and riches, is the ideal focus as per Oswald. In the event that a unimportant man slaughters the most surely understood man on the planet, the previous will positively turn out to be similarly too known. Another perusing of these two thought processes is Oswald considers himself to be a recorded casualty, and his executing of the president is his chronicled reason. As it were, Lee Harvey Oswald was bound to slaughter John F. Kennedy. The consideration of the diary passages is utilized to sympathize. His works are obvious cases of his cruel world: mental flimsiness, self-destructive propensities, learning inabilities, neediness. The hero of *Libra* perceives his tribulations; that is the thing that separates him. He perceives his issues and says, "There is a world inside the world," (13), which is reshaped four times; it implies that Oswald's considerations and conclusions are their very own universe, a suspected that is encouraging to him.

Oswald's diaries likewise present to a perusing of DeLillo's novel as postmodern in the way the former writes. *Libra*'s hero battles with perusing and composing: he "had a type of dyslexia or word-visual impairment," (166). This is apparent in Oswald's written work given by DeLillo: "She is flabbergassed, yet she consents to help. Gets some information about myself and my purposes behind doing this. I explain I am a socialist, and so on. She is politly sym. in any case, uneasy at this point. She attempts to be a companion to me. She feels frustrated about me I am someth. new," (150). In his article "Lee Harvey Oswald and the Postmodern Subject: History and Intertextuality in Wear DeLillo's *Libra*, The Names, and Mao II," Thomas Carmichael qualities the incorporation of Oswald's own compositions to DeLillo's claim that America entered a universe of vagueness after the JFK death: "Yet this feeling of ambiguities of this unique occasion in postmodern history is maybe best passed on in *Libra* through its allocation of Oswald's own writings from the Warren Commission Displays," (208). This announcement underpins my subject of *Libra* accentuating ambiguities and disconnectedness in a postmodern time.

Conspiracy theories are essentially ambiguities; they turn out to be so required with themselves, so multifaceted that the significance of the first occasion blurs away into indefinite quality. The Warren Commission Reports were intended to put a conclusion to the paranoid notions caused by the JFK death. DeLillo's consideration of the Warren Reports takes into account the peruser to see the logical inconsistencies and irregularities identified with the death, which incidentally prompts fear inspired notions and distrustfulness. A standout amongst the most evident deviations in the Warren Report originates from the therapeutic reports with respect to Oswald's self-exacted gunfire wound. After the hero

shoots himself in the arm, the Armed force is required to record a restorative report. It states, "Quiet dropped 45 bore programmed, gun released when it struck the floor, and rocket struck patient in left arm causing damage," (92). At that point, promote in the record, "This multi year male unintentionally shot himself in the left arm with a sidearm, allegedly of 22 bore." These contradictions about actualities achieves two things. Right off the bat they push Oswald's character. Oswald is a "zero in the framework," (40); he is a recluse. He isn't even sufficiently noteworthy to have amend data expounded on him. This disinformation, be that as it may, is related to numerous components identified with the JFK death: there are numerous plot gaps and incoherent actualities, which can be viewed as an impetus for intrigue. Besides, and more noticeable in *Libra*, the confusions in the Warren Commission Report, as specified previously, allude to the capability of connivance and neurosis. All through the novel, DeLillo underlines the Warren Reports' making of distrustfulness in Nicholas Branch, a CIA filer. Branch filters through "the FBI's papers on the death ... one hundred and twenty-five thousand pages, [with] no finish of fear and hardship," (59), attempting to discover the responses to the inquiries the JFK death has made. As *Libra* advances, DeLillo's portrayal of Branch turns out to be increasingly intriguing. Branch's activity, particularly, "is composing a history, not an investigation of the manners by which individuals surrender to suspicion," (57). Be that as it may, as his exploration turns out to be increasingly included, he transforms; he moves toward becoming casualty to what he set out to refute: neurosis. Hence, Nicholas Branch exemplifies a piece of America after the murder, scrutinizing the thought processes and endeavoring to fit the bits of the astound together; in any case, there are excessively numerous inquiries, and he realizes that "[h]e is in too far to stop now," (441). Like the reams of paper that constitute the Warren Report, DeLillo utilizes the Zapruder Film to emphasize the occasion in *Libra* as a postmodern occurrence.

The Zapruder Film in *Libra* consolidates intertextuality and the media's impact. DeLillo's utilization of movies in his work has been conspicuous from the earliest starting point of his oeuvre with *Awesome Jones Road* to his later works such as *Point Omega*. The creator realizes that film is presently the dominating type of workmanship in the postmodern period; along these lines, his utilization of the Zapruder Film in *Libra* is legitimate: not exclusively does it demonstrate how the murder happened, however it additionally affirmed the media's effect on American culture. The Zapruder Film was appeared again and again to groups of onlookers around the country by the media, showing a fruitful endeavor in showing data to a broad audience and passing on its capacity to impact the world. In his exposition, "DeLillo, Postmodernism, Postmodernity," Diminish Knight says, "The genuine hugeness of the death for DeLillo is the impact that unendingly viewing the brutal passings of Kennedy and Oswald has on society everywhere, making Americans casualties of the postmodern condition," (33). The steady redundancy of the film on the news brought about the death getting to be engrained in American culture and personality, pushing the country into the postmodern and nonsensical age.

The media's impact is an unmistakably postmodern thought. DeLillo's utilization of the media in his work is obvious to the point that it seems as though he incorporates it as a definitive character. What's more, while concerning the John F. Kennedy death, it is much more powerful on the grounds that, as Fredric Jameson says in his book *Postmodernism, or the Social Rationale Recently Free enterprise*, "In present day North American history, obviously, the death of John F. Kennedy was an interesting occasion, not minimum since it was a special group (and media, communicational) encounter, which prepared individuals to peruse such occasions recently," (355). The Kennedy death was the occasion that moved America towards the postmodern time since it was the principal show of the media's capacity. In its steady reports with respect to Oswald or the president's condition or the condition of the country and its unending presentation of the Zapruder Film, the media had a "communicational blast," (Jameson 355); it united the country, it might be said. TVs ended up common in that everyone viewed the news channels to find out about the country's awful misfortune. Strangely, DeLillo utilizes media in *Libra* to attempt to comprehend what occurred in Dallas following the times of the killing.

Close to the finish of *Libra*, correspondents are talking all the while, attempting to make sense of what has occurred "oblivious carport underneath police central command," (437). After Jack Ruby gives Oswald, a plenty of correspondents endeavor to answer to gatherings of people the nation over what had happened

"A shot.
There's a shot.
Oswald has been shot.

...
He is lying flat.

There is a gunshot wound in his lower abdomen.

He is white.

Oswald white...." (438-39)

Here, DeLillo is portraying bedlam: journalists talking over each other, endeavoring to take in each new detail, basically depicting the perplexity. The media's portrayal is one that can be viewed as great and positive as every one of the journalists attempt to get a handle on what happened, which, as a result, is endeavoring to cover the injury that America was left with after the murder of the president. Media in *Libra* searches for hints to facilitate the pressure, to answer the inquiries, a typical subject in postmodern writing. Alan Moore says in first experience with *Straight to the point Mill operator's Batman: The Dull Knight Returns*, "With the expansion in media scope and data innovation, we see a greater amount of the world, grasp its working somewhat more plainly, and therefore our impression of ourselves and society encompassing us has been changed," (II). In spite of the fact that DeLillo generally is by all accounts lauding the media in *Libra* in its endeavors to appreciate the circumstance after the death, he additionally is by all accounts scrutinizing it. Beryl Parmenter can't take her eyes off of the TV in light of the fact that the news channels "were indicating reruns of the shooting," (445). Oswald's murder, in a brief timeframe, additionally moved toward becoming engrained in American culture, similar to the death. Also, the media in *Libra* is related with another postmodern thought: schizophrenic style.

Schizophrenic style in postmodern writing will be composing that is fragmented, dubious, convoluted, or sporadic. This style is utilized to show the incomprehension of an occasion, and in *Libra* it is utilized particularly to shape Oswald as a postmodern figure and pass on the open-endedness of the Kennedy death. Michael James Rizza, in his paper "The Separation of Organization in Wear DeLillo's *Libra*," says, "Decentered, not completely show in the scene or associated with himself, Oswald turns into an image for a postmodern condition," (172). This schizophrenic conduct—Lee Harvey Oswald perceives himself as "decentered"—is unmistakable all through the book. For instance, when Jack Ruby shoots Oswald, the last "could see himself shot as the camera got it. Through the torment, he sat in front of the television," (439). Oswald's

shooting is so astounding and turbulent (the journalists talking over each other) that he himself can't comprehend it; in this manner, he endeavors to realize what occurred through the TV. Oswald finds out about himself through the news, which can be viewed as a remark that DeLillo states all through his works: character is characterized in some part by visual media, what we see on TV and film. In another case of being decentered and schizophrenic (in an artistic sense), Oswald shoots the president. "There was so much clearness Lee could watch himself in the immense room of stacked containers, scattered books, old block dividers, exposed lights, a little figure in a corner, incompletely covered up. He shot a second shot," (398). On the off chance that Lee Harvey Oswald is an indication of the postmodern thought, at that point his diaries themselves are schizophrenic it could be said, as well. They are indistinguishable and "the lines, for the most part in square letters, meander and inclination over the page. The page is swarmed with words, start to finish, out to either edge, crossedout words, smeared words, words that run together, endeavored redresses and augmentations, slips into content, a feeling of shortness of breath, with odd quiet sections," (149, my italics). DeLillo utilizes the incoherent written work style to coordinate the identity he has made for Lee Harvey Oswald. *Libra's* hero is delineated as a man who, as said previously, considers himself to be decentered, divided, similar to the written work.

Another schizophrenic part of *Libra* is the incoherent portrayal. The parts move from geographic areas to dates in 1963. Both of the parts meet up close to the finish of the book in Dallas on November 22, 1963—the day of President Kennedy's death. The two arrangements of parts recount two stories that are connected: the geographic segments relate as long as Oswald can remember, and the date in 1963 recount the CIA agents responsible for the connivance to murder Kennedy. Inside each piece of the story, there are sub-plots that further build up the possibility of schizophrenic style in *Libra*. For instance in the segments of the book that retell Oswald's life (these parts can nearly be ordered as inventive nonfictino), there are arbitrary intervals that component Oswald's diary or postcards/letters from his mom Marguerite. The fascinating thing about these interferences is that DeLillo does not give any sign with regards to the move in portrayal; he puts them in the content and enables the pieces to point out themselves. The reason for these interruptions in the account is to welcome the peruser to make the setting; that is, the recesses of content from the diaries or Warren Commission Reports powers the peruser to offer qualities to the professional killer. *Libra* is an anecdotal content with some genuine characters. The consideration of the writings arbitrarily as a piece of the account enables the peruser to perceive what the character was extremely similar to in a couple of ways. History is never entire; there are continually missing pieces. In this manner, chronicled messages, for example, these diary passages can't give an unmistakable picture of Oswald as a recorded player, however they give a look at the sort of man he was.

Don DeLillo says in his *Rolling Stone* essay "American Blood" that the death acquired America "a universe of haphazardness and uncertainty" (22). Thinking about this present, *Libra's* schizophrenic style is an aesthetic articulation of the unclearness of the contemporary American minute. The new and darken universe of which America was a section after the death needed conclusion. Numerous inquiries encompassing the executing still can't seem to be replied. After such a catastrophic disaster, individuals clearly pine for answers. Individuals need comfort—a liberating sensation is achieved when every one of the bits of the astound fit together, uncovering the comprehensive view. In light of the death, the American individuals need to know how a solitary shooter could slaughter the most ground-breaking man on the planet. Be that as it may, taking in the total truth could prompt uncontrollability. Christopher Mott clarifies in his paper "Libra and the Subject of History" that the novel "unmistakably shows that this inclination for add up to clarification leads, truth be told, to add up to turmoil. We essentially can't represent everything about, subtlety" (143). Maybe this is the place connivance originates from: a position of dread and a frantiness for answers, which is basically conclusion. The deficient (and as indicated by my meaning of the term, schizophrenic) comprehension of the occasions that occurred in Dallas and numerous ensuing events are postmodern on the grounds that they affirm Americans' judiciousness at home. Soundness was affirmed universally with the dropping of atomic weapons on Japan and the Holocaust crosswise over Europe, yet there presently couldn't seem to be a balanced demonstration in the Unified States that totally persuaded individuals to take after the way of nonsensicalness; Kennedy's death considered this.

As the nation drew back in fear and stun from the death of John F. Kennedy, it additionally changed. The murder propelled the country into a universe of unclearness and perplexity and de-centeredness: postmodernism. With *Libra*, Wear DeLillo catches that inclination, and he attempts to clarify why America changed after November 22, 1963. In spite of the fact that nobody can clarify why, DeLillo deals with the utilization of unmistakable postmodern scholarly components and fictionalizes Lee Harvey Oswald as a voice for postmodernism to enable him to perceive America's new soul.

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