

Tribhuvan University

Fictionalization of Kennedy's Assassination: A New Historicist Reading of DeLillo's

Libra

A Dissertation Submitted to the Central Department of English

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts in English

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April 2016

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Letter of Recommendation

Tekendra Gharti has completed his thesis entitled “Fictionalization of Kennedy’s Assassination: A New Historicist Reading of DeLillo’s *Libra*” under my supervision. He carried out his research from 2071/07/15 B. S. to 2072/11/07 B.S. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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Approval Letter

This thesis entitled “Fictionalization of Kennedy’s Assassination: A New Historicist Reading of DeLillo’s *Libra*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Tekendra Gharti has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to a number of people for their help with this project. First and foremost, I wish to express deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Shankar Subedi, Lecturer at the Central Department of English for his guidance, advice, criticism, encouragements and insights throughout the research. His willingness to motivate me contributed tremendously in this research for its completion.

Thanks are also due to Prof. Dr. Amma Raj Joshi, Head of the Central Department of English, for his friendly presence and approval of this research work in its present shape. Similarly, words cannot express my gratitude toward respected teachers, Badri Acharya, Hemlal Pandey and others for their feedback, insights, and valuable questioning.

Last but not least, I want to express my love and gratitude to my parents for their constant and lifelong support and encouragement. Most importantly, thanks to all my friends near and far who have been there for me through all the ups and downs and help me to complete directly and indirectly. Innovative Computer Institute, Bagbazar also deserves gratitude for its typing and other technical support.

Tekendra Gharti

April 2016

Abstract

This research looks into the way facts and findings about the assassination of former American president, J. F. Kennedy are represented in a subjective and subtle way. DeLillo does not remain loyal to the objective findings pertaining to the case of assassination. He is simply interested to produce a subjective, thrilling and romanticized version of history. Historical finding and its objectivity appeal less to the author. In *Libra*, Oswald appears to be the assassin who kills the president out of the romantic sense of thrill. Oswald is impressed by the bulk of publicity stunt, glamour and coverage given by the then American media. Kennedy's nuance of handling and using American media on decisive moment makes the whole media loyal to him. The attachment between media and Kennedy takes a legendary form. Any person who wants to thrive in his or her field should know from Kennedy how to use media to the utmost extent. Media personnel also know that under Kennedy's tenure, media has known how much media can flourish. The halo that shines at Kennedy back turns out to be the root cause of his untimely end. Tempted by this halo, Oswald surmises how much attention media lavishes on him if he kills Kennedy. The history of assassination is a product of a silly and deranged mind's distorted longing. The objective history tells that the assassination is a plotting of Cuban dictator or it is a product of disgruntled CIA officers. History is not as serious as analysts claim to be. It can be the byproduct of silly and vainglorious minds. In this regard, it is obvious that *Libra* is a thick analysis.

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I. Representation and DeLillo's *Libra*

This research examines how realities regarding President J. F. Kennedy's assassination appear to be a discursive construct in DeLillo's *Libra*. Through narrative mode, controversial politico-historical reality is projected in its subjective form. Instead of presenting historical fact regarding assassination, DeLillo dramatizes this event in a context of narrative possibilities. Far from pointing to the exact cause of Kennedy's assassination, the novelist explores multiple possibilities. It is Kennedy's nuance and tact of handling media that enables him to win presidential election. He emerges as the center of media coverage. The halo created by media around Kennedy makes everyone hanker after the same and similar type of sensation.

Kennedy is a political sensation. Other fanatics like Oswald are tempted by the halo created by media around Kennedy. Oswald is a victim of dyslexia. He assumes that if he kills Kennedy. He would certainly get boundless media coverage. Intoxicated by this sort of assumption, he shoots the president. The same and similar type of delusion is expected by Oswald's murderer. Oswald's murderer also falls victims of similar type of delusion. The core reality regarding assassination remains a far-fetched fact. In media discourses, cold war politics, Russian collusions, Kennedy's soft and liberal approach to Cuban crisis are held accountable for his assassination. Some members of CIA are dissatisfied by Kennedy's intention to seek negotiating mid-way path to Cuban crisis. Those unhappy youths are also held accountable for the untimely assassination of Kennedy.

Subjective version of historical reality regarding Kennedy's assassination is presented in *Libra*. Instead of locating the exact plotting behind assassination to administrative collusion, cold war hostility and retaliatory act, *Libra* projects a subjective version of reality. Causes for Kennedy's assassination can be manifold. But

media has become an integral part of Kennedy's life and career as a glamorous politician and president. It is the darker narcotic effect generated by a hankering cult of limelight that implants the seed of Kennedy's assassination. Out of the multiple sides of historical reality regarding Kennedy's assassination, one aspect of historical reality is subjectively handled.

The whole narrative of Kennedy's assassination rests on the imagination. It is based on the real life of Lee Harvey Oswald. Oswald fabricates the events surrounding America's 35th President, John F. Kennedy's assassination. This assassination is followed by the murder of Oswald by Jack Ruby. *Libra* introduces a way of thinking about the assassination. This thinking is unaffected by half-facts or ugly possibilities. It is affected by the tide of speculation that widens with the years.

The Kennedy assassination by Oswald gives rise to the countless conspiracy theories. He is being taken through the basement of Dallas Police Headquarters to be transferred to the County Jail. Jack Ruby shoots Oswald. *Libra* is meant to suggest how uncertain reality becomes as a result of the media's penetration of life. Oswald kills Kennedy in anticipation of the attention he would receive from television and press. The role played by the media to cover these disturbing events makes readers feel even more lost in violence and crime.

Television is a basic part of the importance of the Kennedy assassination. If it is used to keep such importance in Kennedy's political career or not does not matter. As reproduced in the narrative, television bears tremendous values in the lives of the assassinated president. Through his characters, DeLillo wants to present the contemporary American reality.

This reality has become completely mediated and artificial presence of the mass media, especially of TV and radio. These technological devices have turned

reality into hyper reality. It is discursively constructed. People have started feeling estranged from the real, and they seek refuge in the simulated. TV, with its glowing images and endless buzzes, intrudes in every aspect of human lives.

Even reality about the contemporary culture and social life is hinted and implied in the novel. Virtual space changes truth. It has a power to modify truth. The mass media have contributed to the emerging of the consumer culture. The delirium and the simulacrum of vast shopping malls and supermarkets have mesmerized the society. If this reality is exactly true or not, it does not matter. What matters is how these discursive construct carries values and authenticity within the textual world.

Literature Review

Don DeLillo produced most of his known work in late twentieth century. His early novels are mainly concerned with malaises and maladies faced by people who are trapped in the postmodern society. He raises postmodern genre to the peak of sophistication and artistry by the end of the last century. He then writes mainly on some of the latest trends and fashions. He captures the ethos and shifting trend of present society which is exposed to countless ills and hazards like simulation of society and obsession with death. Matthew J. Packer is a popular critic of DeLillo. Regarding to DeLillo's *Libra*, he makes the following remarks:

In *Libra*, though, the sacred and the other anthropological elements have scarcely been considered—despite the religious awe looming in the airborne toxic event and the narrator's invitation to consider the scientific study of the cultural behavior and development of man.

Hidden among the novel's characters—hidden by them—is an imitative tendency that first shapes not representational behavior but desire

itself. Triangular desire Girard documents in the French novel structures much of *Libra*. (1)

Both the sacred and profane elements coexist in *Libra*. In addition, there are also other elements which jointly give a glimpse of troubled and superficial tendency of contemporary society. The most mysterious thing about this novel is that DeLillo points out how unpredictably desire changes into source of unknown fear.

Karen Weekes concentrates on the valorous and puzzling disposition of Oswald. He takes Oswald as the most complex character. Weeks discloses the following view regarding Oswald in the context of *Libra*:

Rather than DeLillo's suggested axiom of consume or die, *Libra* argues that we consume and die. Confronting death is a random shock that subsides into mere white noise, as our lives adjust. Our shopping may be temporarily confused, but it continues; we work our way up and down the aisles and toward the culminating registers, while the ambient roar—the background noise of both living and dying—rumbles on. (16)

The idea of the confrontation with death and mortality is the most thrilling idea inherent in the text, *Libra*. When society offers plenty of possibilities to individual citizens, they are rather haunted by their own sense of guilt and unconscious fear. The reason for the unnecessary rise of fear is the most puzzling thing in this novel.

Scott Rettberg is of the opinion that in the mind of Oswald, obsession with death is represented as the ruling motive, an intense, over-mastering passion. Such chronic sense of fear is gratified at the expense of every just and generous principle, and every feminine feeling. Her exposure to television culture and its sedative effect

on her mindset are taken as the root cause of unexpected troubles. Rettberg makes the additional commentary in the following excerpt:

The characters in Don DeLillo's novels inhabit a world that is at times cynically hysterical, sometimes loaded with hopes and potential, sometimes with a brooding, stark darkness that is frightening to us because of the fact that it is so present in our everyday lives. DeLillo's characters face angst of the most contemporary varieties. Although Don DeLillo is not a conventional realist or naturalist in any sense of the word, He is a postmodernist author. (10)

DeLillo is certainly innovative. Despite his innovative hallmark, He is content to work in forms and genres that are long established. Yet the work of DeLillo is distinctly post-modern. It presents the stories of characters that face life in a post-modern, postindustrial, television culture.

Mark Osteen examines *Libra* in the light of characters' soaring obsession. Growing obsession of the characters reveal heightens the possibility of committing crimes. Osteen makes the following pronouncement regarding to this aspect of the novel:

Libra thus brings together many of DeLillo's obsessions: the deleterious effects of capitalism, the power of electronic images, the tyrannical authority and dangerous byproducts of science, the unholy alliance of consumerism and violence, and the quest for sacredness in a secularized world. Like all of his fiction, it displays his virtuoso command of language and, particularly, his ventriloquist capacity to mimic the argots of various cultural forms. In it he amplifies the noises

around us and permits us to hear again how these sounds shape our own voices and beliefs. (5)

DeLillo operates from the inside of the cultural institutions that he is assessing to instigate a dialogue with cyber culture. He maintains a measured opposition while treating the subjects. Masking its critique in celebration, *Libra* inhabits the very heart of political culture to weigh its dangers against its marvels.

Victor Seidler argues that *Libra* displays how masculinity is shaped by academic pursuits. Masculinity and reasonable manner are put side by side by DeLillo in *Libra*. Concentrating on this aspect of reasoning, Victor Seidler makes the following observation regarding to this sort of view that DeLillo projects in this novel:

Don DeLillo's novel *Libra* provides a narrative which critiques the educational reproduction of masculinities. The lecturers in his, School of American Environments, are portrayed as shallow and insecure, desperate to outdo each other in feats of masculinity which resemble rites of passage rather than pedagogic experiences. In the Western world manliness has come to be closely aligned with reasonable behavior. (2)

Victor Seidler reiterates the way in which reason is put forward as the legislator of reality. Thus, this trend gains authority for men to form, and educate, a world according to their notion. This construction prioritizes rationality and requires that men should live a careful and controlled life. DeLillo's academics noticeably struggle to align their urges with their society's expectations.

Ugo Panzani makes the following observation regarding to the subversive power of cold war politics which is obviously handled in *Libra*:

Since realities regarding cold war are in *Libra* the apparatus of state control, such an intense situation represents a moment of counter-hegemonic practice. The novel suggests that by reenacting the traumatic scene, brilliant's performance, defined in opposition to the traumatizing media image, offers an opportunity for a cathartic working through. (7)

DeLillo's portrayal of the power of media is one of the most striking aspects of the novel. The miracle of cold war is also reproduced in the novel. The portrayal of power is carefully planned and maneuvered. DeLillo leads reads to make the inevitable extension to it.

Noeme Abe maintains that painful sense of numbness is projected in *Libra*. This sense of numbness echoes the numbness of grief. Abey reveals the following truth concerning this aspect of *Libra*:

The discussion of many political issues, such as cold war, threat of nuclear annihilation and competition to create satellite state drew to a halt in the face of the strong patriotic propaganda that tended to censor any views that did not comply with its rhetoric. The collapse of the political sphere into the private one has engendered a society in which the political is hidden within the domestic in such a way that the dynamics of hegemony are no longer apparent. (16)

Various issues are addressed by DeLillo in *Libra*. Core thematic content appeals to the readers and critics alike. The nightmares and repetitive actions of the survivor occupy the forefront of the novel.

Rosie Partington notices lots of sympathetic characters. She expresses the following remarks about pathetic characters in *Libra*:

It is interesting to consider whether when reading *Libra* we are empathizing or sympathizing with the characters, and whether or not this affects our emotional response and the feeling of resonance that we experience in relation to the text. Empathy and sympathy are extremely difficult words to define, as there seems to be a psychological and cognitive overlap in what people think they mean.

(2)

Characters are dramatically convincing and life-like. Since they are chosen from political sphere, they are representative of the political norm of that time. They are really appealing to the audiences. They try to identify the actual noise in the famous picture. DeLillo's representation of terrorist threat is questionable in the light of the poor pathetic characters.

According to Silvia Caporale Bizzini, DeLillo's view on terror and threat of nuclear annihilation is clear in the novel. DeLillo does not aim to document political collusions, ideological meandering and threat of nuclear annihilation. Bizzini makes the following remarks as to if DeLillo's view is explicitly clear or not:

My point is that *Libra* does not aim to tell a story that is centered on the spectacle of the threat of nuclear annihilation, even though it retains most of DeLillo's fictional themes and theoretical nodal points such as the analysis of postmodern society or his interest in the power of images, in language, and in cultural history. (3)

How the characters feel threat is portrayed in this novel. Characters' response to the increasing sense of terror is documented clearly in the novel. The text starts with a third-person narrator. The sensation of chaos and loss of understanding are twin problems that are dramatized in the novel.

Although all these critics examine this novel from different perspectives, none of them have dwelt upon the historical and political implication. The things that are filtered in the novel are Kennedy's assassination, CIA's envy and rage at the president's soft approach to Cuban assertiveness, Oswald's fictitious portrayal and other bureaucratic network. Lots of political and ideological implications are hidden beneath the plethora of textual details. Analysis of subtext of this novel opens multiple avenue of historic-political diversification.

New historicism is a literary theory. It is based on the idea that literature should be studied and interpreted within the context of both the history of the author and the history of the critic. It is based on the literary criticism of Stephen Greenblatt. It is influenced by the philosophy of Michel Foucault. New historicism acknowledges not only that "a work of literature is influenced by its author's times and circumstances, but that the critic's response to that work is also influenced by his environment, beliefs, and prejudices" (Greenblatt 14). A new historicist looks at literature in a wider historical context. He or she examines both how the writer's times affected the work. A new historicist work reflects the writer's times.

The new historicist recognizes that this is not a simple answer that can be teased out by studying the text. This work must be judged in the context. Cultural history can be revealed by studying the work. Studying the history shows more about the text. Studying the text yields greater facts about the history. The new historicist also acknowledges that his examination of literature is damaged by his own culture and environment. New historicism stresses the impermanence of literary criticism. Current literary criticism lies on the beliefs of our times in the same way that literature reflects and is reflected by its own historical contexts.

New historicism accepts the idea that times changes and human understanding of great literature also changes. Historical criticism insisted that to understand a literary piece, it is necessary to understand the author's biography and social background, ideas circulating at the time, and the cultural milieu. Owing to the intricate and ambivalent relationship between text and context, there has been a long-running debate about the disciplinary boundary between history and fiction.

The history of literary theory can be viewed as a series of theoretical battles between textualism and contextualism. It sways like a "pendulum, with momentary victories to one side or the other, reflecting the oscillation between the verbal-literary champions of textualism and socio-historical champions of contextualism" (Greenblatt 76). New historicists concern themselves with the political function of literature. They are concerned with the concept of power. They are also concerned with the complex means. With these means, cultures produce and reproduce themselves. These critics focus on revealing the historically specific model of truth and authority. Such an authority is reflected in a given work. In other words, history here is not a mere chronicle of facts and events. Rather, it is a complex description of human reality and evolution of preconceived notions.

Literary works may or may not tell readers about various factual aspects of the world from which they emerge. They will tell readers about prevailing ways of thinking at the time. They raise questions of interest to anthropologists and sociologists. New historicism is more socio-historical than it is "a delving into factoids: concerned with ideological products or cultural constructs which are formations of any era" (Greenblatt 34). New historicists insist that ideology manifests itself in literary productions and discourse. They interest themselves in the

interpretive constructions which the members of a society or culture apply to their experience.

This thesis has been divided into four chapters. In the first chapter, the researcher introduces the topic, elaborates the hypothesis, and quotes different critics' views regarding to the text. In the same chapter, the researcher shows the departure also. In the third chapter the researcher makes a thorough analysis of the text, *Libra*, by applying the theory of new historicism. The last chapter contains the conclusive ending of the research.

II. Gloss on History: A New Historicist Reading of DeLillo's *Libra*

This research examines how Don DeLillo's *Libra* projects significant clues and concerns regarding profound historical truth regarding President J. F. Kennedy's assassination. Narrative acts and assertions hide historical truth. Historical truth about Kennedy's assassination lies in a veiled form. Historical concern is not raised to explicitly. Profound controversial truth about assassination is not explicitly hinted. DeLillo is concerned with truth of Kennedy's assassination. The Concern with the role of sensational media is a gloss on the painful reality. The shocked public holds as responsible factors things like scheming CIA employees, intrusive Russian interest, and president's diplomatic move to mitigate Cuban crisis and subsequent diplomatic and non-diplomatic overtures. But he does not take an obvious and explicit tone.

The narrator does not locate the solid cause behind Kennedy's assassination in serious political and ideological development. DeLillo simply locates the cause behind assassination in Oswald's psychotic urge and hope of getting unbounded media coverage after being the murderer of Kennedy. It is the cult of being hungry for media coverage. Media attention turns out to be the root cause of assassination. This cult is initiated and championed by Kennedy himself. Viewpoint and historical perception simply appear to be fantastically appealing. They are somewhat somewhat ludicrous and negligible. But certain segment of historical reality lies within the layers of this fantabulous stroke of imagination.

Libra concentrates the construction of historical understanding. He views historical understanding in relation to social identity. The society of the spectacle is necessary to foster understanding about reality. The confusing reality surrounds the assassination of Kennedy. Fact about assassination is represented in fictional. The ruptured organization of the text scatters the center of meaning. By doing so, it

identifies in the story areas of difference and discontinuity. The given historical interpretation of the events problematizes the whole way of constructing the historical vision. No representation is allowed the condition of innocence. Everything is infected with the influence of ideology and power. Mode of representation has the power to modify reality. It produces that version of reality which serves as a vehicle of someone else's vested interest.

Owing to the intricate and ambivalent relationship between text and context, there has been a long-running debate about the disciplinary boundary between history and fiction. The history of literary theory can be viewed as a series of theoretical battles between textualism and contextualism. It sways like a "pendulum, with momentary victories to one side or the other, reflecting the oscillation between the verbal-literary champions of textualism and socio-historical champions of contextualism" (Greenblatt 76). New Historicists concern themselves with the political function of literature and with the concept of power.

History here is not a mere chronicle of facts and events. It is a complex description of human reality and evolution of preconceived notions. Literary works seldom tell readers about various factual aspects of the world. They will tell us about prevailing ways of thinking at the time: ideas of social organization, prejudices, and taboos. They raise questions of interest to anthropologists and sociologists. New Historicism is more socio-historical than it is a delving into factoids. It is concerned with ideological products or cultural constructs which are formations of any era. So, New Historicists puts emphasis on the fact that ideology manifests itself in literary productions and discourse. They interest themselves in the interpretive constructions.

In *Libra*, each character appears to have a narrative of his or her own. The perceived reality and historicity carries its own value. Every character's discourse is

the materialization of his or her symbolic position. The much more contested brand of historicity is examined in multiple lights and from variegated perspective. The narration is not linear. Various interests become involved. The following extract throws light on this sort of subjectively constructed historical truth which has its own aura and understanding:

Oswald's story and obsessions, the constant presence of the Mafia, the secret services, the anti-Castro movement and Jack Ruby are unique and wonderful. Laurence Parmenter and Win Everett- both men belonged to the select group of six soldiers who were supposed to start the Bay of Pigs attack. They cannot accept the failure of the operation and the idea of Castro being still firmly in power, so they plot a fake attempt to assassinate President Kennedy in order to prevent him from negotiating with Castro. (78)

Instead of dwelling on the specific brand of historicity regarding the case of assassination, the most mobile and dynamic impression, experiences and living reality try to fix and finalize what the reality is in actuality. Kennedy is moving toward a settling of differences with Castro. The most irrelevant and unnecessary things are that actuality does not matter. The atmosphere where Kennedy was murdered does not matter.

New historicism examines how the textual representation includes traces and fragments of historical truth in tacit manner. It also examines how the fragment of historical truth and cultural ethos enter the textual world in micro form. The truth which enters the text in this manner is subjectivized and textually manipulated. New historicism becomes influential with the works of prominent new historicist, Stephen

Greenblatt, who first of all took it to analyze the particularly the works of renaissance period. Regarding this, Greenblatt makes the following remarks:

New historicism changes its view to history as objective monolithic, linear, casual, static and authentic and equally views that every text is the product of socio-economic, political and cultural context. Thus, new historicist takes history as the matter of interpretation, perception and it is subjective. So, new historicism, in this way, breaks all the traditionally established facts and proceeds by taking history as heterogeneous, unstable and progressive. (65)

A literary text is embedded in its context. It is in a constant interaction and interchange with other component inside the other network of institutions. It believes in cultural power relation and practices. Once spoken or written words enter a form of circulation, it then turns away from their point of origin.

Cuban crisis and increasing interest of USSR are associated even in the novel. In real politics done of Kennedy during the cold war, Cuban crisis had certainly moved and manipulated assassination oriented atmosphere. But DeLillo traces the grand cause of Kennedy's assassination as the superb longing of Oswald to gain limelight and media coverage. Ironically enough, Kennedy himself had dug his own grave by displaying his knack and nuance of manipulating media.

I am convinced this is what we have to do to get Cuba back. This plan has levels and variations I've only begun to explore but it is already, essentially right. I feel its rightness. I know what scientists mean when they talk about elegant solutions. There was a silence. Then Parmenter said dryly, we couldn't hit Castro. So let's hit Kennedy. I wonder if

that's the hidden motive here.' 'But we don't hit Kennedy. We miss him, Win said. (28)

Unlike traditional narrative of cruelty and unexpected event, none of the anticipating or prophesying sequence of actions is used. Events happen simply out of the obscure fate of an individual.

Those whose fates are changed by the decisions of Kennedy want a name, a face, a bodily frame.

Lots of events had occurred at the time of diplomatic overtures around Cuban crisis. They are "Spanish-speaking men, Mexican, Panamanian, trained specifically for this mission in Cuba to be trailed, found, and possibly killed by the Secret Service, FBI or local police"(132).

Whatever protocol demands, Mackey would find this man for Everett.

They needed "fingerprints, a handwriting sample, and a photograph.

Mackey would find the other shooters as well. We don't hit the

President. We miss him. We want a spectacular Miss. (50)

Nicholas Branch is a retired CIA senior analyst. He is in charge of studying the material and the evidence collected on President Kennedy's assassination. He is supposed to analyse in order to give an explanation of what happened in Dallas. The task is overwhelming. It is full of blind spots. The Curator has most of the answers. A strange character seems to know the truth. Branch gets stuck in this analytical task. The Curator is able to "produce the right document at the right time. He intends to redirect the investigation. François puts emphasis on the phonetic similarity between the words Curator and Creator" (79).

Greenblatt recognizes how language both keeps readers at a distance from the past. He also draws readers to it in a quest for understanding. Greenblatt points to in

his raising of questions about the text's assumptions but does not develop. He says that he is "committed to the project of making strange what has become familiar" (8), but he has nothing but an imaginative response. His response is provisional because it is imaginative. He still offers it as some kind of finite explanation. Therefore, one may argue that Greenblatt uses rhetoric to protect such assertions from escape into indeterminacy.

Greenblatt's thesis on self-fashioning in the Renaissance also shows how words are ultimately never enough. The world will not allow identity to be formed through language alone. Action must follow from exhortation. Man must seek to join the signifier with its referent. While Greenblatt draws this important connection between language and time, the temporal problem of history never quite becomes a theme in its own right. Although Greenblatt begins "with the desire to speak with the dead," he admits "all I could hear was my own voice" (1). However, he believes that the solution to this impasse lies within himself as an historically situated subject saying "my own voice of the dead, for the dead had contrived to leave textual traces of themselves, and those traces make themselves heard in the voices of the living" (1). It is, of course, a new historicist axiom that knowledge of the world is determined by the position of the observer. In practice the new historicists require some way out of this cul-de-sac.

Oswald keeps a diary. He calls his private account as a 'Historic diaries because, after being accepted as a Soviet citizen, he himself admits that, "He was a man in history now" (149). Overtime, the same diary turns out to be the root cause of Oswald's Soviet experience. The same event provokes his sense of disillusionment. He writes to define himself for the generations to come. His own writing cannot help

him to escape from alienation. In dramatic moment, Oswald is not as grotesque and deformed as he appears in the narrative.

Imaginary reconstruction of the events gives historical truth a new twist and turn. Oswald is brought up in a deprived environment. He is the son of a neglectful father. He is an unfortunate and desperate man. He seeks unsuccessfully to belong to a group. Such a portrayal intentionally serves as a means to hide profound historical truth regarding Kennedy's assassination. Narrative dimension of *Libra* defies the rules of the society of the spectacle. Such spectacle has constructed the one dimensional individual. The following extract is expressive of this point:

Stateless, world-blind, still a little desperate, he got up in the middle of a spring night and wrote the Historic diary. He wrote in two sittings, breaking for coffee at 4:00 A.M. He wanted to explain himself to posterity. People would read these words someday and understand the fears and aspirations of a man who only wanted to see for myself what socialism was like. It was his goodbye to Russia. It signified the official end of a major era in his life. It validated the experience, as the writing of any history brings a persuasion and form to events. (27)

Oswald imagines people reading them. He is intuitively aware of people moved by his loneliness and disappointment. He is dogged even by his wretched spelling. He is prone to the childish mess of composition. He compulsively starts writing his autobiography. Lee Harvey Oswald's private and public history can be followed by Branch. Such a task is facilitated through the material written on Oswald and by Oswald. He becomes a Marxist at a very early age. At this point, Oswald is sent to Japan where he decides to leave the Marines. Seizing upon the moment, he flees to the Soviet Union where he becomes a Soviet citizen.

The result is a compromised form of discourse. The indication of subjectivity is no more than one element of a complex rhetoric that struggles after more objective truths. Greenblatt is correct to say that "self-expression is always and inescapably the expression of something else, something different" (56) in that he recognizes how any utterance is implicated within other structures of power, culture and so on. However, the link to the past is always one of projection of the self within the self.

New historicism is a theoretical approach that developed as a reaction to new criticism and other objectivist theories. It seeks to examine a text in terms of the fragmented trace of historicity. It is hidden beneath the layers of textual details. New Historicists concern themselves with "the political function of literature and with the concept of power, the intricate means by which cultures produce and reproduce themselves" (Montrose 76). History here is not a mere chronicle of facts and events. Rather it is but rather a complex description of human reality and evolution of preconceived notions.

According to Montrose, "Literary works may or may not tell us about various factual aspects of the world from which they emerge, but they will tell us about prevailing ways of thinking at the time" (76). New Historicism is more socio-historical than it is a "delving into factoids: concerned with ideological products or cultural constructs which are formations of any era"(Montrose, 77). New Historicists insists that ideology manifests itself in literary productions and discourse. They interest themselves in the interpretive constructions which the members of a society or culture apply to their experience.

A New Historicist looks at literature in a wider historical context. He or she examine both how the writer's times affected the work. The work reflects the writer's times. Once his Russian adventure comes to an end and he is back "in the States, with

his Russian wife and child, he is contacted by the CIA and involved in the Kennedy affair" (136). This story is narrated through a number of sources. It is narrated from Oswald's own notes to the medical reports. These reports are collected by the Russian secret services. His early stay in the Soviet Union, he tries to commit suicide so as not to be sent back to the States. The following extract is indicative of this fact:

Branch thinks this is the megaton novel James Joyce would have written if he'd moved to Iowa City and lived to a hundred. Everything is here. Baptismal records, report cards, postcards, divorce petitions, cancelled checks, daily timesheets thousands of pages of testimony, an incredible haul of human utterance. What has been presented as a simple and straightforward act of madness becomes a complicated and fragmented representation of a society that founds its power of representation and construction of mythical figures on the power of the image, regardless of any serious historical analysis. (176)

Oswald seems to be conscious of this fateful moment. He asks his wife Marina to take a picture of him. It is a picture where the written word 'Militant' goes together with his own image with a rifle in his hands. Words and images together can help build the official history.

For Montrose, "all the texts including literary or non-literary are ideological or cultural constructs which should be interpreted according to the particular context" (65). Literary figure invents the history on the basis of material reality. In contrast to traditional concept of objective truth, "singular, objective, monolithic history, new historicism focuses on multiple subjective and heterogeneous histories and challenges to the history constructed by those who are in power" (77).

This new outlook on history also brings about a new outlook on literature. Traditional literary historicism holds that "the proper aim of literary criticism is to attempt to reconstruct the past objectively, whereas new historicism suggests that history is only knowable in the same sense literature is" (88). Louis Montrose lays out that as critics we are historically bound and we may only reconstruct the histories through the filter of our consciousness:

Our analyses and our understandings necessarily proceed from our own historically, socially and institutionally shaped vantage points; that the histories we reconstruct are the textual constructs of critics who are, ourselves, historical subjects. Identity is fashioned by social institutions. Literature is another form of social construct, which is produced by the society and in return is active in reshaping the culture of that society. Literature is a cultural creation constructed by more than one consciousness. Therefore, social, political, religious, and economic factors of a given society determine the literature it produces. (23)

For Montrose, contemporary historicism must recognize that not only the poet but also the critic exists in history. The texts are inscriptions of history and representation. They are the interpretation of the texts of the past. Montrose suggests that this kind of critical practice constitutes a continuous dialogue between a poetics and a politics of culture.

Things are controversial. DeLillo's representation aims at supplying unexamined aspect of historical reality that can be grasped through different angle. The following extract throws spotlight on this aspect:

He posed in a corner of the yard, the rifle in his right hand, muzzled up, butt end pressing on his waist, just inches from the holstered. The magazines, the Militant and the Worker, were in his left hand, fanned like playing cards. She snapped the shutter. He posed one more time, the rifle in his left hand now, the magazine held under his chin with the word Militant visible above the fold, his shadow trailing to the wooden gate and his thin smile carried forward by light and time into the frame of official memory. (278-79)

History and television have got different level of limelight, public attention and coverage. As per Harvey's perception and evaluation, everything is fitted, perfect and doubtless. Images transmitted time and again of JFK's assassination. Such a transmission helps to materialize the figure of the killer. It provides the public crowd with his public execution.

The tendency to go against the establishment of the 1960s refers to an anti-establishment cultural phenomenon that developed first in the United States and the "United Kingdom, and then spread throughout much of the Western world between the early 1960s and the mid-1970s, with London and other various metropolitan cities being hotbeds of early countercultural activity"(Montrose 69). As the 1960s progressed, "widespread social tensions also developed concerning other issues. It tends to flow along generational lines regarding human sexuality, women's' rights, traditional modes of authority, experimentation" (68).

As the era unfolded, "new cultural forms and a dynamic subculture which celebrated experimentation, modern incarnations of Bohemianism, and the rise of the hippie and other alternative lifestyles, emerged" (Montrose 76). This embracing of creativity is particularly notable in the works of British Invasion bands. In addition to

the trendsetting Beatles, "many other creative artists, authors, and thinkers, within and across many disciplines, helped define the counterculture movement. Several factors distinguished the "dissenting voice of the 1960s from the anti-authoritarian of previous eras" (212).

New historicism focuses primarily on view of discourse. Discourse is social language created by particular cultural condition. Foucault concerns discourse in terms of knowledge. Discourse cannot adequately explain culture of social power, rather discourse is formed for getting different sorts of power and is imposed in the society. Michel Foucault adds more about discourse "to maintain dominance of power must circulate in numerous discourses namely religion" (301).

Foucault has been always interested in mechanism of society, human "thought and ideas, concepts, experiences, discourse formed in any society or culture. He also focuses that on divergent interests get intersected with each other in different issues like power, knowledge and truth" (121). His ideas are not only on mere power but it is manifestation and different technique which produces truth to lead an individual to subjection. Regarding such concept Foucault writes:

Resistance is more effective when it is directed at technique of power rather than at power in general. It is technique which allowed for the exercise of power and production of knowledge; resistance consists of refusing this technique. But the unearthing of power technique in their modern configurations requires conceiving of the social body as the multiplicity of force relation. (86)

Foucault suggests that power is intelligible and susceptible to analysis to down to its smallest details, in terms of the historical strategies and set of tactics designed to mobilize these techniques to political advantage. But importantly, oppressive forces of

domination do not hold "the monopoly in the capacity to invent tactic. Foucault questions the historical condition for the emergence of truths" (77). For such purpose he demonstrates the historicity of different disciplines and the concepts of objects related to such discipline along with power relation.

Lee Oswald is thankful of the power of the media. It is the post-assassination scenario that becomes re-baptized. In the midst of spectacle created by floating media Lee Harvey Oswald appears to be "a triple-named echo of another media child, John Fitzgerald Kennedy" (215). Oswald's discourse takes shape through his writing and through his mother's words. Collective action is problematized. It is presented to stress how reality can be ambiguous.

Oswald's collusion of assassinating General Walker is just a few instance of this way of understanding life. The idea of collective action is often associated to conspiracy. It is attached to annihilation and death. The following extract exemplifies the point:

Kennedy's death, Oswald's death but also the death of most of the people is involved in a sequential way. A situation is not recognized by the official investigation. In 1979 a House select committee determined there was nothing statistically abnormal about the death rate among those who were connected in some way to the events of November 22. Only the cloud of certainty is difficult to witness in the midst of claim and counterclaim. (57)

The assassination of President Kennedy is changed into a bizarre event. It is the enthusiasm and outcome of a maddened man who hankers after the halo generated by media. Thus, it is none other than the result of a mad man's action. The assassination becomes something that simply happened. It is crystallized into the conscience of a

whole nation. It transforms both the victim and the parricide into unquestioned and unquestionable myths. It is at this point that the past is annihilated. Contrary to common expectation, the present fuses into the future. It is through narratives their meaning and identities within time appear to be inseparably joined.

According to Foucault, power is not always repressive; it bears the qualities of productivity and creative potential. It is not the ruthless domination of the weak by strong. For him, power does not move in one direction instead it circulates to all directions to and from all social levels all time. Power is never ending process and in the way of formation. In this regard, new historicist has great affinity with Foucault as he states:

Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything but because it comes from everywhere. Power comes from below; that is there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relation serves as a general matrix- no such duality extending from the top down. There is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives. Where there is power, there is resistance. This resistance is never in position of exteriority in relation to power. One is always inside power. There is no escaping it. (95)

From this definition of power and its scopes, it is obvious that power does not get percolated hierarchically. It subverts the traditional concept of power as only tool for subjection and domination since it turns the negative concept of power upside down. Power is all pervasive and deserves equal weight.

Lee Harvey Oswald appears in the narrative as a confused and aimless young man. He is a pawn of three CIA agents. He is utterly discontented over "the bungled invasion at the Bay of Pigs. Oswald has a disruptive childhood. Unconsciously he

cherishes devotion to Communism" (131). Such devotion makes him appear to be dissatisfied against the American government. He is chosen to be a patsy in a plot. He is decoyed to make it seem as though Cuban leader, Fidel Castro, is "scheming to kill Kennedy. Even the conspirators do not know that Kennedy is to die on that fateful day in Dallas, Texas" (88). The following extract illuminates the point:

Oswald does not know he is not the single shooter until he sees the assassination of a president through his rifle scope. Libra is a complicated look at an often analyzed event that gives readers a sympathetic look at a traditional enemy. Walter 'Win' Everett Jr. meets with two friends from his days in the CIA, Larry Parmenter and T-Jay Mackey. All three men have been forced out of the CIA in one way or another. (287)

Win brings these men who have unconscious leaning to communist spirit. They might be able to repair their reputations. They regain their positions within the CIA. Win suggests that Kennedy would be forced to reevaluate his stance on Cuba if he believed Fidel Castro attempts to have him assassinated. Win suggests that they plan and execute an attempted assassination on the president during a motorcade in Miami.

New historicism focuses not only on discourse, power and truth but equally on marginal issues. It critically analyzes narrative of high politic and deconstructs the hierarchy existing in history and foregrounds the suppressive hierarchic existing in history and foregrounds the suppressive hierarchical narrative of marginalized group like such as women, poor, working class people and so on. The historical narratives of some groups are becoming more and more numerous such as those of women and people of color.

Discourse is Foucauldian concept in which he connects the ideas of knowledge and power. Discourse is a discipline which departs away from linguistic concept of structuralist, formalist and communicative approach. Foucauldian idea of discourse is such approach which “gears towards a counter-reading of historical and social condition. Discourse creates power which ultimately creates knowledge that is truth. Discourse is always in the process of formation, correlation and transformation which take place after certain event.

Subjectivity or selfhood is identified by culture that is the product of society. Subjectivity or selfhood is guided by ideology formed in society. Subjectivity is shaped by and shapes the culture into which subject is born. Individual identity is not merely the product of society. Neither is it merely a product of individual will and desires. Instead, individual identity and cultural milieu reflect and define each other. Foucault attempts to trace the proximity between the thematic of repression and the microphysics of power.

The way power operates in a subtle and silent way is dubbed by Foucault as the microphysics of power. Any cynical notion of power hardly fits into the procrustean bed of the microphysics of power. Foucault projects the disembodied and diffused notion of power. He makes the following remarks about Foucault’s treatment of power:

First and most generally, power is not simply punitive—it does not just deny, silence, restrain. Power can also be, in fact need also be productive; a purely cynical form of power would never last. Although we have come to accept confession as a liberating revolt against the silence of the Great Repression, confession is itself a form of the subtle

workings of power, one that in fact promotes discussion and analysis of sexuality. (1)

What is required is not a theory but rather an analytic of power. It must free itself from the juridico-discursive representation of power. This power governs both the thematic of repression and the theory of the law as constitutive of desire. Foucault's explanation for the popularity of the juridical notion of power neglects everything. It makes for its productive effectiveness, its strategic resourcefulness. Power is only accepted as a pure limit set on freedom. It is a capping of freedom.

Win's plan includes finding "a person they can manipulate and cause to appear as a disgruntled American who would be susceptible to assassinating the president on behalf of Castro" (298). This person would fire a few shots at the president and then be arrested, giving the "government someone to blame for the incident, thus protecting the three conspirators from further investigation" (252). The following extract is helpful in understanding the truth involved in the ploy and politics of CIA strategy:

After his active service in the Marines, Oswald travels to Russia and announces his intentions to defect. Oswald's petition to defect to Russia is accepted and he is debriefed regarding the U2 aircraft. When a U2 plane crashed in Russia and the pilot id recovered, Oswald is brought back to Moscow to help the Russians interrogate the pilot. Oswald soon becomes disillusioned with Russia and returns to America with his new wife and daughter. Back in America, Oswald finds it difficult to find a job to help support his family. (281)

Oswald seeks to set up a contact with a friend he made in the Marines. They are both prisoners in military prison. With this friend, Oswald learns about the political stand

of General Walker. Oswald and his friend, Bobby Dupard, plot to "assassinate Walker. On the fateful night in April, the same night three CIA agents plot to make an attempt on Kennedy's life, Oswald takes a shot at Walker and misses" (254).

Foucault did not believe there was any purpose for society and all laws are unnecessary. Foucault takes man and woman simply as the effects of prevailing social practices, codes and disciplines. Since no normative or natural code exist to guide man and his collective activities, human beings find themselves in deadlock if they are solely driven by Foucauldian thought.

If sovereign power or sovereign state exists, only then the question of overthrowing it with suitable alternative comes. Foucault delivers the following views regarding how thought of Foucault weakens the power of revolution:

It is precisely the idea of society as a system, a set of institutions that must give way to something. To abolish power systems is to abolish both moral and scientific categories. Man is a free human subject is a subject of a certain sort, naturally good, warmly sociable, kind and loving. Men and women are always social creations, the products of codes and disciplines. (61)

Man and woman is the product of social relations. They happen to get new insight and vision to go against establishment and status quo. The same system gives birth to a new consciousness which is subversive. This question deserves deeper contemplation.

Foucault has not given explanation about how a new vision and idea arise against that very system out of which these new vision and idea arise. Foucault's thought does not inculcate belief in the possibility of revolution. Those who want to launch revolution should have firm footing in normative principles. But Foucault has

already sabotaged normative values. Foucault's thought does not seem to be conducive to revolution.

On the day of the assassination, three trained assassins arrive on the scene. One focuses "a high-powered rifle on the motorcade while another takes off for another assignment and the other waits in the car. The assassin fires at the motorcade after each of Oswald's shots" (244). Oswald witnesses the murder of President Kennedy through his own rifle scope. Panicked, it "takes a great effort for Oswald to leave the School Book Depository without arousing suspicion in a police officer searching the building. Oswald goes to his boarding house to retrieve his handgun before his meeting with Ferrie at a movie theater takes place"(257). On his way, Oswald is stopped by a police officer. Panicked again, Oswald shoots and kills the officer. The following extract throws light on the post-assassination scene of immediacy:

In the movie theater, Oswald waits for Ferrie. However, Oswald is not aware that another assassin is sitting behind him, waiting for a particularly noisy moment in the movie to kill him. Before this can happen, however, police arrive at the theater and take Oswald into custody. Oswald is beaten, booked, and interrogated over and over before being paraded in front of the press. Among the press is Jack Ruby, a local strip club owner who is known as a friend to the local police. (292)

Ruby closes his clubs the weekend after the assassination in respect for his president. As Ruby grieves alone for his president, he is approached by a mob enforcer. He threatens to take Ruby's clubs for outstanding debts. On this day, however, the mob enforcer offers to forgive Ruby's debts if he would assassinate Oswald. Ruby agrees.

He believes this will make him a hero. Instead, Ruby finds that he will forever be tied to the man who killed the president.

Productive power at the back of the various discursive representation of manifold sexuality is unknowingly and steadily harmful. It blocks the resistance from below. In the formation of manifold sexuality, the interest, emotions and basic expectation of the excluded group are not accommodated. The rebellious concern of those who resist from below is stunted and almost reduced to the level of dysfunctionality.

Discourse is produced in struggle between internal and external. It is used to gain and sometimes to subvert the power position in discursive hierarchies that can change with one discourse taking over the supreme position of another. So, he is interested in the process of how discursive practices change over time. He rethinks the concept of discourse as designating not merely knowledge and disciplines but also transformable units of history. The discursive practices, however, have no universal validity but are historically dominant ways of controlling and preserving social relations of exploitation.

All discourses are production of power. Discourse moves in as the flows of power. It cannot move outside the limits of power. Discourse, for Foucault, is interpretation. Complete interpretation is impossible. Foucault believes that discourses are deeply rooted in social institution and that in other words power function just in presence of knowledge and truth. All sorts of disciplines like social, moral, religious and political control the space of discourse. Discourse means to achieve power more than this discourse cannot be separated from power.

New Historicism is in effect "a profoundly narcissistic method" (Montrose 46). It applies its own standards to the rhetoric of the past in the hope of releasing

genuine historical truths, but in so doing always finds a reflection of itself. As Liu suggests, "New Historicism fails to understand the past on its own terms because it does not achieve a proper understanding "of rhetoric, or more broadly, of language as a historically situated event" (8). Thus, the various voices that are incorporated into new historicist writing are drowned out by a more powerful rhetoric that has no proper appreciation of their difference.

In the Bronx, Lee Oswald and his mother, Marguerite, live in the Bronx. Marguerite has "been married multiple times, once abandoned, once widowed, and once divorced by a man who cheated her out of a reasonable settlement"(296). Marguerite continues to hold a grudge against her last husband, "blaming him for the struggles she and her youngest child, Lee, have had to suffer since he abandoned the family. Lee does not attend school regularly, but Marguerite feels she can do nothing to make him go" (298). The following narrative account aims at giving a new color to the clarity of historical truth:

Lee Oswald is living with his mother in New Orleans now. Lee continues to be bullied by classmates, as it witnessed by the beating he has taken as the chapter opens. Lee has one good friend, however, a boy named Robert Sproul. Lee spends a great deal of time at the New Orleans library, reading such books as *Das Kapital* and the *Communist Manifesto*. Lee becomes fascinated by Leon Trotsky as well as everything Russian. Lee and his mother, Marguerite, often argue as Lee enters adolescence. (299)

Lee sees that his mother often gets fired over dumb things. Her refusal to wear deodorant invites the threat of immediate dismissal. Marguerite often points out to Lee the good things she has done for him. Win thinks about the plot for nearly a

week. He reviews the president's schedule. He decides that it would make the most sense to make the attempt on his life during a motorcade in Miami.

Win is under the impression that if his plan is a success, it will be revealed to the public that Kennedy had wanted Castro. His attempted assassination is a direct result of this. At the same time, Parmenter meets with George de Mohrenschildt. George is a business man who speaks many languages. He is known to be debriefed by the CIA after many of his business trips abroad. During this meeting, de Mohrenschildt tells Parmenter about a young man in Dallas whom he believes is responsible for the attempted assassination of General Walker. The following extract adds further clarity to the post-assassination scenario:

Lee Oswald is stationed in Atsugi, Japan. Oswald, or Ozzie as his bunkmates call him, is on base watching as a U-2 plane lands. Lee and his companions are amazed by the unique, high-flying plane. Lee spends a lot of time in the base library, struggling through his dyslexia to read. One night Lee meets a young woman named Mitsuko that a bunkmate told him about. They have a sexual relationship for several months, leading to Lee meeting Konno, a friend of Mitsuko. (298)

Konno and Lee often talk about socialism. These ideological temptations appeal to Lee. His fascination with Communism seems to have paved the way that does not play a definite role. One night, Lee tells Konno about the U-2 plane. Lee tests Konno, trying to find out how much he knows about such things. Lee keeps back a few details, giving himself some leverage.

Larry Parmenter travels to the CIA training base in Virginia. He visits with T-Jay Mackey. Parmenter tells T-Jay about Oswald. He includes his sharp shooter record in the military, his wife, and political inclinations. Parmenter then instructs T-

Jay that Win wants the presidential limousine to be hit and a Secret Service man wounded, but to not kill anyone. Parmenter also tells T-Jay that "they will hit the president in Miami during a motorcade. After Parmenter leaves T-Jay returns to his trailer and meets with Frank Vasquez and Raymo, two Cuban exiles T-Jay has worked with in the past" (299). They tell T-Jay what it has been like working as migrant workers throughout the south. The following extract illustrates Oswald's ideological leaning in USSR:

Lee Oswald arrives in Russia and immediately begins attempting to find a way to remain. When his visa is about to expire, Lee visits both the Russian Ministry offices to ask for permission to remain.

Unfortunately, Lee is told that he will have to leave. In response, Lee attempts to kill himself by cutting his wrist. Lee is hospitalized for a time and then moved to a hotel that the government has arranged for him. Lee waits for something to happen, but when it does not he goes to the American Embassy. (301)

Lee tells the American Embassy that he wants to defect to Russia. He plans to share secret military information with them. Lee then leaves his passport with the Embassy. Lee Oswald has been given a job at a plant in Minsk working as a metalworker. In Oswald's first months there, a U-2 plane crashes in Russia. The pilot is supposed to blow up the sensitive items in the plane and kill himself, but the pilot does neither of these things.

The government interviews the pilot. He insists that his plane is flying at sixty-five-thousand feet. The government officials do not believe him because of Oswald's testimony that the plane can fly much higher. For this reason, Kirilenko has Oswald brought from Minsk to be present during "the interrogation of the pilot. Oswald

assures them that the pilot is telling the truth. Oswald misunderstands how high the planes can fly" (302). The following extract reveals unexamined side of assassination:

T-Jay is in Norfolk with an Asian prostitute. T-Jay has come to the conclusion that he does not trust any of his co-conspirators and the final result will be something only he will know ahead of time. Later, T-Jay drives to Miami and gives Wayne Elko his assignment in the plot, one that will take him nowhere near the president, but in a more intimate situation. In Denton, Win Everett listens to his daughter read before bedtime. (310)

Everett is aware that his plot has taken on a life of itself. But he is unconcerned by this. Downstairs, Everett listens to his wife's concerns about their daughter's recent odd behaviors. Lee Oswald and his wife, Marina, are now living in Fort Worth with Lee's brother Robert. Lee Oswald is separated from his wife, so he goes to a Laundromat to do his laundry. Lee realizes the laundry attendant is his old cell mate, Bobby Dupard.

Lee and Dupard get to know one another once again. After a few days they begin talking about General Walker, "an outspoken opponent to civil rights and Fidel Castro. Lee and Dupard decide to assassinate Walker. Lee orders a revolver through the mail using the name A. J. Hidell" (311). Lee also begins attending a typing class. He is afraid he is about to lose his job for lack of information to Collings. Lee and Dupard continue to get together. They plan the assassination. A few months after ordering the .38, Lee orders a 6.5 millimeter rifle, a Manlicher-Carcano.

Narrative shift brings a new layer of ambiguity in the hinted historical reality. Ferrie tells Lee about a bar in Dallas where he should go when he returns. In Dallas, Ruby goes into work where he meets with Tony Astorina. Ruby hopes "Astorina can

help him get a new loan from Carmine Latta to save his business, but Astorina offers him no help. Instead Astorina talks about a lover JFK has been rumored to have stolen from a mobster" (321). In New Orleans, Banister talks to Ferrie about Oswald. He instructs him to fly Oswald to Miami the night before the appointed time.

Ferrie asks what will happen if Oswald refuses to help. Banister tells him they will create their own Oswald. Lee Oswald is given the runaround by the Cuban Embassy. The president and his wife arrive at Love Field surrounded by excited people calling their names. The Kennedys are quickly put into their car along with the Texas governor, Connally, and his wife. Lee Oswald is waiting for the motorcade in the Texas School Book Depository with the rifle he used to fire at General Walker.

Lee fires three times and is sure he hit Connally and possibly JFK in the neck. However, Lee is watching through his rifle scope when JFK is hit in the head. Unbeknown to him, Raymo is firing from the grassy knoll on the other side of the plaza. Lee suddenly realizes he has been used as a patsy. DeLillo's retelling of history of the assassination of Kennedy is more than a question of excessive myth or productive decentering. It delves into the deepest aspects of human nature and the formation of identity, the larger questions that many do not want to address.

Memory and its representations touch very significantly upon questions of identity, nationalism, of power and authority. Far from being a neutral exercise in facts and basic truths the study of history, DeLillo's postmodern retelling of history becomes more than creative literary technique. The crux of his work lies in the nature of identity formation. The suggestion that identity formation is based upon a myth of nationhood is not easily accepted by the subject promoting the myths or by the subjected who is searching for identity.

To conclude, it can be said that *Libra* is always strongly connected to the history and politics of America although it is a fiction. DeLillo uses different methods and he treats the facts loosely, interprets them in his own way. The characters and events in this novel are realistic but they are very often involved in far-fetched events and situations. The whole story of *Libra* serves as a metaphor itself to rewrite the history, politics, conspiracies and several critical struggles.

III. History as a Construct

The core finding of this research is that media, virtual space and yellow journalism produce detrimental and deadening effects in those who followed unduly its cult and spree. DeLillo's *Libra* documents some of the cases of how human dignity and decent concern for creativity are badly affected by youths' uncritical and excessive indulgence in practice of cyber culture. Certain version of truth regarding Kennedy's assassination comes in veiled form in this novel. This research looks into this aspect from the angle of new historicism. This novel presents dramatically the worst effects caused by the unrestrained immersion and assimilation of practice of media like virtual space, television, simulated reality and artificial means of entertainment.

The spaces create a virtual reality in which people have different perceptions of everything. As soon as they leave this hyper real place, they start feeling sad. People start to feel estranged from reality. Deep down, people know that this sense of ecstasy and euphoria created by technology is short-lived. Soon they are through with the delirium of TV, the cinema or the supermarket. They return to the real, which is dreadful. *Libra* is about the influence and identification of the general public with the famous personalities.

Oswald finds many coincidences of his and President Kennedy's life. Sometimes he would force coincidences, as he did at the time of the shooting. Oswald believes that the chance passing of Kennedy's motorcade below the window. He works as the Texas School Book Depository in Dallas, must mean that he is destined to shoot the President. By shooting Kennedy, Oswald takes revenge against all the famous men. He blames for confining him to small rooms or the life he had been living. *Libra* also highlights the role of the media.

After the assassination Oswald faces imprisonment. He is satisfied with the feeling that though his body is in prison. His name is carried by radio and TV stations across the world. This charged him with strength. He feels proud as he has displaced media attention from the President himself. He could not help occupying Kennedy's place in the limelight. The narrative center inevitably belongs to Lee Harvey Oswald. He is the alienated person fed on tough-guy fantasies. He ingests without care from television and film. He is determined to become part of history. DeLillo is not interested in solving the shooting of the president so much as examining the process of solution itself.

John F. Kennedy is referred to as America's first television president in recognition of his skills of using media to get elected and become popular. Moreover, it is the effect of media and its repeated replays of Kennedy's assassination. Ruby anticipates for himself the star treatment which he will receive as Kennedy's avenger. The tension between what is real and what is artificial is stressed again. Jack repeatedly asserts that the snakes are real, that he is real, and that death is real.

After watching the distressing simulation, Jack's need to profess and defend the existence of some kind of tangible, intelligible reality becomes increasingly desperate. The authentic and the artificial often blur together. Substance seems interchangeable with surface. This confusion between appearance and reality represents an essential part of Jack's own existence. Although Jack has created a venerable, he remains painfully aware of the total fabrication of this character.

Thus, it can be summed up that DeLillo's *Libra* foregrounds the unexpected effects which can arise from an individual's unrestrained immersion and engagement in the cult of handling life dictated by institutions of virtual space and narcissism. Since no normative ethics and values are credited by doctrine of politics, limelight

and glamour, unrestrained immersion in the ethos of the ideology of pacifism leads to the degradation of an individual's psyche. It also invites the dread of hitherto uncommitted crime.

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