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CREATION OF SUSPENSE IN THE NOVELS *DAN LENO AND
THE LIMEHOUSE GOLEM AND THE HOUSE OF DOCTOR
DEE*

WRITTEN BY PETER ACKROYD

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DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

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MA THESIS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the crime novels *Dan Leno and The Limehouse Golem* and *The House of Doctor Dee* written by renowned British writer Peter Ackroyd in view of Critical Discourse Analysis developed by Norman Fairclough. These novels include the main themes of social inequality, gender discrimination, sexual violence, the evil sides of human beings, and religious and mystical aspects such as ghosts and angels. From the perspective of critical discourse analysis, these themes and the creation of suspense and identity in these crime novels are examined. The use of certain techniques such as the use of foreseeing, delay of the events uncovering the reality, and reference made to people connected with political, mythological, and social events through intertextuality is discussed. So, the scope of this study includes the theoretical background of crime novels, the basic components of critical discourse analysis, the use of suspense as a strategy to raise the interest of readers, the relationship between discourse and identity, and the use of intertextuality. Finally, the analyses of the novels involving two different types of crime, murder and sexual abuse of a child, are presented in the light of the information presented in the theoretical background.

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PETER ACKROYD 'UN *DAN LENO AND THE LIMEHOUSE GOLEM* VE *THE HOUSE OF DOCTOR DEE* ADLI ROMANLARINDA GERİLİMİN YARATILIŞI

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ÖZET

Bu çalışma, ünlü İngiliz yazar Peter Ackroyd tarafından kaleme alınan *Dan Leno ve The Limehouse Golem* ve *the House of Doctor Dee* adlı polisiye romanlarını Norman Fairclough tarafından geliştirilen Eleştirel Söylem Analizi ışığında incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu romanlar toplumsal eşitsizlik, cinsiyet ayrımcılığı, cinsel şiddet, insanın kötücül yanları, hayaletler ve melekler gibi dini ve mistik unsurları ana tema olarak içermektedir. Eleştirel söylem analizi perspektifinden bu temalar ve bu polisiye romanlarda gerilim ve kimlik yaratımı incelenmiştir. Öngörü kullanımı, gerçekliği ortaya çıkaran olayların geciktirilmesi, metinlerarasılık yoluyla siyasi, mitolojik ve sosyal olaylarla bağlantılı kişilere yapılan göndermeler gibi belirli tekniklerin kullanımı tartışılmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışmanın kapsamı, polisiye romanların teorik arka planını, eleştirel söylem analizinin temel bileşenlerini, okuyucuların ilgisini çekmek için bir strateji olarak gerilimin kullanımını, söylem ve kimlik arasındaki ilişkiyi ve metinlerarasılığın kullanımını içerir. Son olarak, iki farklı suç türünü, cinayet ve çocuğun cinsel istismarını içeren romanların analizleri, teorik arka planda sunulan bilgiler ışığında sunulmaktadır.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Although its background dates back to early myths such as Oedipus and Medea, crime novels emerged as a literary genre in the 19th century and gained enormous popularity. Its main themes are mostly crimes, criminals, and the motives behind criminal acts. The word ‘crime’, which comes originally from Latin, means ‘to judge’ and in this genre not just the person responsible for the investigation of the crime but also the reader acts like a judge and is involved in the process of discovering the criminals. As a literary form, it aims to explore the darker sides of society and challenge societal norms through the identification of wrongdoers in reality. It has a basic structure in which first a crime is committed, then an investigation is started and finally a resolution is reached when the criminal is discovered.

Suspense is a crucial element in crime novels to captivate readers’ attention and create a sense of anticipation. It is activated through closely related concepts of curiosity and surprise. The reader is engaged with the question “What happens next?” throughout the narrative by employing techniques like delay, foreseeing, and events building tension. Crime novels make use of suspense to maintain reader interest and drive the plot forward.

This study aims to examine two crime novels written by the prolific British author Peter Ackroyd in terms of the components of crime novels. The topics tackled in the novels are analysed in view of the explanations made by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) put forward by Norman Fairclough (1992, 2013). This theoretical framework takes language into focus point and looks at how language reflects ideologies and power relations in society. CDA aims to uncover hidden power structures embedded in language.

Another important issue concerning CDA is identity construction. Language use plays a crucial role in forming and expressing identities in society. It enables individuals to display various aspects of their identities through their linguistic choices. So, as a part of Critical Discourse Analysis, identity construction plays an important role.

Authors rely on early literature and make reference to prior texts or literary figures when they produce their works. This is a process called intertextuality and it is quite important in literary works since it gives an idea about changes in society and also contributes to the development of plot structure. By incorporating other people’s words and expressions, texts become intertextual with further messages relating to the original work and hence include rich content.

In view of the concepts and theoretical background mentioned above, this study aims to investigate the use of crime as an element highlighting wrongdoings and social problems. With this purpose in mind, it studies two crime novels *Dan Leno and the Limehouse Golem* and *The House of Doctor Dee* written by the well-known, award-winning British author Peter Ackroyd. The discourse used in these novels is analysed critically to reveal the motives behind the commitment of crimes and the presentation of the topics to the readers in an intriguing manner. In addition to the first chapter introducing the purpose of the study, there are three more chapters whose organization is as follows:

The second chapter of the study informs the reader about the theoretical background starting with the crime novel and its historical development. Striking features of crime novels are also introduced and listed. As a main component of crime novels, suspense creation is explained in a separate section in the second chapter. Critical Discourse Analysis is explicated by drawing upon the framework Fairclough put forward. The relationship between discourse and identity is briefly explained since it has its function in CDA. Finally, as a technique used in literature, intertextuality is mentioned in this chapter.

The third chapter presents the analysis of the novels under examination as distinct sections. The characters and plot structures along with the main topics handled in the novels are discussed with some extracts taken from novels. Relying on CDA the hidden messages conveyed to the reader are uncovered in this chapter.

The final chapter includes the conclusions drawn from the analyses. The key points identified in the analysis are highlighted and the importance of the study with reference to socio-cultural aspects is discussed.

CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Crime Novels

Crime fiction is a genre that focuses on crimes committed in a literary work and attempts to detect them, identify criminals, and explore the motives giving way to the commitment of crime. The word ‘crime’ comes from Latin etymologically. The original form of the word is *cernere*, which means ‘to judge’. Later it changed its form slightly and became *crimen* referring to ‘judgment and offence’. Later it was used in the old French in the form of *crimne*. In the Middle English period, it was borrowed from Old French as ‘crime’ and used in the sense of ‘wickedness, sin’. In the contemporary definition, it refers to “an action or omission which constitutes an offense and is punishable by law” and is defined as “illegal activities”. It is also described as “an action or activity considered to be evil, shameful, or wrong” (Oxford Languages, <https://languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/>).

As a literary genre, most crime novels have a basic structure going from the commitment of a crime, usually involving a murder, then there is the investigation for finding the guilty person, and finally the revelation of the criminal or criminals and having the outcome, in other words, judgment in the form of the arrest of the criminals or the death of the guilty person (https://www.findmeanauthor.com/crime_fiction.htm). Apart from crime novels, the terms crime fiction, detective story, murder mystery, police novel, and mystery novel are used to classify the works having the structure mentioned above.

Crime fiction is generally different from mainstream fiction and hence it is easily distinguished from other genres such as historical fiction, fantasy fiction, science fiction, etc. but it does not mean that its boundary is not definite. Due to its flexibility as a genre, it is quite appealing to readers. It gives different messages to different people depending on the time they read the works. Although it has evolved in time and had some subgenres and forms such as detective fiction, legal thriller, suspense thrillers, courtroom drama, private eye, etc., it has kept the usual techniques of fiction theme, character, tension, narrative structure, and so on (https://www.findmeanauthor.com/crime_fiction.htm). The aim of this genre has been set as the exploration of the darker aspects of the society and revelation of the breach of societal norms with the punishment given to the people doing that.

Contemporary crime fiction has the feature of thematic and stylistic complexity and this helps it continue its popularity as a genre. Parallel to the developments in the literary

movements, crime fiction has expanded the themes addressed by integrating taboo topics having a wide range with sexual assault, abuses of power in the domains of policy, society, religion, environmental crime, and so on. Contemporary crime novels represent not only the brutal realities experienced in social and political cultures but also the secret aspects of human psychology. It has even been criticized for dealing with extreme violence and taboo. Fister in 'Copycat Crimes' referring to imitated crimes draws attention to the provision of explanatory narratives in crime fiction: "Crime fiction is popular in part because it addresses our anxieties by taking us beyond the surface of things into its depths, attributing meaning and pattern to elements of the story, suggesting the mysteries of human behaviour can be solved" (Fisher, 2005, p. 45, cited in Beyer, 2021, p. 6).

2.1.1 A Historical Overview of Crime Novels

Although there were many early myths or novels including crime inside such as *Oedipus* (Scaggs, 2005, p. 10) and *Medea*, Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* published in 1798, or Gothic novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy, crime novels were not considered as a distinct genre until the 19th century (Rzepka, 2010, p. 1). The roots of the crime novel can be traced back to the early 19th century, a period marked by immense social upheaval and rapid urbanization, giving birth to an interest in the darker aspects of human nature. Thus, the genre emerged as an influential means of exploring themes of morality, legality, and identity, resonating with the public's increasing curiosity about crime and criminal psychology. Edgar Allan Poe's story '*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*', which was published in 1841, is accepted as the first example of a crime story. After this early attempt in the United States (Saggs, 2005; Schmid, 2010, p. 200), as a new genre it was seen in Great Britain and France and became a new kind of literature by the beginning of the 19th century. One of the earliest and most influential forms of crime fiction was the "sensation novel," which gained popularity during the Victorian era in Britain. Writers such as Wilkie Collins and Mary Elizabeth Braddon pioneered this genre, blending elements of mystery and psychological drama with social commentary. Collins' *The Woman in White* (1859) and Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862) are seminal works that set the stage for the development of crime fiction, combining intricate plots with explorations of societal norms and personal motivations. The genre continued to evolve with the advent of detective fiction in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Crime narratives strengthened their positions as literary art in the 1920s because of the works produced by Edmund Pearson. Pearson wrote and collected books in the early years

following the footsteps of Thomas De Quincey. He published true crime stories in his work *Studies in Murder* published in 1924 and ended with *More Studies in Murder* in 1936. He advocated the concept of criminal responsibility and rejected the concept of the insanity defence on the ground that criminals should not be seen as monsters being different from ordinary people. He has expressed his views as follows:

“Most of the folk who have committed murder are not insane; they are “nastily like ourselves,” and their dreadful deed only represents something that, under certain circumstances, we might have done. The plea of insanity may be raised to save a guilty man, or it may be only a cry of horror to prove that there is a wide difference between the wicked murderers and ourselves, – virtuous folk that we are!” (Pearson 1930, pp. 26 – 7, cited in Schmid, 2010, p. 202)

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who lived between 1880 and 1920, has a special place in the historical development of crime novels. Having worked as a medical practitioner, he invented the stories of the well-known detective Sherlock Holmes. The mysteries solved by Holmes have increased the popularity of crime novels as a special type of literature. In Britain, Sherlock Holmes stories were published in a monthly magazine in serial form and captivated the readers’ attention quickly in different parts of the world. It had such a huge reader group that when Doyle presented Holmes’s death in *The Final Problem* there was a great outcry from the public. For that reason and also because of the offers coming from the publishers, he reluctantly resurrected him. Wilkie Collins’ novel *The Moonston*, published in 1868, was also important in solidifying the popularity of detective stories (Rzepka, 2010, p. 5).

In the development of crime novels, the British author Agatha Christie has a prominent place, as well. As a person with a strong educational background and experience working as a nurse in World War I, she wrote her detective novels with plots including elaborate puzzles (Rzepka, 2010, p. 2; Makinen, 2010, p. 416). She created famous characters such as Miss Jane Marple, and Hercule Poirot (Gates, 2010, p. 345) solving the mysteries. Dorothy Sayers is another female writer producing works in the field of detective fiction. She created a character Lord Peter Wimsey who is haunted by the awful experience he had in World War I (Horsley, 2010, p. 32). Towards the end of the twentieth century, as expressed by Schmid (2010), crime literature has turned into a “pop culture” item expanding its popularity and not losing its place.

2.1.2 Main Features of Crime Novels

In writing crime novels, authors generally take some standard features into account. These features involve the basic components that should exist in a mystery situation. The main element is the crime committed in the novel. As a typical form of crime, murder is the central theme handled in crime novels. It is the starting point for the story and the plot develops around it to solve the puzzle relating to the criminal. W. H. Auden draws attention to this aspect in his essay “The Guilty Vicarage” published in 1948. “A problem of puzzle” is presented to the readers in a detective novel and they, together with the author, participate in the activity of solving the mystery associated with the crime.

The crime in the form of a puzzle is solved with the help of intellectual reasoning by the detective or the character having the position of the detective in the plot structure. The suspects connected with the event of mystery are interrogated directly or indirectly and the truth is uncovered at the end of the story. In the organization of crime novels, readers are also given the role of detective to find the guilty person. They gather the clues and information they need to solve the puzzle created in the story.

Sometimes, as in the hard-boiled detective novel, the aim is not to discover the truth but to display a social problem in a corrupted world. For example, organized crime involving mafia or gangsters, political agents being corrupted, and social problems such as economic difficulties, social injustice, and gender and racial discrimination, etc. are highlighted rather than emphasizing the mystery solution. To make this point clear, Raymond Chandler writes the following lines in his article “The Simple Art of Murder” published in 1950:

The realist in murder writes of a world in which gangsters can rule nations and almost rule cities, in which hotels and apartment houses and celebrated restaurants are owned by rich men who made their money out of brothels, in which a screen star can be the finger man for a mob, and the nice man down the hall is a boss of the numbers racket; a world where a judge with a cellar full of bootleg liquor can send a man to jail for having a pint in his pocket, where the mayor of your town may have condoned murder as an instrument of money making, where no man can walk down a dark street in safety because law and order are things we talk about but refrain from practising; a world where you may witness a hold-up in broad daylight and see who did it, but you will fade quickly back into the crowd rather than tell anyone, because the hold-up men may have friends with long guns, or the police may not like your testimony, and in any case the shyster for the defence will be allowed to abuse and vilify you in open court, before

a jury of selected morons, without any but the most perfunctory interference from a political judge. – (Chandler, 1950, p. 4).

A second component of crime novels is the existence of an investigation. It is the driving force for the solution of the crime. The person carrying out the investigation can be a professional detective or investigator as well as an amateur person acting like a detective to conduct the investigation. In Christie's detective fiction, a person from the upper class or with an intellectual background can act as a detective. Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple have these positions in their novels (Scaggs, 2005).

The detective must put all the clues scattered to the different parts of the story in the narrative together and solve the crime. This person is usually an outsider observing events and identifying the social structures from a certain distance without any bound to them. The person having the role of detective can be both a hero and an anti-hero. That is to say, this person may have the role of restoring the order but s/he can possess characteristics that do not correspond to societal norms (Scaggs, 2005).

A third feature is the suspense built into the plot to keep the attention of readers alive. Using various literary devices such as foreshadowing, and various points of view, suspense is created and not just the real criminal but also some potential criminals are formed to point out that the person is responsible for the crime. Crime novels focus on the motivations for crime from multiple perspectives, and therefore, the characters are deeply investigated as regards their psychology and lifestyles. The reason behind the crime can be an internal conflict arising from past traumas and societal pressures. In contemporary crime fiction, fragmented identity and lack of morality are presented to the readers to blur the distinction between hero and villain (Knight, 2004).

The fourth feature is associated with the sub-genre of crime novels. There are various sub-genres as listed above and they are supposed to include the main elements of the sub-genre. For example, a gangster fiction will have a character who is a gangster and will be in a situation of committing crime for the purpose of having power against the rival gangs. Similarly, an espionage fiction will include a character being a spy. This person usually faces difficult situations that have the possibility of revealing her/his real identity to the antagonists (studysmarter, crime, fiction, <https://www.studysmarter.co.uk/explanations/english-literature/literary-devices/crime-fiction/>).

Finally, in crime novels, there is an expectation to solve the crime through the clues and structure used in the narrative. The aim is to bring justice by catching or identifying the guilty person (studysmarter, crime, fiction, <https://www.studysmarter.co.uk/explanations/english-literature/literary-devices/crime-fiction/>). The guilty party can be social systems or norms that cannot be punished but changed or at least exposed to the public after the evil event taking place in the crime novel. Then the flawed system and the societal misconduct can be blamed.

2.2 Suspense Creation

Suspense is an essential part of certain literary genres to capture the attention of readers. It has been accepted as one of the universals of narrative along with curiosity and surprise (Jacobs and Lüdtke, 2017, p. 75). It is described as a feature that is the opposite of boredom or relaxation and connected with the emotions of fear and hope (Reisenzein, 2009, cited in Jacobs and Lüdtke, 2017, p. 76). It has various forms ranging from ‘mini-suspense’ to ‘overall suspense’. It is reported that texts experienced as suspenseful activate the brain areas relating to the processes of mentalizing, predictive inference, and cognitive control (Jacobs and Lüdtke, 2017, p. 76). It is put together with curiosity and surprise because they are interwoven in texts with a chain of events and readers are exposed to them with the question ‘What happens next?’ in their mind (Jacobs and Lüdtke, 2017, p. 90). It is considered an example of a top-down attention-leading factor (Tan et al., 2017, p. 107).

Suspense scenes contained in narratives have three elements that can be listed as initiating event, outcome event, and delay. The Structural-Affect Theory put forward by Brewer and Lichtenstein (1982, cited in Bálint, Kuijpers, and Doicaru, 2017, p. 178) explains that an initiating event is a trigger for setting the expectation relating to a relevant outcome’s occurrence. These expectations and the uncertainty associated with them give way to the creation of a high level of interest and tension in readers. Delay emerges as a technique increasing the tension and interest as readers want to learn the outcome event. Through the insertion of other events, the process whereby the outcome event is reached is delayed. Relying on this structure, a distinction is made between *diegetic* and *non-diegetic delay*. In the first case, the outcome event is postponed with inserts related to the story. In the second circumstance, elements external to the outcome event, such as a voice-over narrator, are used (Bálint, Kuijpers, and Doicaru, 2017, p. 178).

As a specific type of suspense, felt suspense is an experience relating to foreseen events that have not taken place yet. The source of felt suspense is readers’ expectations about the outcome

of a story. Felt suspense and narrative absorption are related to each other since the former affects the latter. They increase the level of attention paid to the text and the enjoyment taken from the text. Both of them include readers' emotional engagement with characters (Bálint, Kuijpers and Doicaru, 2017, pp. 179-180).

Among the genres in which suspense plays a key role, crime novels and thrillers take the lead because of their plot structures which involve the excitement and interest readers need to keep on going. In narratives, raising questions in the minds of readers will activate the feeling of interest and delaying the presentation of answers will sustain suspense. After making this explanation, Lodge distinguishes the questions raised into two specific kinds; questions dealing with "causality" and questions focusing on "temporality". The first type of question is related to 'whodunnit?', whereas the second type's concern is something like 'what will happen next?' The former is usually asked in the detective stories and the latter is typically seen in the adventure story (Lodge, 1992, pp. 14-15, cited in Iwata 2008, p. 19).

Toolan (2001, cited in Iwata 2008, p. 22) dealt with suspense by concentrating on the plot and identified the following condition pairs for suspense creation in terms of plot-dependent situations:

a. the narrative 'forks' in a Barthean sense of reaching a point of development where very few (often just two) alternative continuations or outcomes is [sic] highly predictable, so that one or two (just a few) narrative completions are clearly 'foreseen' by the reader.

b. at this point of narrative forking between broadly predictable completions, both or all such completions are 'withheld': the disclosure of just which completion obtains in the present narrative is noticeably delayed, beyond its earliest reasonable report. (p. 100)

As mentioned above, one more time the factor of foreseeability besides narrative forks and delayed outcomes has been given as a key factor for the creation of suspense.

Aside from these core factors, Peter Ackroyd employs several narrative techniques that significantly contribute to the creation of suspense in his novels. Among these are foreshadowing, fragmented narrative structure, atmospheric setting, unreliable narrators, the use of myth and legend, and intense characterization and relational dynamics. Each technique plays a vital role in sustaining tension and deepening the reader's emotional engagement with the story.

Ackroyd's use of foreshadowing is particularly effective in building suspense. By planting subtle clues early in the narrative, he hints at future events, creating a sense of anticipation and uncertainty. These hints encourage readers to question the outcome, increasing their emotional investment in the unfolding of the plot.

The fragmented narrative structure is another key element. By disrupting the linear progression of events, Ackroyd introduces a sense of disorientation and mystery, encouraging readers to piece together the fragmented story. This technique delays crucial information and keeps readers on edge as they try to understand how various narrative threads will ultimately converge. The atmospheric setting in Ackroyd's novels further intensifies the suspense. His vivid, often unsettling descriptions of place - whether set in the foggy streets of London or in eerie, historical backdrops - mirror the emotional undercurrents of the characters and the plot. These settings evoke a mood of foreboding and unease, heightening the tension throughout the narrative.

Another critical tool in creating suspense is the unreliable narrator. By presenting characters whose perceptions are questionable, Ackroyd blurs the line between reality and illusion, forcing readers to constantly reassess what is true and what is distorted. This sense of uncertainty is a driving force in the narrative, as the eventual revelation of the truth often comes as a dramatic and suspense-filled moment. Ackroyd also incorporates myth and legend into his work, weaving elements of folklore and timeless stories into the plot. This connection to larger-than-life themes not only adds layers of complexity but also suggests that the characters' fates are intertwined with broader, uncontrollable forces. This mythic dimension adds a layer of suspense, as readers are left wondering how these ancient narratives will influence the story's resolution.

Finally, Ackroyd's intense characterization and relational dynamics are essential in maintaining the suspense. The complex, often unpredictable relationships between characters - marked by shifting loyalties, hidden motives, and intense emotional stakes - further elevate the tension. These intricate dynamics keep readers guessing about the characters' fates and motivations, ensuring the suspense remains high until the very end.

Each of these techniques will be explored in greater detail in the subsequent chapters, as they are central to understanding how Ackroyd crafts suspense and keeps readers engaged with his crime novels.

2.2.1 The Role of Mimesis in Creating Suspense in Narrative and Dramatic Contexts

Aristotle's concept of mimesis, primarily explored in his seminal work *Poetics*, is essential for understanding how suspense is crafted in both narrative and dramatic forms. Mimesis, which translates to imitation or representation, serves as a foundational principle of storytelling, influencing how audiences engage with and experience suspense. This section delineates the mechanisms through which mimesis contributes to the generation of suspense, encompassing the representation of action, the unity of the plot, the dynamics of reversal and recognition, emotional engagement, and the use of foreshadowing.

At the heart of mimesis lies the representation of significant actions. Aristotle argues in *Poetics* that when characters encounter challenges or conflicts that resonate with the audience's experiences, emotional engagement is amplified. Tragedy, in particular, achieves its emotional power by evoking feelings of pity and fear through the characters' actions, leading to a catharsis that aligns with the audience's emotions (Aristotle, 1941, p. 25). This relatability intensifies suspense, as viewers become invested in the potential outcomes of the narrative. The stakes of the story are elevated when characters face dilemmas that mirror the audience's fears and desires, creating perceptible tension as they await resolution (Nussbaum, 1992). Aristotle also emphasizes the unity of the plot as essential for building suspense. A well-structured narrative with a clear beginning, middle, and end creates a sense of coherence, making each event feel connected and consequential. He defines tragedy as "an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude" (Aristotle, 1941, p. 23). This highlights how significant actions are crucial for engaging the audience and creating suspense.

The unity of the plot is exemplified in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, where the tragic events unfold in a sequence that makes each action and revelation feel inevitable, even though they are unexpected. The audience is drawn into the unfolding tragedy because the structure of the play ensures that no event feels extraneous. The tight interweaving of events raises the stakes, drawing the audience further into the story as they become eager to see how everything will resolve. He writes that the structure of a play should be such that, if any one of the incidents were to be removed, the whole would be disjointed and disturbed (Aristotle, 1941, p. 24). This unity heightens suspense as the audience anticipates the consequences of each event.

The elements of 'peripeteia' (reversal) and 'anagnorisis' (recognition) are crucial in Aristotle's framework. These moments introduce unexpected twists that can change the audience's understanding of the narrative. He explains, "The most effective kind of plot is one that is full

of unexpected turns, where a discovery leads to a reversal of fortune” (Aristotle, 1941, p. 27). This concept is clearly illustrated in Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex*, where the sudden recognition of Oedipus’ true identity - coupled with the reversal of his fortune from king to exiled pariah - shocks both the characters and the audience, creating profound suspense. The revelation that Oedipus is the murderer he seeks for, and the subsequent realization of his tragic fate, embodies the idea of anagnorisis and peripeteia as central mechanisms for suspense (Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*). These twists create suspense by altering the audience’s expectations and understanding of the narrative, as viewers are left wondering how characters will react to these changes and what implications they will have for the story. Similarly, in Euripides’ *Medea*, the plot’s unexpected turns - especially Medea’s decision to kill her children as a form of revenge against Jason - intensify the dramatic impact and create the sustained emotional tension. Here, anagnorisis occurs when Medea recognizes the full extent of her betrayal and the irrevocable path she has chosen, while peripeteia is exemplified by the shocking reversal of her emotional state from grief to vengeful rage (Euripides, *Medea*).

Emotional engagement plays a pivotal role in suspense as well. Aristotle believes that through mimesis, audiences experience catharsis, a release of emotions like pity and fear. When viewers empathize with the characters and their struggles, they become more invested in their fates, heightening the suspense as they worry about the characters they care about (Aristotle, 1941, p. 22). In *Medea*, the audience’s emotional engagement with Medea, who has been wronged by her husband Jason, creates a heightened sense of anticipation and dread as they await her next move. As Medea gets driven by her emotions, her decisions become increasingly unpredictable, which intensifies the suspense surrounding her actions.

Although Aristotle does not explicitly mention foreshadowing, this technique aligns with his ideas on mimesis. By hinting at future events through subtle clues, storytellers can prepare the ground for an atmosphere of anticipation, prompting the audience to speculate on what lies ahead and thereby increasing suspense (Aristotle, 1941, p. 23). In *Oedipus Rex*, for example, the audience knows the prophecy - that Oedipus will kill his father and marry his mother - before the characters do, creating dramatic irony and increasing suspense. The sense of foreshadowing intensifies the audience’s emotional engagement, as they anxiously watch the characters unknowingly move toward their doomed fate (Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*).

In summary, Aristotle’s focus on mimesis reveals how the representation of meaningful actions, cohesive plot, emotional connections, and subtle foreshadowing work together to create

suspense in storytelling. These components give the audience a deeply impactful and captivating story experience.

2.3 The Interplay of Childhood Trauma and Criminality in Crime Novels

The relationship between childhood trauma and criminal behaviour is a profound theme that is highlighted throughout crime literature. By exploring the psychological outcome of trauma, authors create rich, multifaceted characters whose actions reflect the complexities of human behaviour. As readers engage with these narratives, they are invited to consider the societal and psychological factors that contribute to criminality, highlighting the need for a compassionate understanding of individuals shaped by their past experiences.

In examining the intricate relationship between psychology, childhood trauma, and criminal behaviour, crime novels provide a lens through which these themes can be explored. Many crime narratives analyse the psychological underpinnings of their characters, portraying how unresolved childhood trauma can shape behaviours, influence decision-making, and increase the likelihood of criminality. Psychological theories suggest that individuals who experience trauma during childhood may exhibit criminal behaviour as a coping mechanism or may reflect the emotional and psychological voids left by these experiences (see Schore, 2003; van der Kolk, 2014). Characters often respond to such traumas either by engaging in criminal acts or by seeking to fulfill the needs or desires that remain unmet due to their past experiences. Thus, to understand and investigate their criminal behaviour, it is crucial to examine their past, uncovering the driving forces behind their deviant actions.

Childhood trauma encompasses a wide range of adverse experiences, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, neglect, and exposure to violence. Research in psychology indicates that such experiences can profoundly impact an individual's emotional and cognitive development, often leading to long-term psychological issues such as anxiety, depression, and personality disorders. These effects can impair impulse control and hinder social functioning, potentially increasing the risk of engaging in criminal behaviour. Several psychological theories address the link between childhood trauma and criminality. *Attachment theory*, first introduced by Bowlby (1969), suggests that early interactions with caregivers play a crucial role in shaping future relationships. When children form secure attachments, they develop a sense of trust and safety, which helps them navigate social and emotional challenges later in life. However, insecure attachment styles - often stemming from inconsistent or traumatic caregiving - can make it harder for individuals to manage emotions and build healthy relationships. Ainsworth's

(1978) research on attachment patterns highlights how people with insecure attachment styles, such as anxious or avoidant types, may struggle with emotional regulation, which can sometimes lead to antisocial behaviours as they have difficulty relating to others and managing their emotions.

Similarly, *social learning theory*, introduced by Bandura (1977), suggests that people often learn behaviours by observing and imitating others, particularly in environments where violence or neglect are common. In crime novels, characters who grow up in such difficult settings may come to see criminal behaviour as a way to cope with their circumstances or gain power and control. Their traumatic experiences shape how they view the world, leading them to adopt crime as a strategy for survival.

Crime novels often serve as a microcosm for exploring these psychological dynamics. Characters who commit crimes are frequently portrayed with complex backstories that illuminate their traumatic pasts. For example, a protagonist who turns to crime may be depicted as having experienced severe neglect or abuse during childhood, providing readers with insight into their motivations and internal struggles. In *Wuthering Heights* (1847), Heathcliff's violent and vengeful behaviour stems from the trauma of his childhood, where he faced abuse and rejection. His mistreatment by Hindley and the emotional abandonment by Catherine Earnshaw fuel his desire for revenge, and his obsession with power and control becomes his way of coping with his painful past.

Similarly, Catherine Earnshaw's psychological struggles, shaped by her social isolation and inner turmoil, play a key role in her destructive actions. The complex histories of both characters help explain their harmful behaviour, offering insight into the emotional pain and motivations driving their actions. This narrative technique not only humanizes the criminal but also encourages readers to grapple with the broader social implications of trauma. Authors such as Patricia Highsmith and Thomas Harris have expertly crafted characters whose criminal actions are inextricably linked to their traumatic pasts. In Highsmith's *Strangers on a Train*, for instance, the protagonist's psychological turmoil and fractured identity are rooted in his childhood experiences, ultimately driving him toward a path of moral ambiguity and crime. Similarly, in Harris's *The Silence of the Lambs*, the character of Hannibal Lecter is shaped by early traumas that inform his later predatory behaviour, raising questions about nature versus nurture in the realm of criminality.

2.3.1 The Relationship Between Childhood Trauma and Later Behaviour

Childhood trauma can have a lasting impact on a person's behaviour, and both Carl Jung's and Michel Foucault's theories help explain how these early experiences shape later actions, including criminality. According to Jung, traumatic experiences often lead to repressed emotions and memories, which reside in the unconscious mind. He argued that "what is repressed in the unconscious becomes the content of our personal history" (Jung, 1953, p. 61). These hidden, unresolved feelings can resurface later in life, influencing an individual's behaviour in unexpected ways, including potentially harmful actions. Jung introduced the concept of the shadow, the darker side of the personality that individuals often try to deny or suppress. He described the shadow as "the thing a person has no wish to be" (Jung, 1953, p. 131). When trauma contributes to the formation of this shadow, it can lead to destructive behaviours, as the individual acts out repressed emotions they have not dealt with. For example, someone who experienced neglect during childhood might resort to violence as a way to express or cope with their unresolved feelings of anger and helplessness.

Jung also believed that the process of individuation, or integrating different aspects of the self, is crucial for personal growth. Trauma can disrupt this process, leaving a person with a fragmented sense of self. Jung argued that individuation involves "the integration of the unconscious into the conscious personality" (Jung, 1953, p. 229), and when this process is hindered by unresolved trauma, the individual may struggle with their identity. Without properly integrating their painful experiences, these individuals may act out and display behaviours that reflect inner turmoil. In some cases, this can lead to criminal acts, as individuals seek to assert control over their lives or respond to their emotional chaos in unhealthy ways. Jung's perspective highlights the internal psychological struggles that drive such behaviours.

Foucault, on the other hand, offers a different but complementary perspective by focusing on the role of societal power structures. He argued that power is not just about repression but also shapes how individuals see themselves and behave. Foucault (1975) stated that "power is everywhere...because it comes from everywhere", meaning that it is deeply embedded in societal institutions like families, schools, and the legal system (p. 93). These institutions play a major role in defining what is considered "normal" or "deviant." Childhood trauma, especially in environments marked by social inequality or oppression, can be exacerbated by these power dynamics. Foucault suggested that people who experience trauma may also feel alienated by the very institutions that are supposed to protect or educate them. This can increase the

likelihood of being labeled as “deviant” or “criminal” by society, reinforcing the trauma and pushing individuals toward behaviours that fit these labels.

Foucault’s work also highlights how disciplinary systems, such as surveillance and punishment, reinforce these labels. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1977) writes that “the body becomes a docile object” under systems of control (p. 136). People who have experienced childhood trauma may become more vulnerable to being monitored and controlled by these systems, especially when their behaviour deviates from societal norms. Over time, this creates a cycle in which trauma leads to behaviours that are pathologized and punished, further entrenching individuals in criminality. This societal response can make it harder for individuals to escape their past and build a positive identity, as the label of criminal becomes self-fulfilling.

Together, Jung and Foucault provide a fuller understanding of the link between childhood trauma and later behaviour. Jung focuses on how unresolved emotional trauma can shape the unconscious mind, driving individuals to act out their pain in maladaptive ways. As he wrote, “neurosis is always a substitute for a more serious and profound suffering” (Jung, 1953, p. 88), indicating how deep-rooted psychological pain can manifest in harmful behaviours. Meanwhile, Foucault emphasizes the role of societal power and labeling in reinforcing these behaviours. He argued that criminal labels are socially constructed, and that “the criminal is not a person but a label for a category of acts” (Foucault, 1977, p. 138). Both perspectives show that criminal behaviour is not just about individual pathology but is deeply influenced by both internal psychological factors and external social forces. Understanding this interplay is essential for addressing the root causes of criminality and helping individuals heal from past trauma.

2.4. Critical Discourse Analysis

To make a brief introduction to critical discourse analysis, the definition of the term critical linguistics should be given as the fundamental discipline that paved the way for its development. Critical linguistics pioneered by Roger Fowler (2016) applies the linguistic analysis of a spoken or written discourse from a social perspective. That is to say, language as a performance of the speaker or the writer encodes ideological representations of the world in itself and reflects the ideologies of the individuals and it becomes a social practice. Individuals’ choice of grammar and vocabulary reveals their ideologies whether conscious or unconsciously produced. As language pre-exists in its forms, individuals become the product of what they produce and it is called discourse.

Starting with the same understanding, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) developed by Norman Fairclough is interested in how language expresses ideologies and power relations. It focuses on the ways discourse is shaped by sociopolitical and cultural factors. It also deals with the issue of how discourse itself can shape power relations in society. Fairclough expresses his view about critical discourse as follows:

“By critical discourse analysis I mean analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events, and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony” (Fairclough, 1995a: 132-33).

He introduced three basic properties in connection with CDA: relational, dialectal, and transdisciplinary. He thinks that since it focuses on social relations instead of entities or individuals, it has a relational form as a research approach. He argues that discourse itself includes a complex set of relations containing various interaction forms between people talking, writing, and communicating with each other. Additionally, it informs people about relations between concrete forms of communication, such as conversations, newspaper articles, and so on, as well as abstract and complex discursive ‘objects’ referring to languages, discourses, and genres. As there are links between discourse and objects in the physical world, people, power practices, and institutions interconnected with each other, it addresses them, too. In short, for him, discourse is not an entity that can be defined on its own separately from other internal and external components shaping it. It is the means of bringing into complex relations forming social life and the processes producing meaning (Fairclough, 2013, pp. 15-16).

He believes that the relations he identified are dialectical and adds that dialectal relations refer to the relations between objects not being discrete from one another but different from each other. He exemplifies this with power and discourse relations. In his view, the power of the people controlling a modern state has a discursive character to a certain extent because they sustain the ‘legitimacy’ and representatives of the state through discourse. Although power cannot be simply reducible to discourse, they are still interwoven in a complex relation as different but not discrete items. Therefore, he claims social activity contains complex

articulations of objects as elements and they are supposed to be analysed in their dialectical relations (Fairclough, 2013, p. 16).

Fairclough (2013) explains the third property by drawing attention to the point that CDA analysis takes not only dialectical relations between discourse and other objects but also the 'internal relations' of discourse. As these relations require the contributions of other disciplines ranging from linguistics to sociology and politics, CDA has an interdisciplinary structure for the analysis of discourse and he calls this a transdisciplinary form. He clarifies the term by emphasizing that it refers to the 'dialogues' between disciplines, taking some theoretical explanations and frameworks that can be used in analysis and research. He sees the approach he uses as a realist recognizing the reality of the world where humans live in. He distinguishes the natural world from the social world and states that the social world is constructed by human action and hence the effects of discourse in the socially constructed world are important in CDA (Fairclough, 2013, p. 17).

CDA's main concern is to analyze the complex relations between discourse and social elements which include power and ideology. Critique in CDA aims to evaluate the social wrongs of neoliberalism which has been derived from Marxism and which has become the dominant political view in the contemporary world. It also attempts to explore possibilities available for human well-being. This approach emphasizes the prominent role discourse plays in understanding and transforming neo-liberal capitalism. A crucial objective of CDA is to identify emerging strategies at the time of crisis by evaluating their potential to improve human well-being. It also addresses inequalities existing among people (Fairclough, 2013).

While discussing what CDA is, Fairclough also highlights what CDA is not. For him, if CDA is not defined properly and it becomes ill-defined or vague, then its value may be weakened in social research. For that reason, he puts forth the following characteristics to bring clarity to what CDA is (Fairclough, 2013, p. 24):

- 1. It is not just an analysis of discourse (or more concretely texts), it is part of some form of systematic transdisciplinary analysis of relations between discourse and other elements of the social process.*
- 2. It is not just general commentary on discourse, it includes some form of systematic analysis of texts.*

3. It is not just descriptive, it is also normative. It addresses social wrongs in their discursive aspects and possible ways of righting or mitigating them.

In the discussion of CDA as an analysis approach, Fairclough concentrates on the relationship between social institutions and ideologies imposed on people through these institutions, using discourse as a means. He asserts that institutions shape subjects' values and perspectives to look at the events through ideological and discursive norms. CDA's main aim is to uncover the ways of naturalizing ideologies and their impacts on social practices. Thus, it will be possible to raise people's awareness of how social institutions determine the ways they speak. Institutions have a prominent role to play in structuring social actions even in places like family and school. They create ideological and discursive subjects by coding them with some norms and putting some constraints on individuals to make them act within certain frameworks (Fairclough, 2013).

Relying on Marxist theories and discourse analysis methods, the relationship between language and ideology is clarified. It is important to look at language and ideology expressed through language within the context of power relations, especially in association with hegemony. Ideology is reflected in structures and events within language. Social conventions impose some constraints on discourse production and the structural perspective brings these constraints into light, emphasizing the dynamic nature of ideological processes. Ideologies are passed to people through specific codes or discourse types and they influence the way social entities restructured. Fairclough suggests the use of 'interdiscourse' and Foucault's 'order of discourse' as useful frameworks for understanding the whole process. Ideological elements transferred to people may not be explicit but implicit, that is they may be inferred through textual cues and interpretations (Fairclough, 2013).

Another important issue highlighted by Fairclough is the concept of hegemony. It works in a specific way. First, some alliances are constructed and then subordinate classes' consent is won through concessions or ideological means shaping the way subjects think and use their common sense. Fairclough (2013) thinks that the ideological aspects of hegemonic structures can be displayed by carrying out discourse analysis, focussing on articulations of ideological elements in society.

For Fairclough, dimensions of discourse analysis include three levels that are combined to describe, explain, and interpret a text. He claims that although these three stages can give insights into the text, they cannot a hundred percent function correctly as the interpretation of the text might differ depending on the background, knowledge, and the power position of the

reader (Fairclough, 2002; Wodak & Ludwig, 1999). Fairclough (2013) criticizes descriptive approaches to text analysis as they neglect power relations and do not realize the complexity of discourse.

2.4.1 Ruth Wodak and Teun A. van Dijk: Foundational Figures in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Ruth Wodak and Teun A. van Dijk are two of the most influential scholars in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), each contributing to the development of this interdisciplinary approach to studying language and power. Although their perspectives differ in some respects, both scholars share a commitment to investigating the relationship between discourse, social structures, and power dynamics. Although their key contributions to CDA have distinct approaches, they have some commonalities binding their work as well.

Ruth Wodak is renowned for her emphasis on the historical and socio-political context in the analysis of discourse. Her approach, often described as historical-discursive, argues that understanding discourse requires a deep consideration of the historical background and the broader social context in which it occurs. For Wodak, discourse is not only a reflection of the present but also a product of historical processes and power relations that have shaped its development (Wodak, 2001, p. 33).

A central theme in Wodak's work is the relationship between discourse and power. In her book *The Discourse of Politics in Action: Politics as Usual*, she examines how language both reinforces and challenges social hierarchies, emphasizing the role of discourse in maintaining or contesting dominant ideologies. Wodak's analyses often focus on political discourse, where she explores how language is used to construct identities, legitimize power, and frame issues in ways that benefit particular social groups. Her thematic analysis seeks to identify recurring patterns and strategies within discourse, particularly in political and ideological contexts, offering insight into how language functions as a tool of social control and resistance.

Another key aspect of Wodak's approach is her emphasis on contextual analysis. In *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, she argues that any meaningful discourse analysis must cover the socio-political environment, historical circumstances, and power relations that shape language use. In her view, understanding discourse is closely linked to understanding the socio-historical context in which it unfolds. This perspective positions Wodak as a scholar who stresses the need for a multi-dimensional approach that situates language within its broader social and historical landscape (Wodak, 2001, p. 47).

In contrast to Wodak's historical focus, Teun A. van Dijk's work is centred on the cognitive dimensions of discourse. Van Dijk's contribution to CDA is rooted in his cognitive discourse studies, which explore how mental models and knowledge structures shape individuals' understanding of discourse and, in turn, influence social attitudes and behaviours. For van Dijk, discourse is not merely a reflection of external social forces, but it is also mediated by the cognitive processes that govern how individuals interpret and respond to language (van Dijk, 2009).

Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach integrates cognitive science with sociolinguistics, focusing on how discourse both reflects and constructs social power dynamics. He is particularly interested in how individuals and groups use mental models to make sense of the world, and how these cognitive structures are influenced by, and in turn influence, the broader social and political contexts. This approach allows van Dijk to examine how language in various forms - such as news media, political speeches, and everyday communication - can serve to reinforce or challenge social inequalities.

A notable area of van Dijk's work is his critical analysis of media discourse. In *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach* published in 1998, he investigates how language in the media can shape public perception, reinforce stereotypes, and perpetuate ideologies. Through a detailed analysis of media texts, van Dijk reveals the mechanisms through which language constructs social realities, often serving the interests of dominant groups while marginalizing others. His work is crucial in understanding the role of media discourse in the reproduction of power relations.

Even though Wodak and van Dijk focus on different aspects of CDA in their work, they both share a fundamental commitment to the core principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Central to their views is the belief that language is deeply intertwined with power relations and that discourse both reflects and reinforces social inequalities. For them, discourse is not just a means of communication, but a space where social power is negotiated, contested, and reproduced. They are particularly interested in understanding how language can either uphold or challenge the existing social order.

One of the key commonalities between Wodak and van Dijk is their focus on social power and resistance. Both scholars aim to uncover how discourse gives way to inequalities by framing issues in ways that favor certain groups over others. However, they also acknowledge the potential for discourse to be a site of resistance and change. While Wodak emphasizes the role

of historical context and political discourse in shaping power relations, van Dijk highlights the cognitive mechanisms through which individuals come to accept or challenge these power structures. Their combined contributions to CDA have provided valuable frameworks for analysing how language is used to construct identities, ideologies, and social realities. Wodak's focus on historical context and thematic analysis complements van Dijk's cognitive-socio approach, offering complementary perspectives on how discourse functions within society. Together, their work has significantly shaped the development of CDA, advancing our understanding of the intricate relationships between language, power, and social inequality.

In conclusion, Wodak, van Dijk, and Fairclough all contribute to the development of the field of investigating the connection between language and power through discourse. They agree that discourse plays a major role in shaping and maintaining power dynamics, often favoring certain groups over others. Wodak highlights the importance of historical and political context in understanding how power is communicated and reproduced through language. She asserts that discourse not only reflects the socio-political environment but also can either support or challenge existing power structures.

People internalize power structures through their cognitive processes, and van Dijk takes a more psychological approach to examine this contrast. It is suggested that dominant ideologies can be reinforced or resisted by the way discourse is interpreted and processed by people. Both the social and cognitive aspects of discourse are brought together by Fairclough and they are combined effectively. He sees language as both shaping and being shaped by society, emphasizing that discourse can both reproduce and challenge social structures. Together, these three scholars offer complementary perspectives on CDA, to make how language creates, maintains, and sometimes challenges power and inequality clear.

2.5 Discourse and Identity

Humans can have different roles, such as a woman, a mother, an actress, a partner, a colleague, etc. in society, and depending on their roles they can interact with other people differently and use language in accordance with the role they play. Ervin Goffman (1959, p. 240) is the first person taking a "dramaturgical approach", as indicated by Barnhart, and drawing attention to the concept of roles by saying that the world is a stage and individuals are actors or actresses playing their roles there. He describes this as a performance and argues that it is shaped by the environment and people around it. He thinks individuals develop their identities through

interaction with other people and gives detailed explanations and analysis concerning the interactions between people.

Parallel to this view, Paltridge (2006) states that all the roles individuals take part in are related to their identities and remarks that “the ways in which people display their identities includes the way they use language and the way they interact with people” (p. 38). He writes that identities are not natural but constructed through language use, in other words, discourse. He also adds that as it is not fixed, it does not stay the same. There is a constant construction and even reconstruction when people interact with one another. The words and the language forms are connected with their images and also their identities. Even in the contemporary world, cybergirls use symbols, emoticons, and ‘avatars’, that is visual characters, to construct their online identities (Paltridge, 2006, p. 39).

Cameron (2001, p. 170) makes the same points and says that in written or spoken language production people are informing other people about themselves and thus they create relations with them. Identity is a production taking place mutually. The language used in the joint activity reflects a particular identity. Then it is a social process for creating self and multiple as people use a continuous construction.

Discourse serves not only as a channel of communication but also as an instrument for creating, altering, and consolidating social identities. The connection between discourse and identity is key to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which looks at how language not only encompasses but also constructs social self and group images. This issue has also captured the attention of some scholars such as Ruth Wodak and Teun A. van Dijk who look at how discourse constructs personal, social, and collective identities. The notion of identity is constantly altering and has many aspects, as it exists in each individual and the society they live in. It is about how people see themselves (self-identity) and how others see them (other identity). In both cases, identity construction is mediated by discourse as language positions people within social structures and connects them to broader ideological and cultural contexts. It is also often said that identity is relational, dependent on the context, and made through practices in specific discursive arenas.

In his book *Society and Discourse: How Social Contexts Influence Text and Talk* (2008), van Dijk explores how discourse is central to the construction of social and personal identities, with a particular focus on how individuals enact identities in specific contexts. He also discusses how people manage multiple and sometimes conflicting identities, particularly concerning social categories such as ethnicity, nationality, and gender. “People construct not only a

personal Self, but also a social Self as member of various groups, and that intra- and intergroup perception and interaction depend on these socially shared identities of people who categorize themselves as group members” (p.71). In this way, depending on the context one would engage in the performance of certain resources and produce the so-called multiple identities. At the level of the individual, the discourse contributes to the building of self-concept and personal identity in the way in which one speaks about oneself or how people speak about that individual. Language enables a person to build an image of their inner world to communicate their beliefs, and take a stance against others. This mechanism is very much dependent on the context, as the same identity can be constructed through various discourses differently. For example, when talking about politics, one can join a certain political debate, regardless of whether they are conservative or liberal, by employing an in-group language.

Ruth Wodak’s work *The Discursive Construction of National Identity* (2009) emphasizes the way identity is constructed and mediated through discourse in historical and political contexts. In her research, particularly on political discourse, Wodak identifies how language is used to construct identities in opposition to other groups, such as the construction of the enemy or the other in nationalistic rhetoric. “Political discourse not only shapes our understanding of ‘the other’ but also defines who we consider to be the legitimate members of the nation, constructing national identity in opposition to the perceived threat posed by outsiders or marginalized groups” (Wodak, 2009, p. 79). Political leaders, for example, use specific linguistic strategies to position themselves as protectors of the national identity, while constructing marginalized groups as threats to that identity. In this sense, discourse shapes individual and collective identities by framing what is considered normal or acceptable within a given society.

On the other hand, discourse plays a central role in both the formation and maintenance of social identities that are constructed through commonalities such as nationality, ethnicity, gender, religion, and class, as well as in the exclusion or inclusion of individuals within particular groups. The concept of *social identity theory* (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) suggests that individuals derive part of their self-concept from the groups to which they belong. Also, discourse acts as the mechanism through which group identities are constructed, reproduced, and challenged. Through discourse, social groups define their boundaries, establish norms, and create representations of themselves and others. In addition, this shared discourse helps them internalize or marginalize others depending on their language use.

As previously mentioned in Section 2.3, van Dijk's work on discourse and identity focuses on the socio-cognitive aspects of identity formation. In his socio-cognitive model, van Dijk emphasizes how people's mental representations and cognitive structures - such as stereotypes, attitudes, and social knowledge - are reflected in discourse. He (1988) argues that these mental models, which are shaped by both individual experience and broader societal discourse, influence how individuals interpret and construct group identities. For instance, media discourse plays a key role in reinforcing certain social identities by shaping public perceptions of different groups. In his work *News as Discourse* (1988), van Dijk examines how the media constructs social identities through language, often by framing certain groups as "insiders" or "outsiders" based on ethnic, cultural, or political categories.

In conclusion, discourse is integral to the process of identity construction. It not only shapes how individuals see themselves but also how they relate to others within their social environment. Since CDA critically examines how discourse functions as a tool for constructing social realities and shaping the identities of individuals and groups in society, it will be appropriate to analyze the sociological settings of the novels through discourse.

2.6 Intertextuality

Intertextuality is defined as the interconnection of texts or having traces from earlier texts, thus proving to be an important concept to comprehend how meaning is constituted and how social identities are shaped through language. Kristeva is the first person to use this term in "Word, Dialogue, and Novel" to point out that texts are influenced by previous texts and absorb some elements from past texts. She also argues that texts are not isolated items. They are reflecting and shaping the changes taking place in society. Although Kristeva coined the term intertextuality in the late 1960s, Bakhtin is the person who emphasizes the communicative functions of language and highlights the ways texts are shaped under the influence of previous and subsequent texts they respond to and anticipate. Bakhtin argues that all interactions with other people's words and expressions generate intertextual connections in utterances, both spoken and written. Thus, all texts become inherently intertextual. He points out his aspect of intertextuality as follows (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 89): "Our speech is filled with others' words, varying degrees of otherness and varying degrees of 'our-own-ness,' varying degrees of awareness and detachment. These words of others carry with them their expression, their evaluative tone which we assimilate, rework and reaccentuate."

Kristeva (1986) expresses the view that intertextuality incorporates history into texts and in return, it inserts the texts produced into history (p. 39), that is earlier texts are utilized to build up the current texts and they respond to rework prior texts, and thus shape history and contribute to cultural change. With this function, for Fairclough (1992) intertextuality should be focussed on in discourse analysis. He states:

“The concept of intertextuality points to the productivity of texts, to how texts can transform prior texts and restructure existing conventions (genres, discourses) to generate new ones” and remarks that the productivity of intertextuality is limited by social constraints and power dynamics. Therefore, a theory exploring the influence of power on text production, like hegemony theory, can be used as a complementary approach to understanding intertextuality” (Fairclough, 1992, 270).

There are various classifications made for intertextual relations. Bakhtin identifies two types, horizontal and vertical intertextual relations. The first one includes the dialogical exchange between texts in a sequence as in conversations and letter correspondences and the second one combines texts across different historical contexts and changes their meanings and interpretations (Kristeva, 1986, p. 36, Fairclough, 1992, p. 271). Another distinction is made between “manifest” intertextuality, which is formed if other texts are explicitly referenced in a text as a quotation or allusion, and “constitutive” intertextuality or interdiscursivity which is produced in the case of reference made to the underlying conventions and genres shaping a text’s generation. These types are identified by French discourse analysts with the terms “heterogeneity montree” and “heterogeneite constitutive” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 271).

Intertextuality has a really prominent place in literary theory as it challenges the traditional form of authorship and originality. It asserts that texts are like mosaic pieces taken from various sources as quotations or allusions to add layers to the work that should be explored by readers. It can be created from a vast array of sources extending from other literary works, historical contexts, and cultural events.

CHAPTER 3. ANALYSIS OF THE NOVELS

3.1 The Aim of the Study

Taking the theoretical explanations made in Chapter 2 into account, the analyses of the novels *Dan Leno and The Limehouse Golem* and *The House of Doctor Dee* written by Peter Ackroyd will be made by giving deeper explanations of the application process in Chapter 3. The aim of this is to reveal the suspense strategies used by Ackroyd in the organization of the plot structures of these crime novels. Among the objectives of the study, the analyses of the character developments as regards identity construction and the challenges against social norms and relations take their places as well. Furthermore, power relations and hidden ideological impositions are discussed in terms of CDA.

3.2 Peter Ackroyd as a Crime Novelist

Peter Ackroyd is a well-known British novelist, critic and biographer. He has a high interest in the historical and cultural background of London and takes this city to the centre of most of his works. He was born on the 5th of October in 1949 in London. He had his education at St. Benedict's in Ealing and at Clare College in Cambridge. He earned a degree in English Literature and became a Mellon fellow at Yale University in 1972. At the age of 22, after he went to Yale with a fellowship, he wrote *Notes for a New Culture* which was published in 1976. He had the position of literary editor at *The Spectator* magazine between 1973 and 1977 and was promoted to managing editor position in 1978 and continued in this job until 1982. He worked for the *Times* as the principal book reviewer (Britannica, para.1-2).

He wrote many books but started his career with absurdist poetry and wrote *London Lickpenny* in 1973 and *The Diversions of Purley* in 1987. He was the author of a biography, *Ezra Pound and His World* which was published in 1980 and he revised it with the name of *Ezra Pound* in 1987. In 1982 he wrote his first novel *The Great Fire of London*, and it was succeeded by *The Last Testament of Oscar Wilde* 1983, which brought the Somerset Maugham Award to him. *Hawksmoor*, which was written in 1985, brought Prix Goncourt and the Whitbread Book of the Year Award to him. Later he wrote *Chatterton* (1987), *First Light* (1989), *English Music* (1992), *The House of Doctor Dee* (1993), *The Trial of Elizabeth Cree: A Novel of the Limehouse Murders* (1995), *The Fall of Troy* (2006), *Three Brothers* (2013), and *Mr. Cadmus* (2020). Ackroyd also retold the *Canterbury Tales* in 2009 (Britannica, para. 3).

He wrote the biographies of literary figures such as *T. S. Eliot* (1984), which made him win the Whitbread Biography Award and the Heinemann Award, *Dickens* (1990), *Blake* (1995), *The Life of Thomas More* (1998) as well as the life story of film stars and directors *Charlie Chaplin* (2014), and *Alfred Hitchcock* (2015). In the last two decades, he changed his direction and dealt with historical surveys. He wrote books on ancient Egypt (2004) and ancient Greece (2005). He showed a special interest in the history of England and wrote nonfiction books relating to London and mysterious topics ghosts, *London: The Biography* (2000), *Thames: Sacred River* (2007), *The English Ghost: Spectres Through Time* (2010), *London Under: The Secret History Beneath the Streets* (2011) and *Queer City: Gay London from the Romans to the Present Day* (2017) between 2000 and 2017 (Britannica, para. 4).

As for his writing style, Ackroyd puts a special emphasis on London to explore and chronicle it in his fiction and non-fiction works. He gives a great place to its history, literature, and culture besides people. He integrates writers such as Charles Dickens, William Blake, Thomas Moore, John Milton, Oscar Wilde, etc., and artists of the city into his works as fictional figures or biographical subjects and because of this, he is called a 'London writer' (O'Reilly, 2012).

He carries out research when he writes his works and presents knowledgeable and scholarly aspects about the topics he tackles in his fiction and non-fiction productions. He blends his imagination with his intellectualism and presents complex information in an accessible and entertaining form to his readers. He produces his novels in a postmodern style and makes the fiction and nonfiction distinction blurred in his works. He pens stories in which past and present are interwoven as he starts many of his narratives with the discovery of a historical item or a piece of information at present but goes back to the past to combine present and past. He is accepted as the master of dual narrative because there is usually more than one story in his works. He chooses his topics from social problems such as domestic and sexual violence, discrimination against gender, etc, and develops crime or suspects around them with a mystery that should be solved (O'Reilly, 2012).

3.3 Analysis of The Novel *Dan Leno and The Limehouse Golem*

The novel presents us the characteristic development of female protagonist Lambeth Marsh Lizzie who later becomes Elizabeth Cree, wife of John Cree, and also her transformation into a serial killer. The novel can fit into the characteristics of different genres including bildungsroman as it shows the development of Elizabeth, epistolary as it includes a diary, crime

novel as it is investigating a series of murders, and lastly thriller for its gloomy tone, narration technique, and subject.

Lambeth Marsh Lizzie is born as an illegitimate child of a reformed whore. They earn their living by sewing sailing clothes for fishermen. After her mother's death, she immediately goes to Dan Leno's music Hall where she finds her future husband, John Cree, and agitates her story as a poor orphan, only to find herself working for the music hall and becoming friends with Dan Leno, a performer. After a while, she becomes the performer of her shows including *Little Victor's Daughter* and *Older Brother*. By this reference, her life can be divided into three stages; as a child in Lambeth Marsh where she was struggling with her identity as the bitter fruit of her mother's womb, as a worker at Music Hall where she uncovers her past by simply agitating her life story, and as a woman changing into Mrs. Cree enabling her higher social status. Although her social status gradually develops positively through these three stages, her personality, contrarily, grows worse and worse.

The novel is set mainly in the Limehouse, where inferior subjects of London live including prostitutes, Jews, and lower-class people in the late Victorian era. The writer skilfully applies his knowledge of London to the setting and he is also careful in the choice of the characters as they all intentionally contribute to the historical criticisms he aims to make. These historical characters also serve the postmodernist features of the text. In postmodern works of art, facts are interwoven with fiction, and here characters including Karl Marx, George Gissing, and Dan Leno alter the reality at different levels and Ackroyd creates discourses that are possible to hear from them and enriches his narration.

Another aspect of postmodernism that can be traced in the novel is taking advantage of intertextuality. Intertextuality is crucially under examination in critical discourse analysis since it has something to do with history. Besides referring to real-life events like the Marr family murders, the novel has a variety of references to works of art, inventions, social problems such as ethnicity and racism with the name of Karl Marx, ideas expressed by literary figures like Thomas de Quincey, and scientists like Charles Babbage to draw insights into the sociohistorical situation of the timeline of the novel and how their ideas were regarded by power institutions and society in total.

The polyphonic narration also can be counted as a postmodern aspect of the novel which confuses the reader by jumping from one mouth to another and concealing the real murderer with smart wordplay. The novel starts with an omniscient narrator who introduces Elizabeth

Cree's execution for murdering her husband John Cree by poisoning and continues with episodes from her trial and her defence including dialogues with crime investigators. It moves on with Elizabeth's record of her life story, her husband's diary, and the omniscient narrator's account of her life.

There is also an extradiegetic narrator who, however, has not got a full insight into what is happening. This narrator is the most complicated one as it determines and controls the reader's mind. It is for this reason that there are at least five different narrations that contribute to the development of the novel because, in each narrative voice, the reader suspects the possibility of the murderer's identity. Four main murders under investigation are presented to the reader: Jane Quig, a prostitute; Solomon Weil, a Jewish scholar; Alice Stanton, a prostitute; and the whole Gerrard family in the presence of three main suspects, who are Dan Leno, Karl Marx, and George Gissing.

The encounters by chance can cause the reader to suspect these characters of crimes but with further explanations made step by step, the number reduces and this narrowing perspective evokes questions in the reader's mind. Contrary to the suspects, there is a record of murders from the first mouth: John Cree. In his diary, he reveals that he is committing these murders by also giving his causes. Therefore, the reader is already made to believe the murderer's identity. However, with the confession of Elizabeth Cree at the end of the novel, it is discovered that she is the one who has murdered these people and written the diary from her husband's pen.

Here, credit should be given to Ackroyd for creating such a mind-blowing narrative structure in his work because, without such a powerful representation of the characters, the novel would not evoke such curiosity. Also, this polyphonic narration and the story necessitate a second reading of the novel since the reader believing - and ready to believe - the identity of the murderer as a male should analyze the discourse from a feminine perspective. It appears to be easier to expect such animal-like instincts of killing and explanations of them with cold blood from a male character than from a female character.

Applying Wodak's discourse-historical approach, it can be said that even with this narrative structure, the writer shows how sociocultural ideologies of the late Victorian era and the twenty-first century are identically the same despite the gap between them and how sociologically constructed ideologies are inherently transmitted to next generations both in fiction and reality. Moreover, the phallogentric ideology of Victorian society is continuously reflected by indicating that what is male is legitimate even though it is terrible as an act.

To make the plot structure clear, each murder can be given with their background and the reflection of the ideology behind them. While making a critical judgment about the murders, the gender of the murderer and the implied murderer must be considered, so the analysis will be two-folded: considering the ideology of the murderer within the gender framework and it will again touch upon Wodak's discourse-historical approach to deal with sociohistorical aspects.

The first murder whose victim is a prostitute happens shortly after Elizabeth marries John Cree. As a former performer, Elizabeth commits these murders under chief disguise as a male person. Her choice of victims can be said to be both personal and sociological. As a practice, she chooses the weakest of society both physically and socially. A prostitute in the public eye has no respect and also she would not get into any trouble because the murderer can be one of her customers and nothing can reveal her identity. Besides logic, Elizabeth's hatred for her mother's attitude as a 'reformed whore' makes her psychologically take revenge on the profession itself. Although she poisons her mother, she still carries the psychological marks of her experience. Seeing her mother destitute, she picks her first victim of the same kind and faces the social ideology once again through the media's description.

The only thing causing this murder to catch the media's interest is the distorted body she has left behind. She unplugs Jane Quig's eyes so that her image would be gone forever and thus newspapers called the murderer a 'fiend in human form'. After leaving a piece of art in the eyes of Londoners, Elizabeth expects more than a 'fiend in human form'. The murderess sees her homicides as products of fine artistry and wishes them to satisfy Londoners' lust for blood. Despite her expectation in her mind that her "works of art" should shock but arouse the great admiration of violent Londoners, her crime does not arouse much attention. All in all, a whore's absence is not that important and her audience -the public- does not seem very satisfied in return. If the identity of John Cree is trusted as the murderer, the discourse can be analysed by judging the murderer for displaying misogynistic behaviours and expressions. Nevertheless, the novel also pinpoints the reality that a woman can also have misogynistic traits.

Not only are her choices of victims triggered by personal ideology, but they are also the results of the social behaviour of society and media institutions. After her failure, she analyzes society's needs; they want a good plot, a celebrity, and an epic scene. For that reason, she comes up with the idea of killing a Jewish scholar who is a well-known public figure: Karl Marx. She

intends to kill Marx because he is a Jew but she mistakenly kills Solomon Weil who is also a Jewish scholar.

“And then I recalled the scholar. It was an easy thing to kill a whore, and there could be no real or lasting glory in it. In any case, so strong is the public lust for blood that the whole city would be waiting in anticipation of the killing of another flash girl. That would be the beauty of the Jew: It would throw all into confusion and lend such splendor and excitement to my progress that each new death would be eagerly awaited. I would become the model of the age” (p. 64).

There are two main subjects that ought to be covered. The sociological inheritance of Antisemitism and media institutions. While confessing her crimes to the priest before her execution, she explains her reasons for killing Weil *“after all he was a Jew, Jesus killer as my mom used to say”* (p. 237). Her explanation deciphers that she is unaware of why she has a hatred towards Jews but it is a learned behaviour. Here, religious dogmas target a community and the victims’ identity does not define them but their function and label do. For her, defeating what is notorious is the best reputation, and hence, by killing Christ’s killer, she becomes epic and realizes her theatrical ambitions. Besides this, after the failure to draw attention to the prostitute’s death, she shows how the media of the late Victorian era tends to use inferior members of London as a source of their profit. While they are ignored when alive, their death comforts high-class Londoners since the murderer does not target their social class and religion directly and these murders become an entertaining part of their lives as if they are reading penny dreadful stories. For newspapers, killing Weil is not a personal action but it pinpoints the whole community and that’s why it is more attention-grabbing.

Reflection of such public events has always been a power for media as they can simultaneously affect society’s ideology and behaviours. To illustrate this, the notorious nickname of the murderer can be examined: Limehouse Golem. Limehouse, as previously mentioned, is the place where a socially inferior population is mainly located. By pointing out Limehouse, journalists not only underline the location but also the residents of that particular place. Setting the crime scenes in this neighborhood, Ackroyd chiefly represents the stereotypical ideology that where inferiors of the society live, there flourish immoral behaviours such as crime, and deceit, and face the reality of the places that do not fit into the Victorian morals.

When journalists point out a place like Limehouse, they are doing more than simply identifying a location; they are also constructing and reinforcing certain social meanings about the area and

its residents. Limehouse, a district in East London, carries with it a variety of historical, social, and cultural connotations. Through mentioning it, journalists tap into these associations, which can influence public perception of both the area and the people who live there. Historically, Limehouse has been linked to poverty, crime, and immigration, but also to a sense of “otherness,” with its diverse, often marginalized communities. Through discourse, journalists contribute to these pre-existing narratives, shaping how the public understands the area.

At the same time, by pointing out Limehouse, journalists not only highlight the physical space but also define the identities of its residents. The language used to describe a place like Limehouse can influence how its inhabitants are perceived. For example, by associating Limehouse with poverty or crime, journalists implicitly categorize its residents as part of a marginalized or deviant group. This process of categorization reflects larger societal attitudes toward class, race, and criminality. These identities are often reinforced by the media, whether intentionally or not, and can contribute to stereotypes about working-class or immigrant communities. As previously mentioned in Section 2.3.1, according to van Dijk language in the media can shape public perception, reinforce stereotypes, and perpetuate ideologies, while marginalizing others. As it can be seen in the novel, the role of media discourse in creating power relations is so important that it can divert the attention to somewhere else even in cases like Kildare’s investigation, or favoring a gender over the other while mentioning these crimes can also postpone the revelation of these crimes, or prioritizing certain crimes over the other may create a biased focus and thus give way to other crimes. For instance, if the media had given enough place to Jane Quiq’s murder, the Golem, or Elizabeth Cree, would somehow become satisfied.

This issue can be examined from two different perspectives. As Jane Quiq is a female, her death is connected to her lack of physical power to overcome the murderer; here her weakness gives way to her downfall, as people think. On the other hand, as she is a prostitute, her absence does not evoke much interest as she is the embodiment of the deviance of the Victorian norms. Being aware of this public view, the murderer realizes that her choice of victim is wrong. *“I knew that the common people preferred to turn their lives into the cheapest melodrama, with the taint of the penny gaff, but surely the more educated classes of the newspaper world might aspire a little higher? And then I recalled the scholar. It was an easy thing to kill a whore, after all, and there could be no real or lasting glory in it”* (p. 77).

Furthermore, this discourse is deeply intertwined with power dynamics. The representation of Limehouse in the media is not neutral; it reflects and perpetuates power relations. Journalists, often from more privileged positions, have the power to shape how communities are viewed. By highlighting Limehouse in certain ways, they also contribute to a social narrative that can affect the lives of those who live there. For instance, negative portrayals of Limehouse might lead to public support for more policing or social intervention, reinforcing a cycle of criminalization and surveillance. Conversely, more positive portrayals could lead to gentrification or increased investment, which may benefit some but displace others. Thus, the act of naming and describing a place is never just descriptive - it is always political, shaping the social and economic realities of the residents.

In addition to these immediate effects, the way Limehouse is depicted in the media is also part of a larger cultural discourse that stretches back through history. Representations of Limehouse in literature such as Thomas Burke's *Limehouse Nights* (1912), Sax Rohmer's *Yellow Shadows*, (1926), and Kate Summerscale's *The Wicked Boy: The Mystery of a Victorian Child Murderer* (2016), from the dark depictions in Victorian novels to its portrayal in noir crime fiction, influence how the area is viewed today. This intertextuality reinforces certain ideas about Limehouse as a site of danger, criminality, or vice, even if these representations do not reflect the current reality. By invoking these historical images, journalists do not only report on the present but also participate in an ongoing cultural conversation about race, class, and social order.

Ultimately, when journalists point out Limehouse, they engage in a complex act of representation that shapes both the place itself and the people who live there. Through the language they use, journalists contribute to the creation of social identities and reinforce or challenge stereotypes. They reflect existing power structures, perpetuate certain cultural narratives, and influence public policy and social attitudes. Discourse analysis helps individuals understand how these linguistic choices shape their perceptions and highlights the role of language in constructing social realities.

The word Golem comes from the investigation of Weil's murder scene as his testicles and penis are found on the book pages where he is reading about Golem, a mythical creature without form that spreads fear. Calling the murderer a Golem initially puts Jewish residents into the spotlight as if one of them is the murderer. Moreover, Karl Marx is suspected of Weil's murder because of his former visits to his house. While the media's accounts of the murderer's identity reflect

and shape the majority's social ideology, Marx's discourse shows the minority's humiliation at the hands of institutions.

"So now they call this murderer a golem, do they? So they absolve themselves of their responsibilities, and declare that the Jew is killed by a Jewish monster! Make no mistake about it, gentlemen. It is the Jew who has been killed, not Solomon Weil. It is the Jew who has been violated, and now they wash their hands clean!" (p.92).

Investigation of Marx also reveals social perspective and institutional prejudice reflecting Anti-Semitism as police insistently question him. Marx points out how easy it is to make such a judgment about Jews regarding violent actions and once again socio-political and cultural inequality is criticized for their tendency to blame a Jew for being the golem and making them the scapegoat as a community for disturbing public peace. Conversations between Mr. Gerard and the murderer can also be counted as evidence of the public perception of the crimes:

"That's exactly what I said myself, sir. Shocking. What is it that they call him?"

The Limehouse Golden?"

"Golem."

"It must be some Jew or foreigner, sir, with such a name as that."

"No. I don't believe so. I believe this to be an Englishman's work."

"I can hardly believe it, sir. In the old days perhaps so, but in modern times -" (p. 114)

Mr. Gerard expects the murderer to be a Jew or some outsiders for two reasons. Firstly, the denotation 'golem' suggests a minor group, and secondly in a modern society like Britain such animalistic behaviours are not performed, or at least they are not thought to be like that. The murderer, on the contrary, suggests that this can be an Englishman's work as she thinks they are the products of a magnificent mind and praises English identity as superior to others counted. Thus, definition and description of these murders also varies between the different layers of society. Even though they are poor, illegitimate, illiterate, etc, the ideology of the time favors a foreigner, a Jew to be a criminal, not a Londoner. The text affirms Vulgar Marxism, which argues that literary texts project particular conflicts of particular eras and their political stances.

Social inequalities can be analysed in a more detailed way if we include the backgrounds of the characters under investigation since the reasons for them to become suspects in the crimes are

not only related to coincidences but they also carry certain sociological insights. Born as the daughter of a whore, Lizzie is an outcast in the beginning. Her mother has named her in the name of society 'sin', devil, etc. As an illegitimate child, she is the embodiment of deviation from the norms that are implemented in Victorian society. In this particular society, gender plays a crucial role in locating individuals to certain levels. Being a man puts you above women in hierarchical order, but it is not enough for more. Beyond gender, different variables maintain social status.

Dan Leno is a beloved public figure but at the end of the day, he becomes a clown because of the unrespectability of his profession at those times. George Gissing, on the other hand, is an intellectual with numerous publications but he marries a whore and steal to feed her. Combining these two events, he is not a favorable public figure. Karl Marx, as already mentioned, is a well-known scholar but he is a Jew. Although their relationships with the victims are unfortunate incidents, all these traits are not coincidental in the development of the novel. By picking problematic and outcasted characters, the novel also implies the psychological potential of these suspects for murder. Thus, the discourse becomes a tool for criticizing the stereotypical perception of individuals with certain backgrounds. In addition to social criticism, a historical criticism of accounts for discourse has been made at the beginning of the novel where the extradiegetic narrator explains how late Victorian society is governed by mid-Victorian Era politics. Although industrialization has brought prosperity, there are still some impairments in the society; law, crime, and poverty. Crime, though the main problem of the era, is handled by rejection and solved in isolation from the public eye.

“Only a few years before the woman could have been hanged beside the walls of Newgate Prison, to the delight of the vast crowd assembled there throughout the night, but the chance of such a great performance had been denied her by the progressive legislation of 1868. So, she had to die in mid-Victorian privacy, in a wooden shed that smelled of the sweat of the workmen who had erected it two days earlier” (p. 8).

The passage contrasts two very different ways of dealing with crime and punishment in Victorian England, focusing on the shift from public executions to private ones. The first part of the excerpt “only a few years before the woman could have been hanged beside the walls of Newgate Prison, to the delight of the vast crowd assembled there throughout the night” describes public executions as a kind of spectacle. The phrase “to the delight of the vast crowd” emphasizes how executions were once viewed not just as a legal punishment but as a form of

entertainment for the public. People gather in large numbers, almost enjoying the event, and the word “delight” suggests a sense of enjoyment or even excitement in witnessing another person’s death. This shows how executions are tied to societal power, where the crowd’s pleasure in the execution reflects their control and approval of the punishment.

However, the tone shifts when the passage moves to the woman’s death in the new era: “She had to die in mid-Victorian privacy, in a wooden shed that smelled of the sweat of the workmen who had erected it two days earlier.” The word “privacy” is interesting here, as it stands in stark contrast to the public spectacle described earlier. On one hand, the shift to private executions, following the legislation of 1868, could be seen as more humane- removing the public crowd and the violence of public executions. But the passage also conveys a sense of isolation and coldness through the description of her death. The term “privacy” here feels almost detached, as if the punishment happens in secret, without the public’s involvement. Instead of a dignified end, Elizabeth Cree’s death is described in harsh, uncomfortable terms – “in a wooden shed that smelled of the sweat of the workmen” (p. 8). This imagery makes her execution feel more like an afterthought, a rushed and crude event compared to the elaborate public execution scenes that once drew crowds.

The focus on the “sweat of the workmen” adds to this feeling of detachment. These workers, who are only mentioned in terms of their physical labour, are not given names or identities. The shed itself, built quickly and without ceremony, contrasts sharply with the grand, public spaces of earlier executions. This suggests that, although the process of execution may be more private and progressive, it has also become more impersonal, and disconnected from society.

Reality has been concealed but the problem still exists because from among the crowd comes a new criminal. Coping with problems superficially or directly ignoring them is a historically well-known aspect of the Victorian era. Although it has paved the way for progress and improvement in modernity with the effect of the Industrial Revolution, social issues cannot be counted among them. Another sociohistorical criticism is directed toward child labour by Elizabeth’s records of her childhood which can be regarded as a historical reference. “*Sewing the sailing cloths was exceedingly violent work, and even my leather gloves could not keep the cloth and the needle from chafing my hands. Look at them now, so worn and so raw*” (p. 12). In Elizabeth’s account of her childhood, the description of her work highlights the harshness and brutality of child labour. The phrase “exceedingly violent work” emphasizes the painful and damaging nature of the task, suggesting that it goes beyond just being hard work, but also

physically harmful. Her mention of wearing leather gloves, yet still having raw and chafed hands, reveals how even protective measures are ineffective against the harsh conditions, symbolizing the futility of trying to shield children from exploitation. This personal account critiques the social system that forces children into such labour, showing how their well-being is ignored for economic gain. The focus on her hands - worn and raw - illustrates the physical toll of the labour, making it clear that children's bodies are harmed by such exploitation. This narrative challenges the idea that child labour was acceptable, revealing the dehumanizing effect of the system and urging a reflection on the injustice children faced in such harsh working conditions.

The mixture of historical facts and fiction is a useful tool for analysing historical discourse and social framework. Elizabeth's last and most famous murder is the Gerard Family murder and it is planned after certain references to historical events and literary works. Firstly, Elizabeth finds her inspiration from the Marr Family murder by John Williams, and seeing the Gerard family occupy the house where John Williams' massacre happened, she decides to rewrite and replay the same plot with respect to the murderer. Although there is a sixty-eight-year gap between the two murders, the first event gives way to the second and the writer again shows how certain discourses have an impact on the ways individuals shape their minds. All the characters visiting the Reading Room of the British Museum read the book *On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts* by Thomas De Quincey. It was written after John Williams who committed the murders of the Marr family. Quincey called him an artist. The popularity of the essay may also be the source of public interest in these murders.

"The destroyer of the Marr family was "a solitary artist, who rested in the centre of London, self-supported by his conscious grandeur," an artist who used London as the "studio" to display his works" (p.32). Quincey's comment on the murderer's work can make an individual admire and envy his talent and mind as in Elizabeth's case "I hugged myself in delight when I first read how he had dressed for each murder as if he were going up on the stage" (p.32).

As a murderess, she thought that such a unique place where the artistic setting was still alive should not be home to a clothing family and by taking pride in her talent she prepared a respectful performance for the repetition of the same artistic setting.

Here, these repetitions, allusions to historical characters, and mentions of their works in general, such as Charles Babbage's machine, and how their works of art have inspired individuals add to the intertextuality as a postmodernist feature of the novel. In addition, intertextuality is a

functional unit of CDA as it reflects historical references between the two. Ackroyd, in a postmodernist view, combines fiction and reality by creating intertextuality between them and it becomes a source for CDA. For instance, Babbage's analytical machine and how religious institutions regard his invention form the mentality among the society that these murders are the very results of defying God's power and the society is cursed with a monster in return. *"Perhaps Charles Babbage's creation was the true Limehouse Golem, draining away the life and spirit of those who approached it. Perhaps the digits and the numbers were little chattering souls trapped in the mechanism, and its webs of iron no less than the web of mortality itself. What monstrous creation might it bring forth in years to come?"* (p. 132) Intertextuality can also be traced in the attached denotations of London and Golem. London used to be called the city of red which suggested the violence, chaos, and danger, while Golem is thought to be made of red clay. So the link between these two seems compact in terms of consistency to references. The use of the name Karl Marx is associated with intertextuality combined with ethnic origin. Topicality is another issue while conducting CDA of a text as it reveals the writer's influence on shaping the minds of readers and also shaping the minds of the characters of the novel. In the newspapers, what concerned the producers was not the victims but the golem itself. Therefore, the enthusiastic view of the curiosity about the identity of the golem outweighs the victim's misery.

There is a figure and ground concept. The writer has to create a perspective that influences the reader's perception. By creating such a structure that leaves the reader in between the identity of the murderer, Ackroyd here also trusts his instincts that most of the readers would expect the murderer to be a male and it contributes to his development of the structure. The trick Ackroyd uses to deceive readers is connected to this topical issue. Male identity becomes the figure of the novel, while the actual murderer conceals herself on the ground. By putting male characters into the flashlights, Ackroyd imposes a false notion but already the people of the time would not expect such physical strength and instinct to kill.

As previously mentioned, she cannot distinguish herself and other characters as she cannot dissociate performance and reality. Despite this, her murders can be divided into two categories: ones that are the works of an artist as a performance and others committed by instantaneous fever. The murders mentioned in the diary and made public belong to the former category but her career as a criminal has not started at that point. She reaches the second stage of her life by killing her mother but that is just the beginning. She kills her uncle because he has seen her in

male disguise and wants her to sexually torture him as a reward. She pushes little Victor from the stairs on the grounds that he has touched her; she kills her husband as he has discovered her murders and all related to her real life. Viewed as a whole, she has an organic relationship with all these people.

One might begin to judge her as a real professional because she continuously calls herself for her attitude toward her performance. Her first performance can be said to be the time when she deceives her theatre community about her past, making up a false story about herself as an orphan who stuck to living on her own. Hypocrisy or polyphony is a talent she discovers before going on stage, so much so that while her narration expresses her composure and her ambitions for the past and the future without hesitation, she does not reflect the cold-blooded and emotionless side of the people she knows in the music hall "*Of course she believed my story - who would not?- and throughout my narrative, she patted my hand and sighed*" (p. 75). She has even written a play telling the story of her life but it has not brought much success, but after her death, Dan Leno stages it again.

Her death takes place in reality at the beginning of the novel and on stage at the end. However, she commits these murders to stay unforgettable, and while she projects the murderer as John Cree she prefers not to be a golem to prevent him from gaining fame but to stay as the one who has killed the golem and saved London. Hence, the important thing for her is not to be remembered, but to decide how she will be remembered. She canonizes herself as the savior and destroyer of evil though she herself has literally created all the terror:

"First there was my dear mother. Then came Doris, who saw me. There was Uncle, who soiled me. Oh, I have forgotten Little Victor, who touched me. The Jew was a Christ-killer, you see, as my mother used to say. And the whores of Limehouse were the dirtiest of their kind. He tried to steal my plot. He wanted to change the denouement and expose my little adventures to the world. So then I managed the funniest bit of business. I kept a diary in his name, which will one day damn him before the world. Why should I bear any blame, when I know that I am pure still? When his diary is found, I will be exonerated even for his death. The world will believe I destroyed a monster" (p.237). Reputation is a determinant of her means. Coming into existence as an illegitimate child of a prostitute, she always seeks for a better title and social status. Though she reaches the level of lady, she wants more popularity and fame. The social hierarchy is criticized for the way it drives inhumane instincts.

In short, the novel has a variety of concepts intertwined with critical discourse analysis. Gender, race, religion, and social status as political devices represented from different discourses, and all five narrative voices can be counted as different variables on the same topic each dealing with these concepts based on their backgrounds. Karl Marx's criticism of social discrimination and cultural taboos represents his ideology, and his historical comment on such institutional prejudices becomes a substantial force in the discourse. His discourse as a fictional character and real Karl Marx overlaps with each other enhancing the consistency of the novel as a sociohistorical resource. Elizabeth's narrative voice puts psychological insights into the characterization and development of a sociopath who even can kill children with flashbacks to her traumatic childhood from her sincere expressions but also her disguised voice in the diary parts enables the reader to compare and contrast her past and present in the novel. Additionally, creating a hybrid plot that necessitates a second reading to understand the writer's ideology. Plot can be challenging for analysis since in each reading it becomes the antithesis of the previous reading but as Fairclough (1992) states, the right interpretation does not exist and even the analyses carried out are the products of culturally determined minds.

3.3.1. Gender and Crime in *Dan Leno and The Limehouse Golem*

In *Dan Leno and the Limehouse Golem*, gender plays a significant role in the construction of criminal identities and victim narratives. The relationship between gender and crime is a multifaceted aspect of the novel, revealing insights into Victorian society's views on gender roles, criminality, and morality. Ackroyd's portrayal of gender and its intersection with crime is crucial for understanding the thematic depth of the narrative. Women's roles as passive victims in the narrative reflect societal perceptions of female fragility and moral susceptibility. This representation critiques how women were marginalized and objectified in Victorian society. *The Limehouse Golem*, as the central figure of menace, challenges traditional gender roles and embodies a form of monstrous masculinity that disrupts societal norms. The Golem's crimes and the ensuing investigation reflect societal anxieties about male violence and its implications for both public safety and gender dynamics. Victims of the Golem's crimes, often female, are portrayed through a lens of vulnerability and victimization that underscores Victorian gender norms. The novel explores how women are perceived and treated in the context of crime, highlighting their positions as both victims and symbols of moral decay. The portrayal of female victims in the novel serves to critique the objectification and marginalization of women in a patriarchal society. Generally, the concept of womanhood in the

Victorian era revolved around the idea of 'Angel in the house', a term popularized after the publication of Coventry Patmore's poem *The Angel in the House* (1854). In the Victorian era, women were often idealized as embodiments of virtue, purity, and domesticity, with their primary role seen as that of wives and mothers. Society expected women to remain submissive to their husbands and largely out of the public sphere, with their lives centred around home and family care (Watt, 1992).

This idea was reinforced in literature, poetry, and art, where women were often portrayed as passive and emotional, in contrast to men, who were depicted as strong, active, and rational. A central part of this cultural construct was the emphasis on female chastity and purity. Women who lost their virginity outside of marriage - especially prostitutes or women engaged in extramarital affairs - were labeled as "fallen women", often being marginalized and cast out of society. These societal expectations created a strict framework in which women were defined by their relationships with men and confined within the domestic sphere. Dickens, Eliot, Gaskell, Collins, Gissing, and Hardy each have, in at least one major work, questioned the absolute nature of the two groups of women, the pure and the fallen. They proved there was no one fall, no single disgrace, no automatic placing in categories of purity or prostitution.

Ackroyd's depiction of female characters offers a critical examination of gender roles and expectations. Characters such as Elizabeth, the Golem's female counterpart, and her mother, are pivotal in exploring themes of power, agency, and societal constraints. Elizabeth's role challenges traditional notions of female passivity, as she exhibits both strength and complexity, navigating her position within a male-dominated world.

The character of Elizabeth also reflects the novel's engagement with feminist themes, portraying a woman who defies the constraints of her gender role. Her presence in the narrative highlights the tensions between societal expectations and individual agency, questioning the restrictive norms imposed on women. However, the novel can be regarded as inconsistent in some ways. For example, while revolutionarily depicting a female character who is both physically and mentally capable of committing such murders, the writer also chooses most of the victims from inferior female characters such as Jane Quiq. Worse than that, Elizabeth gives up on murdering women when she realizes that their place in media does not evoke much curiosity and interest. So there appears a controversy: The writer revolutionizes the gender roles creatively in a Victorian setting, but he also shows the female character's power by weakening other characters of the same sex. Another socio-political stance that the writer observes and

reflects in his novel is the negative representation of the female sex by other female characters. In her first narrative voice, Lizzie starts describing her mother's hatred towards her and it is understood that to purify herself, her mother has turned to religion and limited Lizzie's gender knowledge by constantly cursing Lizzie's genitalia by calling it the place where the evil flourish: "There is a place between my legs which my mother loathed and cursed - when I was very little she would pinch it fiercely, or prick it with her needle, to teach me that it was the home of pain and punishment" (p. 17).

As discussed in Section 2.3.1, unresolved emotional trauma can shape the unconscious mind, driving individuals to act out their pain in maladaptive ways, as Jung expresses. Here, after her mother's traumatic behaviours on her physical body, she escapes her sexuality and rejects the sexual performances in her later life. Also, her mother's behaviours are a result of her past experiences, and in a way, she sacrifices her daughter for the sins she has had in her life and makes her daughter pay for her sins. Although she does not continue to work as a prostitute, her past still discomforts her mind so much that she cannot overcome the guilt. In a sense, she passes down her trauma to her daughter to get relief and Lizzie is triggered in her childhood about violence and she copies her mother's psychology about making people pay for her actions; for instance, she commits these crimes on her own but gives her husband to the public as the murderer. Her criminal actions reflect her inner trauma.

Although once a whore, by religious ideology her mother has made herself believe that the female body is the beginning of devastation and once it is given permission, it continuously spreads evil and brings about sinners. With this belief, she burns Lizzie's genitalia with an iron stick. By eliminating Lizzie's production of evil, she purifies herself and makes it even for her afterlife: "Blood for blood" (p. 16). Oppressive patterns in Christianity toward women can be seen as a contagious disease, since it can change a former prostitute's attitude towards her sex.

Ackroyd's novel examines various criminal archetypes and their gendered dimensions. The figure of the Golem as a monstrous and ambiguous entity challenges conventional notions of criminality and gender. The Golem's crimes are not only a reflection of personal pathology but also a manifestation of broader societal fears about gendered violence and moral corruption. The portrayal of Dan Leno himself as a cross-dressing performer adds another layer to the novel's exploration of gender and crime. Leno's performance and public persona blur gender boundaries, challenging traditional notions of masculinity and femininity. His character's intersection with the criminal elements of the story highlights the fluidity of gender identity and

its impact on societal perceptions of crime. While creating such blurry identities to conceal the murderer, the writer also reflects on the media discourse and their insistence on referring to the murderer with the pronoun 'he' in the news. So, although this fluidity gives the novel a sense of sustainable suspense, he carefully depicts the sociopolitical stance towards gender and criminality by displaying medias media-biased attitude which also reflects the current social attachment that men are more likely to perform criminal activities not due to a psychological inferiority but their physical and mental ability to create such scenes of horror.

Sexual identity in general is a fundamental concept in the development of the murderess' character. After her mother's physical abuse and violence, she abandons sexual performance before her puberty, and with choices of male personas in her theatrical performances, she estranges her female identity. As mentioned in Section 2.3.1, trauma can interrupt a person's process of building a view of identity and self, leaving a person with a fragmented sense of self. Here, before understanding her body and femininity, she faces her mother's abuse and rejects any female duty even during her marriage. While inserting the idea of how sinful femininity is, her mother has changed her gender ideology as well, for example, her first victims are women who she believes exemplifies the corrupted women stereotype in her mother's belief.

The development of the murderess' character in relation to sexual identity can be closely connected to trauma, particularly through her experiences of physical abuse and violence at the hands of her mother. Trauma, in this case, disrupts her sense of self and her relationship with her own body, which is often central to the formation of sexual identity. After enduring abuse, she abandons sexual performance before reaching puberty, a decision that can be interpreted as a defence mechanism against the trauma she has experienced. The act of rejecting her own sexual identity is a way of distancing herself from the pain and violation caused by her mother's actions.

Furthermore, her choice to adopt male personas in her theatrical performances is another manifestation of this trauma. By embodying male identities, she not only separates herself from her female identity but also attempts to gain control over her body and the power dynamics she associates with masculinity. This choice reflects an attempt to escape the vulnerability and victimhood she associates with her female identity, perhaps as a response to the abuse and the powerlessness she felt in her past. In this way, trauma does not just alter her sexual identity; it also reshapes her entire sense of self, leading to a profound estrangement from her original gender and a search for control through the performance of masculinity. To underline her defect,

Ackroyd introduces two different models of androgynes to readers, the first one being Dan Leno the great performer well-known for his female personas, and the second Elizabeth who physically and psychologically favors the other sex. While Dan Leno can abandon his female features outside of his theatre, Elizabeth employs male characteristics outside of theatre because real life is a bigger stage.

Taking advantage of gender, Lizzie manipulates people by playing the role of an innocent orphan girl. As an actress, she takes advantage of a male disguise to conceal her crimes and misleads the public who already believes the identity of the murderer is male. Psychologically, she is the embodiment of an abject who has lost the distinction between herself and the other personas she projects. To sustain herself, she excludes sexual practices from her personal life and even hires a maid to fulfill her physical duties to her husband.

In *Dan Leno and the Limehouse Golem*, Ackroyd displays the complex interplay between gender and crime, using his narrative to critique and illuminate Victorian society's views on gender roles, criminality, and morality. Through the depiction of criminal archetypes, victimhood, and the roles of female characters, Ackroyd examines how gender dynamics shape and are shaped by criminal narratives. By creating such a complex criminal web, he investigates the impact of criminal gender on the evaluation of crime. The novel's exploration of these themes offers a nuanced understanding of the intersections between gender, power, and societal norms, contributing to a broader discourse on crime and gender in literature.

3.3.2. Creating Suspense in *Dan Leno and the Limehouse Golem*

In *Dan Leno and the Limehouse Golem*, Peter Ackroyd masterfully weaves an atmosphere of suspense that is perceptible in every aspect of the novel. Through a combination of fragmented narrative techniques, rich atmospheric settings, unreliable characters, and the gradual unfolding of mystery, Ackroyd keeps readers on the edge of their seats. The suspense in the novel is not merely about discovering the identity of the Golem but about the deeper psychological and emotional tension surrounding the characters, their motivations, and the sinister world they inhabit.

One of the most striking techniques Ackroyd uses to build suspense is his fragmented narrative structure. The story is told through a series of shifting perspectives and timelines, with key events revealed in pieces rather than all at once. This method of storytelling creates a sense of mystery and uncertainty, as readers are slowly provided with information about the characters and the gruesome murders that form the novel's central mystery. The multiple viewpoints,

particularly those of Elizabeth Cree and Dan Leno, not only offer different angles on the events but also leave crucial gaps in the reader's understanding. For example, when Elizabeth is introduced, she is a suspect in the murder of her husband, yet her backstory and the circumstances surrounding her actions remain unclear for much of the novel. Readers can only make guesses about her relationship with her husband through the limited mentions. "*It was only in the dead of night that she could escape him when the silence of the room seemed to speak louder than his cruelty*" (p. 105). This gradual revelation adds to the suspense, as the reader is unsure whether Elizabeth is a victim, a villain, or something in between. It is only through the fragmented narrative that her secrets are gradually revealed - such as her troubled relationship with her husband and her potential involvement with the Golem murders - keeping the reader in suspense. As these perspectives slowly merge, the sense of suspense heightens, with readers constantly questioning how the various threads of the narrative will ultimately connect. This inciting information ensures that readers remain on their toes, ever eager to uncover new revelations, yet always wondering if the full truth is being obscured.

The setting of Victorian London, particularly the dark and foggy district of Limehouse, plays a pivotal role in maintaining the novel's atmosphere of suspense. Ackroyd paints a vivid picture of a London teeming with danger and unpredictability. The city itself becomes a character, its shadowy streets and grimy alleys serving as a perfect backdrop for the unfolding drama. For instance, the opening descriptions of Limehouse set the tone for the entire novel, where the foggy, decaying streets, the "stench of the gutters," and the dark shadows that stretch out from alleyways evoke a sense of claustrophobic fear. "*The city of footsteps and flaring lights, of houses packed close together, of lachrymose alleys and false doors, London becomes a brooding presence behind, or perhaps even within, the murders themselves* (p. 38)". Ackroyd's description instantly invokes an atmosphere of foreshadowing. The thick fog that "might have come straight from hell (p. 56)" obscures the city's landmarks and the sense of isolation that pervades the Limehouse district contribute to the overall feeling of unease. This oppressive atmosphere ensures that readers feel the same tension and uncertainty that the characters experience as they navigate the world around them. In this environment, anything seems possible, including a blood-thirsty serious killer or a supernatural force that is responsible for the ill fate of the city. This dark setting reinforces the idea that Limehouse is a place where the line between the mundane and the grim is easily blurred.

At the heart of the suspense is the presence of unreliable narrators. Throughout the novel, Ackroyd introduces characters whose motives are ambiguous and whose pasts remain shrouded in mystery. Elizabeth Cree, the young woman at the centre of the narrative, is particularly enigmatic. Her complex relationship with the events surrounding the murders and her own tortured history leads readers to question her reliability. For example, Elizabeth's account of her marriage to John Cree seems heartfelt, but the more readers learn about her past, the more suspicious her truth becomes. Her interactions with other characters like Dan Leno are portrayed in ways that make readers question her sincerity. The ambiguity around her role in the murders and her relationship with the Golem create psychological tension throughout the book. Similarly, Inspector John Kildare, while persistent in his investigation, is not immune to the fallibility of human perception. His own biases and assumptions often mislead his judgment, causing him to misinterpret crucial evidence. One moment that highlights his unreliable perception occurs when Kildare insists on a certain theory about the Golem's identity, only for this theory to be upended in a later chapter. The ambiguity surrounding these characters creates a sense of psychological tension, as readers are left to wonder how much of what they are being told can be trusted.

Another technique that Ackroyd uses to amplify the suspense is his skilful use of foreshadowing. Throughout the novel, subtle hints and clues are scattered, suggesting future events and potential outcomes. In Chapter 2, the mention of an ominous figure in the shadows - a vague allusion to the Golem - works as a small but important piece of foreshadowing. As the narrative progresses, Ackroyd plants other signs, such as the strange occurrences surrounding Elizabeth's life, which hint at a greater mystery yet to be uncovered. These early indications - whether in the form of cryptic dialogue, brief flashes of foreshadowing, or eerie details in the setting - keep readers engaged, as they try to predict what will happen next. However, Ackroyd is a master of misdirection, often leading the reader down one path only to reveal a different truth later in the story. For example, there are several instances where the narrative seems to suggest one character is behind the killings, only for a later twist to suggest another possibility. For instance, in naming the characters who visit the reading room and reading *On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts* by Thomas De Quincey, the writer pinpoints these characters as possible murderers.

“The Reading Room was the true spiritual centre of London where many secrets might finally be revealed. Indeed, if he had known it, he could have solved the riddle of the Limehouse Golem

beneath the great dome - if not precisely in the manner he might have expected. All the participants in the mystery, willing or unwilling, had come to this place - Karl Marx, George Gissing, Dan Leno, and, of course, John Cree himself' (p. 235).

Later, the story weaves the characters and victims in such a natural way that, when characters such as George Gissing become one of the suspects, no one can object to the idea that he is the murderer. Because these shifts are tied so neatly with the plot, Ackroyd can cleverly raise questions in the readers' minds. This constant shifting between expectation and surprise keeps the tension high, as readers are never entirely sure where the narrative is headed or when the next twist will occur. The interplay between foreshadowing and misdirection heightens the suspense, as the reader's growing sense of anticipation is constantly delayed or reframed by new revelations.

The complexity of Ackroyd's characters adds another layer of suspense. Figures like Elizabeth Cree and Kildare are not mere plot devices but fully realized individuals with complicated inner lives. As their secrets are slowly revealed, readers become increasingly invested in their fates. For instance, Elizabeth's troubled past and the emotional turmoil she faces throughout the novel create a deep psychological suspense. Early in the novel, the reader may sympathize with her as a victim of circumstance, but as the layers of her character are peeled back, including her potential complicity in her husband's death, her true nature becomes more elusive and morally ambiguous. In one particularly tense scene, Elizabeth confronts her fears, acknowledging her connection to the Golem, but her confession remains deliberately vague, forcing readers to grapple with their uncertainty. The reader becomes caught up in her internal struggles, wondering whether she will be able to overcome the forces that threaten her - or if she is herself a part of the very danger that plagues Limehouse. Similarly, Inspector Kildare's pursuit of the truth raises questions not only about the mystery of the murders but also about his capacity for judgment. These characters are not simply there to advance the plot; their personal dilemmas and emotional conflicts deepen the tension, making readers eager to see how their stories unfold.

Ackroyd also incorporates the element of myth, particularly the legend of the Golem, to further unsettle the reader. The Golem, a creature of Jewish folklore believed to be a manmade monster, serves as both a literal and symbolic figure in the novel. As the mysterious killings unfold, the question of whether the Golem is a real, supernatural entity or merely a figment of imagination grows more pressing. The novel constantly plays with this ambiguity, leaving readers unsure

about whether the Golem is truly a supernatural force, a psychological projection, or a result of the characters' collective madness. For example, Elizabeth's increasing references to the Golem in her thoughts and dialogue suggest that she may see it as both a literal and psychological threat. This blurring of myth and reality not only serves to heighten the suspense but also adds a psychological dimension to the narrative. The inclusion of folklore enriches the mystery, turning the murder investigation into a more profound exploration of human nature, fear, and the power of legend, and also reflects the tendency of society to be enchanted by supernatural phenomena instead of analysing events with reason.

Pacing is another key element in Ackroyd's suspense-building technique. The novel alternates between moments of heightened tension and quieter, more introspective scenes. For instance, when Elizabeth is arrested and placed on trial for the murder of her husband, the narrative shifts between intense courtroom drama and moments of private reflection, giving the reader brief pauses before plunging back into the investigation or the unfolding revelations. There are moments of intense action, where the mystery takes sudden and shocking turns, followed by reflective passages that offer insight into the characters' inner worlds. This contrast allows readers to catch their breath while still anticipating the next twist. When the narrative shifts back to action, the tension feels all the more intense, as readers are left hanging on the edge of their seats, wondering what will come next.

Finally, the climax of the novel is marked by a series of revelations that reframes much of what has come before. As the story reaches its zenith, Ackroyd skilfully ties together the various threads of the narrative, revealing the truths behind the Golem and the murders. One such revelation comes when the true identity of the murderer is disclosed, and readers realize that the Golem's presence was both a literal and metaphorical reflection of the dark forces at work in the characters' lives. These climactic moments are both shocking and satisfying, forcing readers to reevaluate everything they thought they knew about the characters and the events that have transpired. For example, it may become necessary to reread the novel to evaluate the style of the diary Elizabeth Cree was writing in her husband's name as it was her ideas that reflected the psychology of a male murderer. Such twists and turns leading up to the final resolution serve to maintain suspense until the very last page, ensuring that readers remain hooked until the final, revelatory moments.

Through these varied and skilful techniques, Ackroyd constructs a suspenseful narrative that is as much about psychological complexity as it is about solving a mystery. The fragmented

structure, atmospheric setting, unreliable characters, and subtle foreshadowing all contribute to a sense of mounting tension that propels the reader through the novel. *Dan Leno and the Limehouse Golem* is not simply a murder mystery; it is a deeply immersive and suspenseful exploration of human nature, fear, and the dark forces that shape our world.

3.4 Analysis of the Novel *The House of Doctor Dee*

It is not easy to categorize the novel *The House of Doctor Dee* written in 1993 as it contains features attributed to historical fiction, Gothic horror, and metaphysical elements. It presents the story of two men: Matthew Palmer who is a modern-day historian and Dr. John Dee who is a 16th-century alchemist and magician trying to find a way to create gold with alchemy. The common point between these characters is a house shared in Clerkenwell, London. The novel has a complex structure because of the shift between two timelines. It also uses interesting symbols, so it creates an atmosphere echoing with metaphors of crime fiction. Ackroyd's novel deals with discourses of history, time, and identity and creates a ground for critical analysis of the topic it addresses. It is organized around conventional structures of crime fiction while tackling issues associated with larger social and historical discourse.

Matthew Palmer inherits a house from his father and moves there but eventually, he realizes that this house is full of ghosts enabling him to have access to an old family memory kept as a secret for years. Ackroyd manages to construct a narrative putting a fictional creation developing around Matthew Palmer and factual elements connecting with John Dee's life. Crime is used as a vehicle to explore philosophical questions concerning identity, the importance of knowledge, and the nature of evil. In the novel, a series of children disappears and it is found that they are used in Dr. Dee's occult experiments.

After inheriting the house in Clerkenwell Matthew starts living in his residence but at the beginning of the novel suspense relating to the house is created with the following lines: "... my father had never mentioned any house in Clerkenwell. He had so many other properties that perhaps this should not have surprised me – except that the others, as far as I knew, were all commercial sites. And this was also the only house he had explicitly mentioned in the course of his bequests to me. Why was it of such importance to him?" (p. 14) Palmer learns that Doctor John Dee, an alchemist who worked for Elizabeth I, lived in this house. Having found out the previous owner of the house, he investigates the mysterious alchemist to get more information about him. In the following chapter, the narrator changes from Matthew to Doctor Dee and he

informs the reader about his life in England in the Renaissance. Dee investigates the ancient city of London, which he thinks was buried underground.

While living in this house, he starts to see ghosts but he cannot be sure whether these ghosts are real or imaginary. As a result of this situation, he slowly becomes unstable and makes the following confession: “[t]hat was why I had seen ghosts rather than real people. That was why I was haunted by voices from the past and not from my own time” (p. 178). Later he thinks that the house is speaking to him and he goes mad gradually. This madness hurts him and leads him to behave like his father.

The novel moves on the stories of two men having some similarities as regards their personality. They are selfish with some psychological problems. There are some events linking the past and present events in the house. A pigeon’s wing is used in such a way. Throwing a book including Dee’s alchemical charts Palmer kills a pigeon violently. After throwing the book and damaging its wing, he brings his heel upon its head and stamps upon it until blood runs onto the book (Ackroyd, 1994, p. 151). A similar dead pigeon is mentioned in Dee’s descriptions. One night he hears a sound and sees his cat running curiously and then the cat drops the single-winged, dead pigeon at his feet. Dee decides to study it in his laboratory and takes it there (Ackroyd, 1994, p. 180). With such events, different periods are presented to readers with multiple dimensions. Including dual timelines in the novel’s setting provides a different layer to the visualization and comparison of the city between different centuries. Ackroyd uses this style to criticize the transformation of the city through a lens that highlights the tension between modernity and human vitality:

“Two centuries ago these streets would have been darker, more malodorous, more treacherous, and they would have been filled with cries, screams, and laughter. But now as I stood with the homeless around me, all I could hear was the vague hum of the neon street lamps and the gusting of the wind around Centre Point. Why was it that, in a place such as this, all the natural sounds seemed fabricated and unreal, while the artificial noise seemed most natural? This city was too bright because it was celebrating its triumph. It had grown steadily larger by encroaching upon and subduing, the energy of its inhabitants. They hardly moved as I made my way towards Charlotte Street” (p. 50).

By describing the city of the past as “darker, more malodorous, more treacherous,” filled with “cries, and screams, and laughter,” the writer evokes a sense of authenticity and raw human life. Reflecting the 16th-century London as full of struggle and emotional expression while

criticizing the impact of modernism on society in Palmer's era, lacking humanlike-reactions and becoming more mechanized. In contrast, the present city is sterile and artificial, with "vague hums" and the cold sound of neon street lamps, suggesting that life has become mechanical and detached from genuine human experience. This comparison serves to emphasize what has been lost in the city's modernization.

The writer's aim here is to underscore the hollowness of progress, where technological triumph is celebrated through the "brightness" of the city, yet this triumph is shown to be self-absorbed and disconnected from the lives of its inhabitants. The phrase "subduing the energy of its inhabitants" reflects the disempowerment felt by individuals in the face of urban expansion, where human agency is increasingly constrained. Additionally, the presence of the homeless amidst this artificial landscape critiques the social inequalities brought about by urban development, highlighting the marginalized individuals left behind by the city's growth. Through this deliberate contrast between past and present, the writer explores how modernization, while expanding the city, also erodes authenticity, human connection, and social equity, ultimately creating a more impersonal and oppressive environment.

Palmer puts the clues coming from historical documents, strange dreams, and ghosts present in the house itself together like a detective, and then he uncovers secrets connected with his past and identity. Especially in Chapter 5, haunting changes the form and directs Matthew to re-enactment of the past events. Like his father performing black magic and sexual rituals, Matthew wants to experience violent sex and invites a prostitute to the house. When they go to the basement with this girl, he has the desire to have sex there by thinking that his father and his father's lover Daniel might have sexual activities there. He states that "*[t]his must have been the corner where Daniel and my father performed their rituals and, as I grew rougher with Mary, I knew it had been used for the same purpose in much earlier times*" (p. 172). Following the event of having desire of sex with prostitute in basement, it is realized that Palmer inherits his father's sexual anomalies. The protagonist remembers the talk he had with his father about his sexual magic rituals.

Unconscious memories haunting Matthew changes his character. He starts to experience his haunted past and his old memories come back but he is not fully aware of the whole process. The ghosts of his past, especially his childhood years, invade him. As a result of these memories, he wants to go deeper into his past and find out more about it. He gets help from old books and his mother's memory. While talking to his mother, he finds out that the couple

adopted him since they did not have their child. The purpose of this adoption is revealed as performing magic and sexual rituals. The sentence he produces after having sex with Mary, the prostitute, gives the clue relating to his father's mistreatment: "When my father made me, he made me strong" (p. 196).

Palmer discovers that her mother knew what his father was doing to him but she says she caught him just once and threatened him by taking him to the police. Since she could not give her husband a child, she has accepted the adoption without being aware of the real purpose behind it. He understands why he has forgotten his childhood and has no people in his memories: "*I knew why now why I had forgotten my childhood, and so forgotten myself. I knew why there were no people in my memories. I had been lost from the beginning*" (p. 201).

As to Doctor Dee, he spends his whole life engaging with the occult. He is obsessed with alchemy and tries to reconcile this with the religious aspect and hence thinks he can have angelic communication. To a certain extent, it is related to cultural anxieties humans have about the limits of their knowledge and the dangers of going deep into the unknown fields. A tension is created with the figure of Doctor Dee since he attempts to uncover the secrets of the universe. It gives the message that Dee's alchemical experiments are a way of reconciling scientific inquiry with mystical beliefs.

Using the Gothic tradition, Ackroyd emphasizes the mysterious and uncanny and puts Dr. Dee into the position of a perpetrator as well as a victim of supernatural crime. With this structure, Ackroyd combines crime with horror and creates a narrative amalgamating the investigation of history with the solution of mystery. The portrait of Dr. Dee illustrated as a person interested in science and black magic enables Ackroyd to create the tension between reason and superstition in this novel. Crime is linked to metaphysical forces transcending the material world. It fits the dual narrative structure that is generated in this novel and blurs the border between present and past as well as reality and fantasy.

3.4.1. Creating Suspense in *The House of Doctor Dee*

In *The House of Doctor Dee*, Ackroyd creates a compelling sense of suspense through a combination of techniques that keep the reader on edge throughout the novel. One of the key methods is his use of a dual narrative structure, where the story alternates between the 16th-century alchemist Dr. John Dee and a contemporary narrator investigating Dee's legacy. As is also evident in *Dan Leno and The Limehouse Golem*, telling the story through a series of shifting perspectives and timelines postpones the revelation of key events all at once. This

shifting between periods prevents the reader from fully understanding the connection between the two timelines until much later, building anticipation and uncertainty as clues gradually unfold. The narrator reflects on his growing unease: “*The house was an enigma, as though it held its secrets within the very bones of its walls*” (p. 87). This disjointed approach heightens the sense of mystery as the reader, like the narrator, is left to piece together the connections. Though not a narrator, the house becomes a character through which the minds of the main characters could be reached. The house stands for the development of trauma and represents three generations who have been affected by trauma; therefore, the house becomes a legacy not only as a physical entity but also as a psychological burden that manifests itself in different eras.

Ackroyd expertly uses the house as a symbol to create a sense of impending reckoning, both for the physical space and for the characters connected to it, particularly the narrator and his father: “*It was as if the house, and therefore my father, was being subjected to some long-overdue judgment*” (p. 86). This moment is significant because it highlights a key moment of tension and suspense in the narrative by suggesting that the truth, long hidden or ignored, is finally coming to light. With its dark history and secrets, the house becomes a metaphor for the past that cannot be ignored forever. The suspense builds as the reader begins to sense that something significant is about to be revealed, but the nature of this revelation remains uncertain.

The idea of “judgement” linked to the house creates an atmosphere of foreboding. The house, once a place of comfort or normalcy, is now seen as a site where the wrongs of the past will be confronted. By drawing this connection between the house and the father, Ackroyd builds psychological suspense. The narrator feels that both the house and his father are being judged for their past actions, but the specific nature of those actions remains unclear, creating a sense of mystery. The reader is left wondering what the house might reveal about the father’s past and how these revelations will affect the narrator. This uncertainty and the gradual build-up of the house’s role in the story intensify the suspense.

Ackroyd also uses this moment to foreshadow that something significant is about to happen. The phrase “long-overdue judgement” suggests that the truth has been delayed, and now it is time for that truth to emerge. This slow build-up of anticipation keeps the reader engaged, as they expect that the past, especially the father’s role in it, will soon come to light. The suspense is maintained through the gradual unveiling of these truths, keeping the reader on edge as they anticipate the consequences of this long-awaited revelation.

The idea of judgment also introduces the theme of moral reckoning. The house, as a symbol of the past, holds within it the weight of actions that are now catching up with the characters. The suspense here is not just about what will be revealed, but how it will affect the characters involved, especially Matthew Palmer himself. Will the truth about his father change his understanding of their relationship? Will it force him to confront uncomfortable aspects of his own identity? The tension created by this uncertainty ensures that the reader remains invested in the story, eager to see how the judgment will unfold and what it will mean for the characters. Through examining the revelation of the events and the connection between Doctor Dee and his father, Matthew Palmer's traumas can be fully understood and analysed within the frame of psychological views mentioned in Section 2.3.1.

Tension in the novel comes from both Matthew's internal struggles and external conflicts. As he investigates the strange events in Doctor Dee's house, Matthew is forced to confront his own beliefs. He is a modern man, grounded in logic, but the more he uncovers, the harder it becomes to explain things rationally. "*Sometimes, I'm convinced that there's a madman somewhere in this house*" (p.133). His fears and conflicts with his logic are not a result of pure exaggeration but his experiences in the house create such suspense that the reader can share the feelings of Palmer's insanity. As a researcher, he is a man of logic and concrete evidence, but his instincts and unease with the house and life of Doctor Dee force him to evaluate his core values about superstition and the supernatural.

Foreshadowing is another aspect that pinpoints not only the shift in the story and events taking place but also the shift in the narrator's understanding of his life and past and beliefs about the people surrounding him. While he starts to investigate Doctor Dee's life to make meaning out of his experiences and comfort himself about the house, he understands that what people cannot witness can be harder to acknowledge later. Following the information he has gathered about Dee, he understands that there is no consensus about Doctor Dee's contemporaries on his character and work. "*The past is difficult, you see. You think you understand a person or an event, but then you turn a corner and everything is different once again*" (p. 134). This is not just a conclusion about Dee, but a broader foreshadowing that he is on the edge of changing his beliefs about people around him. The narrator's understanding of the past - whether it's the history of the house, his father, or Dr. Dee - is incomplete and subject to change. The imagery of "turning a corner" indicates a shift in perspective, where new information or revelations will drastically alter the narrator's perception of past events. This foreshadows how the narrator's

understanding of his father and their family history will be challenged. As the story unfolds, what initially seems clear or understood about the characters or their actions is repeatedly overturned, revealing deeper complexities and hidden truths. Just as the narrator suggests that the past is “difficult” and not easily understood, the novel itself plays with the idea that the truth about the house, Dr. Dee, and the family’s past is layered.

3.4.2. The Impact of Child Abuse on the Development of Self: Mathew Palmer

In *House of Doctor Dee*, Mathew Palmer’s psychological fragmentation is shaped by the abuse he experienced from his father and the emotional neglect from his mother. Jung’s theory of the psyche explained in section 2.3.1 emphasizes the need for the integration of both conscious and unconscious parts of the self to achieve wholeness. However, Mathew’s unresolved trauma starting with his lack of childhood memories and mind gap regarding those years leaves him with a fractured sense of self, which prevents him from developing a coherent identity. His trauma is further complicated by his unconscious repetition of his father’s abusive sexual behaviours, which reinforce his emotional wounds.

One significant moment in Mathew’s psychological breakdown occurs when he learns that his father’s partner, Daniel, was not only his father’s assistant but also a lover. This revelation forces Mathew to confront a new layer of his father’s identity, deepening his emotional turmoil and confusion. Mathew’s father’s abuse is at the core of his psychological struggles. The violence and manipulation Mathew endured remain deeply buried in his unconscious, contributing to the formation of what Jung calls the *shadow*, which holds repressed emotions and unresolved conflicts. These experiences foster feelings of anger, shame, and self-loathing, which Mathew is unable to process or fully understand. As a result, rather than achieving psychological healing, Mathew remains fragmented, unable to integrate these painful experiences into his sense of self. His trauma prevents him from moving toward individuation - the process of becoming a complete, whole person.

Following such a traumatic confession, occurs another great moment for Mathew. His realization about being adopted and his traumatic past marks an important turning point in his psychological journey:

“Now I recognized the source of her rage and bitterness, even on those occasions when they had been directed against me. My father ... what had he wanted from me? What had Daniel called it? Sexual magic? I knew now why I had forgotten my childhood, and so forgotten myself. I knew why there were no people in my memories. I had been lost from the beginning. It was

only with unbearable exhaustion that I could look upon that period of my life which I thought to have forgotten, but which in fact had formed me” (p. 176).

His acknowledgment of having “forgotten” his childhood and the reasons behind it speaks to the profound impact of trauma on memory and identity. Jungian psychology offers insight into how deeply traumatic experiences, especially those rooted in early childhood, can disrupt the formation of a consistent sense of self. Mathew’s statement, “*I knew now why I had forgotten my childhood, and so forgotten myself,*” reflects the defence mechanisms of repression and dissociation, where the mind suppresses painful memories to protect the individual from overwhelming emotional distress. The absence of memories - *there were no people in my memories* - indicates an unconscious strategy that allowed Mathew to distance himself from the traumatic experiences of abuse and emotional neglect. However, despite the lack of conscious recollection, these repressed memories continue to shape Mathew’s sense of self, demonstrating that trauma is not eradicated but instead buried within the psyche, exerting a lasting influence.

His recognition that these forgotten experiences “formed” him underscores the enduring impact of early trauma on the individual’s psychological development. While the memories were inaccessible to his conscious mind, they still played a crucial role in shaping his adult identity. This aligns with Jung’s theory that unresolved childhood experiences, particularly those rooted in trauma, leave an indelible mark on the psyche, affecting behaviour, relationships, and self-perception. The disconnect from his past, along with the confusion surrounding his identity, signals a fractured sense of self that is further exacerbated by his adoption and the emotional void it creates.

The “unbearable exhaustion” he experiences when confronting his past reflects the immense psychological strain of revisiting repressed memories. The process of recalling and facing these traumatic experiences requires significant emotional effort, highlighting the difficulty of confronting deeply buried trauma. In Jungian terms, such emotional burdens, though repressed, cannot be entirely erased; they must be acknowledged and integrated into the conscious self to facilitate healing.

Aside from these, Mathew’s sense of being “lost from the beginning” encapsulates the disorientation caused by his trauma and adoption. The emotional displacement resulting from abandonment by both his biological and adoptive parents contributes to his inability to establish a stable sense of identity. This realization marks the beginning of Mathew’s difficult journey

toward integrating the fragmented aspects of his self, as he begins to understand how his past has shaped his present.

In addition, Mathew's emotional neglect by his mother only adds to the effects of his father's abuse. Instead of offering comfort or protection, his mother remains distant and emotionally unavailable though she regretfully claims otherwise. This lack of maternal support further hinders Mathew's emotional development, reinforcing his sense of disconnection and fragmentation. Without a healthy, integrated self-image, Mathew struggles to make sense of his experiences and identity. The absence of a nurturing mother figure leaves Mathew unable to internalize a stable, positive sense of self. Since Mathew's mother is emotionally unavailable, he is deprived of the healthy maternal influence that could have helped him develop a balanced sense of self. Even, she confesses that she suspected them, the father and child, of having a relationship. Thus, instead of becoming a protective shield for him, she sometimes thinks of it as a mutual relationship with wilful sexual performance. That is why he is left to face his trauma alone, with no guiding force to help him process his painful experiences.

His trauma is further complicated by his adoptive mother's response to his father's abuse. Unlike a biological mother, who might have a more instinctive connection to her child, Mathew's adoptive mother does not offer the emotional nurturing or protective support one would expect. When Mathew is subjected to abuse by his father, his adoptive mother's reaction is not one of comfort or intervention but rather of fear and passivity. She attempts to address the situation by threatening Mathew's father with police involvement, hoping this would stop the abuse. While her threat may reflect a desire to protect Mathew, it reveals a deeper inability to act decisively or to provide the kind of emotional security a child needs in such circumstances. She says "*I had to go along with it because I knew that I could never give him any children*" (p. 176). From a psychological perspective, Mathew's adoptive mother's response illustrates a failure to embody the protective and stabilizing aspects of the maternal archetype, which are essential for emotional development. Rather than shielding Mathew from harm or offering a comforting refuge, she takes a more passive and fearful approach. This lack of maternal intervention is deeply damaging for both sides. As a female, she is not gifted with bearing a child and she suffers to perform mother instincts to protect him or even stand against anything that might harm him. On the other hand, because Mathew's adoptive mother is unable to confront the father's abuse directly, her role in his life is insufficient, and he grows up feeling abandoned not only by his father's cruelty but also by his mother's inability to protect him.

Furthermore, Mathew's adoptive mother's response highlights the complex dynamics of the abuse. Her fear of confronting his father suggests a power imbalance that leaves her feeling powerless to intervene effectively. Instead of confronting the source of Mathew's pain, she chooses a more passive approach - threatening to involve the authorities rather than taking action herself. This fear and lack of agency contribute to Mathew's psychological fragmentation, as he witnesses his mother's inability to act as a protector. The absence of a strong, decisive maternal figure reinforces his sense of helplessness, leaving him with unresolved emotional wounds. This dynamic emphasizes the importance of not only the father's abuse but also the mother's failure to protect, both of which contribute to Mathew's sense of self-alienation and confusion.

In light of these dynamics, Mathew's feelings of abandonment and unworthiness are compounded. His adoptive mother's failure to offer consistent emotional care or protection, combined with his father's cruelty, creates a foundation of instability that marks his development. This lack of maternal presence and support leaves Mathew feeling emotionally isolated, intensifying the fragmentation of his sense of self and complicating his ability to form healthy relationships in adulthood. His trauma is not just a result of physical abuse but also a consequence of emotional neglect and the absence of a mother who could provide the nurturing, stabilizing force he needed.



CHAPTER IV. CONCLUSION

In this study, two crime novels *Dan Leno and the Limehouse Golem* and *The House of Doctor Dee* written by prolific writer Peter Ackroyd have been analysed in terms of Critical Discourse Analysis. The study aims to find out the techniques and strategies employed by the author to create suspense and develop tension in these novels as well as the motives forcing the criminals. In addition, the victim's agony relating to the process is uncovered in the analysis. This study sets out to explore how these novels engage with crime, identity, and trauma, and how discourse shapes readers' understanding of these themes.

In the study, crime fiction has been chosen as the genre of analysis as it focuses on the crimes committed in literary works and identifies the criminals while exploring the motives behind these crimes. It also reveals truths concerning the influence of social and cultural structures on crimes. Crime novels typically have a structure involving the commitment of a crime, an investigation to find the guilty parties, and the revelation of the criminals to get some form of justice. This quite popular genre just now has evolved into some subgenres such as detective fiction, legal thrillers, suspense thrillers, etc.

Crime novels have suspense as their essential component for creating tension and captivating readers' attention. Within crime novels, suspense is heightened through certain literary devices such as foreseeing, delays in explaining key information, and the presence of mysteries not only detectives or amateurs acting like detectives but readers must solve. As discussed in Chapter 2, crime novels generate interest by posing questions concerning causality and temporality to encourage readers to speculate about what will happen next. Suspense, a central element of crime fiction, was shown to arise from a variety of techniques, including mimesis, where events are presented as a reflection of real life, creating tension and anticipation. This study also revealed that childhood trauma plays a crucial role in shaping criminal behaviour in many crime novels, with past experiences significantly influencing the characters' actions and identities. In Ackroyd's novels, the impact of trauma was evident, as characters' pasts complicated their relationships with crime and violence.

In Chapter 2, the main theoretical framework Critical Discourse Analysis has been introduced to make how language expresses ideologies and power relations in society clear. The relationship between discourse and social structures has been explained and the reflection of

individuals' ideologies through language choices has been discussed. Individuals realize various roles in society through interaction and shape their identities. By examining how Ackroyd uses discourse, it became clear that language not only shapes the characters' perceptions of themselves but also influences how readers interpret the narrative. CDA allowed for a deeper examination of the social and political contexts embedded in the texts, showing how the language in these novels goes beyond simple storytelling to comment on broader societal issues. Furthermore, intertextuality referring to the interconnectedness of texts has been tackled since texts are not isolated but interconnected to display societal changes. As Ackroyd's works often reference historical events and earlier literary traditions, they provide additional layers of meaning for the reader. These points have been discussed to give a theoretical background for the analyses of the novels.

The analysis of childhood trauma as a recurring theme in crime novels revealed a significant and complex connection between early life experiences and later criminal behaviour. In the novels analysed, trauma is often presented as a foundational element that deeply impacts the psychological and emotional development of the characters. This trauma, whether caused by neglect, abuse, or other experiences, often becomes a driving force in shaping the characters' actions, decisions, and perceptions of themselves and the world around them. In Ackroyd's works, this theme is particularly prominent, where the protagonists Elizabeth Cree's and Matthew Palmer's pasts play a crucial role in defining their relationships with crime, morality, and violence. For instance, the characters' early traumatic experiences often serve as the motivation and inclination for their involvement in criminal activity, leading them to either act out violently or engage in morally questionable behaviours. These experiences create internal conflicts, as the characters struggle with the tension between their desires for redemption and their darker impulses shaped by their traumatic pasts. The novels highlight how unresolved childhood trauma can leave lasting psychological scars that influence the characters' sense of identity, ultimately complicating their moral decisions and their interactions with others. Ackroyd's exploration of this theme underscores the idea that crime and violence are not simply acts of deviance but are often intertwined with deeper psychological wounds, which, when left unchecked, can perpetuate cycles of criminal behaviour.

In Chapter 3, the crime novels have been analysed and the truth behind the crimes committed has been explicated. In the first novel, *Dan Leno and The Limehouse Golem* the character development of Elizabeth Cree, the setting of the house in late Victorian London, and the

postmodern elements used by the author have been highlighted. The inclusion of the names of historical figures has been evaluated as regards intertextuality and polyphonic narration. It was shown that the novel has a complex narrative structure with many mysteries to keep readers busy with the solution of the layered mysteries. Ackroyd's exploration of social ideologies, gender roles, and cultural taboos has been shown to the readers to make them question societal norms and power relations. The suspense in the novel was created through a gradual revelation of mystery and the blending of historical fact with fiction.

The second novel combining elements of historical fiction, Gothic horror, and metaphysical mystery connected with ghosts and the supernatural has presented the dual stories referring to the past and present at the same time. The novel focuses on the themes of history, time, identity, and the limits of human knowledge. Dr. Dee was introduced as a figure devoting his life to scientific inquiry and mystical beliefs but reached nothing in the end. Thus, the tension between reason and superstition has been questioned parallel to the story of Matthew Palmer who has been exposed to sexual abuse by his adopted father and tried to forget everything relating to his childhood. In *The House of Doctor Dee*, the supernatural and psychological trauma formed the basis for suspense, with characters wrestling with their troubled pasts.

This study contributes to the broader understanding of crime novels by demonstrating that suspense is not merely a plot device but also a way to explore deeper psychological and social themes. By addressing the effects of childhood trauma, this thesis adds to the conversation about the psychological dimensions of crime fiction. Furthermore, the application of CDA to the analysis of discourse and identity provides a fresh perspective on how language shapes both the narrative and the reader's interpretation of characters and events.

Despite its contributions, the study has some limitations. The focus on only a selected number of novels limits the scope of the analysis, and there may be other works in the crime genre that engage with these themes in different ways. Future research could broaden the range of novels studied, especially those that address contemporary social issues or come from various cultural contexts. It would also be interesting to explore how other forms of discourse, such as media representations of crime or the language of the criminal justice system, influence crime fiction.

In conclusion, these crime novels displayed that societal conventions can put pressure on individuals and they can develop certain traumas affecting not only their own lives but the others living in the same environment as them. Sooner or later the traumas experienced by

individuals will come into daylight and lead them to behave under their influences. Both novels demonstrated that crime fiction is not only about criminal acts but also about the emotional and psychological complexities of the characters involved. At their core, these novels are a complex fusion of narrative techniques, psychological depth, and social commentary, which together create a rich and multifaceted reading experience. By examining how suspense is carefully crafted, the role of childhood trauma in shaping criminal behaviour, and the powerful influence of discourse on identity and power dynamics, this study has contributed to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the crime genre. Through these themes, crime fiction becomes not only a tool for entertainment but also a mirror reflecting the complexities of human behaviour, societal pressures, and the moral ambiguities of criminality.

The exploration of suspense, for example, reveals how crime novels go beyond mere plot-driven tension to examine the psychological and emotional states of both characters and readers, creating a deeper connection with the narrative. The theme of childhood trauma, which plays a pivotal role in shaping criminal behaviour, adds another layer of complexity, suggesting that crime is often not just an act of violence but also a consequence of past pain, unresolved conflict, and psychological scars. Furthermore, the application of Critical Discourse Analysis has highlighted how language within crime novels is not only a means of storytelling but also a powerful tool for constructing social identities, influencing perceptions of power, and reflecting broader cultural and historical contexts.

By weaving together these diverse elements, Ackroyd's works, in particular, serve as examples of how crime novels can serve as both a form of entertainment and a medium for social and psychological exploration. This study reinforces the idea that crime fiction is more than just an exploration of criminal acts; it is a space in which the darker aspects of human nature, societal structures, and moral dilemmas are interrogated. As crime fiction continues to evolve, it remains a vital genre that provides insight into the complexities of the human condition, exploring how society defines and responds to crime, identity, and justice. Through these works, a deeper understanding of criminal behaviour and a more profound reflection of the forces that shape our perceptions of morality, identity, and the human psyche are developed.

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