

CHAPTER 6

EMBODIED SPACES

6.1 Introduction

The human body is space in itself and is embedded in surrounding spaces. The human body-mind is also capable of creating such surrounding spaces by physically building them or conceiving fictional geographies and social spaces. From architecture to artificial islands and even the International Space Station, humans have created places of habitation within the physical space. In the realm of ideation, however, spatial creation and design is boundless. Fictional and virtual (digital) spaces are examples that create alternate dimensions of spatiality. Among these multitudes of spaces, crime fiction and especially the Police Procedurals seems to latch on to the tangibility of spaces, especially the embodied space.

Low (2011) defines embodied space as the “location where human experience and consciousness take on material and spatial form. . . The space occupied by the body, and the perception and experience of that space contract and expand in relationship to a person’s emotions and state of mind, sense of self, social relations, and cultural pre-dispositions” (467). Police Procedurals highlight this corporeality and the existing social relations through an emphasis on the investigation. The investigation of crime, especially that of murder, fixates on the corpse (the victim and evidence) and the criminal or murderer who becomes the tangible face to the act of crime. A procedural is not just about who committed the crime, but also why the crime was committed. It bridges the crime and the intent, the physical act and the psychological motive, and the human body (effect) and social circumstances that initiated that act (cause). As mentioned by Canter (2002), “the victim takes on significance in the offender’s self-constructed life story that is reflected in how the body of the victim is violated” (n.p.).

The embodied space, therefore, mirrors society and gives us an insight on existing social relations.

Although not all crimes are inflicted on the human body, such as white-collar crimes (for example, forgery, bribery, embezzlement), James' Dalgliesh series discusses cases that involve violations of the human body. While sci-fi crime narratives have plots with cyborg or artificial intelligence related crimes, this study looks at P.D. James' representations, which solely involve crimes on the corporeal. This chapter explores the representations of human body under the categories of the vulnerable, the disabled and the violated. Violation of the human body includes various kinds of assault, such as, physical, sexual and emotional, however, for this study, the violated body refers to the corpse of the murdered victim.

According to Heise (2020):

Detective fiction is a literature animated by dead bodies. From the locked rooms and train cars of Golden Age mysteries to the back alleys and mean streets of hardboiled fiction, dead bodies litter the genre. If the corpse is seemingly a necessity to this literature, we nevertheless are confronted with the question of what the corpse means. For the detective, the initial questions are invariably the hows and whys of a particular murder, yet these quickly deepen, I want to suggest, into more fundamental and categorical questions pertaining to the very nature of time and space in the genre. This is true because the corpse signifies for the detective a past that has to be recovered and reconstructed and a spatial disruption that has to be contextualised and explained. The corpse's shocking presence breaks the seamless flow of time and throws into relief the world around it. (219)

The corpse encapsulates time and space and interacts with the detective to narrate a story. This interaction of the dead with the living and the living with the dead is important in a procedural.

It reminds us that the investigating officers are human figures and representatives of human civilisation that enforces an evolving law and order. The Procedurals, and significantly that of James, move beyond the able-bodied. This chapter reads the human body in a constant state of transition: the ageing, recovering, decaying, growing, thereby, becoming a part of the liminal space.

6.1.1 Liminal Space

Arnold van Gennep in his work *Les Rites de Passage* (Trans. *The Rites of Passage* (1960)) published in 1908, introduced the concept of liminality through a “scheme of rites of passage”, which are, “preliminal rites (rites of separation), liminal rites (rites of transition), and postliminal rites (rites of incorporation)” (11). In his anthropological study, he observed ceremonial rites that initiated transition of an individual from one stage of social situation to the next, such as “birth, social puberty, marriage, fatherhood, advancement to a higher class, occupational specialization, and death” (Van Gennep 1960, 3). These transitions are universal even though the rites and practices vary across cultures. For example, in Indian scriptures, these stages are categorised as *brahmacharyam*, *grihasti*, *vanaprastham*, and *sanyasam* (Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2005, 86–87).

In 1969, Victor Turner applied the concept of liminality to study the rituals of Ndembu tribes of northwestern Zambia. He emphasises the close relationship between social practices with the environment:

In the social sciences generally, it is, I think becoming widely recognized that religious beliefs and practices are something more than “grotesque reflections or expressions of economic, political, and social relationships; rather are they coming to be seen as decisive keys to the understanding of how people think and feel about those

relationships and about the natural and social environments in which they operate.
(Turner 1991, 6)

This implied that liminality as a social process is dependent on the social and physical spaces that facilitate these processes. Tally establishes this spatiality of liminality by distinguishing the word liminal from limit.

According to Tally (2016) “the word ‘limit’ comes from the Latin root word ‘*limes*’”, and the word liminal comes “from ‘*limen*’ which means ‘threshold’ and is distinct from ‘*limes*’ because it does not indicate an “enclosure” or “delimited territory” (xi). Therefore, the liminal space allows fluidity and transition, wherein one cannot demarcate where the space begins and ends. ‘*Limen*’ indicates a “space of potentiality”, a space of “opening, unfolding, or becoming” (xi). Exploring the etymological origins of the word, Downey *et al* (2016) explain:

. . . the Latin word “*limen*” (from “*lmn*”) had already registered a human as well as a geophysical dimension: it originally meant a “harbour”, a place where the sea and the land met, as well as a “threshold” or “passage” to be crossed – both a geophysical boundary and a symbolically ritualised site or space of human movement and transition. To speak of space was thus to speak of how space was occupied – and by whom – and the ways in which space in turn affected and determined the behaviour of those who occupied it, passed through it, and interacted with it. As Kathleen M. Kirby illustrates, discourses such as psychoanalysis allows us to grasp the extent to which it is not only the space that defines the subject but the subject that defines space. The subject is an effect of space, but the space that effects it is subjective. Subjectivity is a continual process of negotiation with space, of attempting to locate and reassure one’s self of one’s limits and to confirm the place of reality. (10–11)

Liminality, therefore, inherently establishes the spatial-subject correlation, wherein the subject itself, as argued earlier, is a part of the space, and interacts with it through its subjectivity.

Overarchingly, it can be said that crime fiction is a literary genre that deals with this subjectivity. It aims to understand the complicated psyche, psychological deviations, and repressed emotions that might result in committing a crime. The Dalgliesh series also reflects on the physical deviations from what we understand as ‘healthy’ and ‘nourished’. The series is abundant with spaces that provide medical care and convalescence. Inevitably, the characters are either providing or receiving medical assistance. In *Cover Her Face* (1962) we have the ailing bedridden Simon Maxie; in *Mind to Murder* (1963) we have the Steen Clinic that offers psychiatric treatment; in the third novel, *Unnatural Causes* (1967), there is Sylvia Kedge who walks using crutches and Dorothy Seton who commits suicide due to “manic depression”. This chapter will focus on *The Black Tower* (1975) and *A Taste for Death* (1986) in detail, to understand the liminal embodied space.

6.2 Vulnerable and Disabled Bodies

Police Procedurals are inclined to represent police officers in a humane light, such as Rendell’s Inspector Wexford, tormented by health ailments and concern for his daughters Sheila and Sylvia (Rendell 1997; 1995). The suffering detective from the Golden Age, affected by PTSD, such as Sayers’ Whimsey and Doyle’s Holmes, has percolated to successive forms (Gillies, 2019, 40).

The character Adam Dalgliesh, is a mix of the traditional genius detective and the modern police officer. He is the “Yard’s maverick” and “Commissioner’s blue-eyed boy”, known for his total recall, and the least time taken to solve his case (*A Certain Justice; The Black Tower*). At the same time, he is also an exhausted middle-aged man, tired from his long hours of continuous work. A poet, he often contemplates on the process of ageing and

complains of not retaining the energy he once had. In *A Taste for Death*, James writes, “He was surprised to find himself tired. He expected to be exhausted later in an investigation when he would be working a sixteen-hour day, but this early heaviness, the feeling that he was already spent in mind and body, was new to him. He wondered whether it was the beginning of age or one more sign that this case was going to be difficult” (68). Consequently, he considers retiring from the profession but is uncertain about making the ultimate decision.

In the final novel of the series, *The Private Patient* (2008), James iterates, “This was not the most horrific corpse he had seen in his years as a detective, but now it seemed to hold a career’s accumulation of pity, anger and impotence. He thought, *Perhaps I’ve had enough of murder*” (138). The novel ends with the indication that this would be Dalgliesh’s last case as he passes on the baton to Miskin (*The Private Patient* 360). According to Priestman (2010), Dalgliesh as an erudite poet, “retains some of his predecessors’ special status” such as Christie, Sayers and Allingham’s “well-bred sleuths” (1). However, “[t]he choice of a career policeman as her detective hero was not unprecedented, but helped to move the genre’s center of gravity away from the gentrified pre-war world” (Priestman 2010, 1). The police officer’s professional duties deprive the individual (the officer beyond his professional identity) a private space. “Policing is a 24/7 operation” (Reidy 2020, 484), where officers are subjected to “long and irregular work hours, shift work, sleep deprivation and the inherent physical and psychosocial danger associated with the job” (Fekedulegn *et al* 2017, 43), resulting in “physical”, “mental” and “emotional” fatigue (Violanti, 2018).

The failure in solving the case or the failure in preventing a crime from happening deeply impacts the officer’s psychological well-being. There are moments when Dalgliesh is “filled with a terrible sadness fused with the bitterness of failure, a burden which he knew he had to accept and live with” (*The Lighthouse* 255). Additionally, there are circumstances when Dalgliesh is physically injured, hospitalised, or quarantined on being infected with the SARS

virus. *The Black Tower* (1975) begins and ends with Dalgliesh in a hospital. He is misdiagnosed with leukaemia, later rectified as “atypical mononucleosis” complicated by pneumonia. His ill health makes him uncertain about continuing in his profession at the police force and he craves to distance himself from a life of crime and violence. Hence, he decides to attend to a few private matters while he is in convalescence and visits the fictional Toynton Village in Dorset, where the story is set.

6.2.1 Spaces of Imprisonment

In a letter addressed to Dalgliesh, Father Baddeley invites him to visit his house, Hope Cottage, Toynton Grange, Toynton Village. Toynton Grange is a private property functioning as a hospice that is situated among the high cliffs and there is a warning against people trespassing. The Toynton Village has cottages where the employees of the Grange reside. Eric Hewson is the “resident medical officer” who lives in Charity Cottage with his wife Maggie who is a nurse (*The Black Tower* 23). The other staff members include nurse Helen Rainer and Dennis Lerner, and matron Dorothy Moxon. The Toynton Grange and the cottages are owned by Wilfred Anstey, except for a sea-facing cottage that belongs to a diplomat, Julius Court. The Grange houses and cares for the disabled. It has six patients who do not have much scope for medical improvement and are bound in wheelchairs.¹¹

The Grange is architecturally a small Elizabethan manor house that was rebuilt after a fire in 1843, by Anstey’s great grandfather. This is yet another example of domestic space that is remodelled and used as a space of healthcare and convalescence as discussed in the previous chapter of this study. By 1887, at the age of 69, Anstey locked himself in the Black Tower and starved himself to death. The Tower is a tomb, and symbolic of death, seclusion, masochistic

¹¹ The six patients include: Victor Holroyd, Grace Willison, Ursula Hollis, Jennie Pegram, Henry Carwardine and Georgie Allan.

trauma and a “claustrophobic cell” (166). Dennis Lerner describes, “It looks magical, unreal, a folly built to amuse a child. And underneath there’s horror pain, madness and death” (111). The Black Tower is a metaphor of the Toynton Grange, and hence relevant as the title of the novel.

The Grange is an “aberration” (15). Firstly, it is spatially located on the coast but does not face the sea, and secondly, because it isolates itself from the rest of the village and forms an enclosed community of the disabled. It is “not registered as a nursing home” and is “only a home for the young and chronic sick and disabled” (31). The Grange has a “KEEP OUT” sign at the entrance that asserts its status as “private” property (14). It also warns people that there are “DANGEROUS CLIFFS” with no access to the beach (14). Usually, nobody arrives at the headlands and we are told that even the locals avoid it. The ground floor of the Grange is used for the patients’ bedrooms and the old stables are used as “sheltered patio for the patients’ wheelchairs” (69). James highlights that it is difficult to find staff to work at such a “remote specialized place” (93). The spatial delimitation extends to the physiological where the body itself is deprived of movement and even vision (since the Grange faces away from the sea). The Grange is also away from the city space, situated in remote parts of the countryside, establishing its world away “from the hazards and inconveniences of a world aggressively organized for the healthy and able-bodied” (75).

For Dalgliesh, boundaries are beyond the structural and geographical. He is alienated at multiple levels – from the society due to his vulnerable health, from his home in the city to a countryside where he is an outsider, and as a police officer in a civilian community:

It was as if they saw him now merely as a police officer, an unwelcome intruder of uncertain allegiance, a potential spy. He drove away from Toynton Head early every morning and returned late each night to darkness and silence. Neither the police activities nor the life at Toynton Grange touched him. He continued the daily,

compulsive exploration of Dorset like a prisoner on licence and looked forward to the inquest as the final day of release. (243).

This alienation from the community makes him feel entrapped. Thus, he equated himself to a prisoner, an antithetical position to his profession. The geographical space thus transforms into a prison-like location. However, unlike the patients at the Grange, Dalglish has mobility and freedom to traverse. The patients are physically (bodily) and geographically bound and imprisoned.

The Black Tower (1975) is a medium through which James addresses the issues of disability. The human body, according to James, is like a prison when it refuses to act according to the will of the mind. Seeking assistance for basic activities, James highlights the internal monologues that a disabled individual might go through. She writes, “My body is my prison; and I would be so obedient to the Law, as not to break prison; I would not hasten my death by starving or macerating this body. But if this prison be burnt down by continual fevers or blown down with continual vapours, would any man be so in love with the ground upon which that prison stood, as to desire rather to stay there than go home?” (83). This quote justifies the geographical and physiological space as a single unit. Cheyne (2019) reinforces how the geographical, physiological and social space impact and affect each other by defining disability as “a complex attribute arising from the intersection of bodyminds with the natural or built environment, social expectations, systemic barriers, and cultural norms” (9).

For the patients at Toynton Grange, the only access of movement is through the wheelchair, which is, ironically, in this crime fiction, a medium of social deprivation than of assistance. The wheelchair here is not empowering, but a tool for crime, used for transporting drugs across borders. The mobility of the wheelchair is also used by Lerner to murder Holroyd by conveniently pushing him off the headland cliff, thereby making it appear like an accident. While the disabled community in *The Black Tower* falls victim to crime committed by the

abled, in *Unnatural Causes* (1967), the socially victimised Sylvia Kedge, becomes the perpetrator of the crime. According to Cheyne (2019), “[i]n crime fiction, the disabled perpetrator both embodies and creates disorder, the deviant disabled body/mind mirroring the deviance from social rules and norms involved in criminal acts” (70).

Similarly, Sylvia Kedge resentful of being treated inhumanly resorts to revenge and murder. Talking about her experiences working with Maurice Seton she says:

[H]e wouldn't notice that it was a human being who spoke. I wasn't ever that to him. Just a machine who could take shorthand, type, mend his clothes, wash up, even do a little cooking. Not a really efficient machine, of course, I hadn't the use of my legs. But that made it easier for him in some ways. It meant that he didn't even have to think of me as female. He never saw me as a woman, of course. That was to be expected. But after a time I wasn't even female. I could be asked to work late, stay the night, share his bathroom. No one would talk. No one would care. There was never any scandal. Why should there be? Who would want to touch me? (*Unnatural Causes* 252–253)

Ostracised at multiple levels, for being disabled, a woman, and an employee, she questions, “Why should deformity be disgusting?” (253).

Both novels depict physical disability and vulnerability carving out a social and physical space that is isolated from the able-bodied community, while the body itself transitions into the inhuman: prison-like, ungendered, desexualised, and attached to a machine. However, this body, which Haraway (1985) would categorise as a cyborg is not empowered, “a creature in a postgender world”. It is a disintegrating body, a residue of the modern world that collapses in a world that socially alienates. Crime fiction significantly talks about disintegration and dismemberment through its depiction of the murdered corpse that

undergoes a transition from the human to the inhuman (the anatomical evidence and a part of a crime scene), from the embodied to the placial.

6.3 Liminal Corpse

“Death obliterates us. It suspends signification and subjectivity, and it cancels identity and differentiation. Crime fiction. . . evokes this existential threat by foregrounding the cadaver and operates ritually to conjure it away using narrative and investigative procedures” (Close 2018, 13–14).

The body of the victim in crime literature is one of the most significant clue in an investigation. It is not just a dead and decaying body but a host of evidences for forensic analysis. Bloody crimes in crime narratives can depict grim, gory, explicit and jarring images, depicting butchered bodies with investigative details of splattered blood and visible entrails. They have the ability to shock the readers, invoke disgust, and question the psyche of the criminal and the social conditions that provoke such brutality. In Mankell’s *Faceless Killers*, for example, the police officers describe the crime scene as a “slaughterhouse” (12, 15).

According to Dodd (2016), the depiction of death was “no longer a social taboo” (6) and with the advancement in forensic sciences, a “decomposing and mutilated corpse” (8) was explicitly depicted in crime fiction. Dodd (2016) continues to state that, “writing about death is intimately bound up in social attitudes not only of the era in which writers generate their fiction, but also the way in which varying social attitudes prevail in modern times for the divergent audiences of crime fiction sub-genres” (11). The desecrated bodies of the victims in crime fiction, therefore, depict human atrocity. Llyod (2014) argues that “Murder denotes life cut short when there is still so much to say or do, leaving things left unsaid and undone. . . .” (101–102). The detectives investigating the murder, thus, “spend their lives listening to the dead” (102). Then, the murdered bodies, it can be said, are lifeless but not dead. They

constantly communicate with the police officers and forensic pathologists. These bodies cannot be obliterated till they undergo a post mortem and evidences are collected. Moreover, these bodies cannot undergo the ritual of a funeral till they are a subject to the investigation. Therefore, for the period of the investigation, the body (or corpse or the murdered victim) is in a state of liminality.

“A policeman reasons on the basis of the *body*. His training demands that: he is trained to note and describe the body, the wounds, the state of conservation of the body. . . .” (Houellebecq 2012, 191).

James’ crime scene as compared to Mankell’s, is cleaner and more staged. There is a gradual transition from her early Dalgliesh novels to the late novels wherein the brutality ascends and the violence in the narratives intensifies. In the first novel of the series, *Cover Her Face* (1962), the body of Sally Jupp is represented in an angelic form: “Over the pillow Sally’s hair was spread like a web of gold. Her eyes were closed but she was not asleep. . . .” (57). Progressively, as the novels become longer, there are multiple murders, the crimes become gruesome and the motives ambiguous. One such example is the *Devices and Desires* (1989) where the serial killer mutilates victim’s bodies and keeps trophies of his killings. Similarly, mid-way into the series, the novel *A Taste for Death* (1986) consists of barbaric murders of a minister, a tramp, an undercover agent, along with a suicide, the questioning of morality behind amniocentesis, culminating with a situation of hostage of a police officer’s grandmother who is ultimately shot dead.

6.3.1 Investigating Murder: Disintegration of Time and Space

A Taste for Death (1986) introduces Sir Paul Berowne, who is a minister, and a friend of Dalgliesh. His body is found along with that of a tramp, Harry Mack, on September 18th, 8:45am, by a sixty-five-year-old spinster Miss Emily Wharton and a ten-year-old boy Darren

Wilkes, in the Vestry of St Mathew's church. As she enters the church, she can sense the strong smell of blood and finds two mutilated bodies with their throats cut. The death of a minister makes it a sensitive case and is assigned to the Special Unit of the Scotland Yard, headed by Commander Adam Dalgliesh and his team: Chief Inspector John Massingham and a newly recruited Inspector Kate Miskin, the first woman detective to feature in the series.

Of the two victims, the minister is known to the investigative lead and as a result, Dalgliesh struggles with his personal biases and professional duties. His inner turmoil is reflected in the following lines:

His reaction to the news had been partly predictable and partly complex and more disturbing. There had been the natural initial shock of disbelief at hearing of the unexpected death of any person even casually known. . . . But this had been followed by a sense of personal outrage, an emptiness and then a surge of melancholy, not strong enough to be called grief but keener than mere regret, which had surprised him by its intensity. But it hadn't been strong enough to make him say "I can't take this case. I am too involved, too committed." (*A Taste for Death* 16)

Yet, he insists on his best forensic pathologist, Dr Kynaston, to investigate this case, showing that the police officer is not devoid of the humane feelings that can at-times cloud over professional decisions.

Dalgliesh and his team examine the bodies at the scene of crime. There is blood smeared on the carpeted vestry floor; Harry Mack's throat is slit from left to right; Berowne's body is found holding a razor in his right hand. Preliminary evidence seems like a murder followed by suicide because of which Inspector Miskin believes that Berowne first slashed Mack's throat and then killed himself. Dalgliesh on the other hand, believes this to be a murder even though there is no physical evidence to support his hypothesis. The body of the victim

leads both the investigation and the narrative, to the past, to parallel storylines and the lives of people. Llyod (2014) calls it, a “*katabasis*, or hero’s descent to the underworld” (105) where the detective unravels the whodunnit and why of the crime. As a result, a “discontinuous narrative” emerges consisting of “interlinked stories” that merge in with the main plot or the primary crime which the detective is assigned to solve (Shaw, 2016). Here, there are subsidiary plots such as that of Nolan, Travers, Miskin, Darren, apart from Berowne’s. However, Harry Mack’s narrative is ignored. One forgets the presence of the ‘second body’ at the crime scene. Harry Mack is not socially and legally privileged as a minister.

The narrative shows the society’s existing class distinctions that continue to be a part of the identity of an individual even after his death. As a tramp, Mack does not find a space in this story. We never get to hear about his family members, his past life, or what happens to his body. Moreover, if it had only been Mack’s death, the case would not have been in priority and assigned to the Special Unit involving Dalgliesh or Dr Kynaston. Dalgliesh realises this: “He wondered why he had felt it important to speak Harry’s name. Poor Harry so incongruously yoked in the forced democracy of death, whose stiffening body would receive far more attention in its dissolution than it had ever received in life” (*A Taste for Death* 98). Although through these lines James critiques social stratification, paradoxically, her narrative needs the death of a minister to make the story substantially strong and significant.

But death alone, as in this case, is not enough. The police officers must prove that the death is unnatural and suspicious and must have evidences to show in court. This is where the forensic team (such as the pathologist, the fingerprint expert and the photographers) plays a significant role. Berowne’s death for Dalgliesh had been a shocking one. Dalgliesh’s conviction of foul play in the death does not justify the death as murder. When Dalgliesh addresses the case as a “double murder”, Dr Miles Kynaston responds: “I believe you, but it’s going to be the devil to prove, and I don’t think my report will be much help. Suicide is the

most private and mysterious of acts, inexplicable because the chief actor is never there to explain it” (199).

Scholars of crime fiction argue that forensic thrillers focus more on the dead than Police Procedurals which is dependent on the killer’s psyche (Dodd, 2016; Llyod, 2014). While forensic thrillers such as that of Patricia Cornwell and Kathy Reichs communicate with the corpse in scientific ways, the Procedural accommodates both the living and the dead, especially in situations when there is no “prima facie evidence of foul play”, such as in the deaths of Berowne and Mack (*A Taste for Death* 27). This shows the possibility that crime and evidences have the probability to be misinterpreted if not coupled with good detection and even police instincts. The police detection, therefore, demands recreation of the past, that is, the know-how of the life of the victim preceding his or her death. The police detective, like an author, builds a narrative through the victim’s lived spaces, and through interrogations with the victim’s social space.

Unnatural death or murder disintegrates time and space. The investigative process must dwell in the past to understand the present, and thus, there is an inevitable back and forth movement in time. Tracing the past of the victim is important to determine probable suspects and a motive of the crime. The disintegrating/decaying body of the victim provides licence to the police officers to invade into their private lives and private spaces, which makes them seem like “scavengers” (*Shroud for a Nightingale*). The term ‘scavengers’ used by James, depicts how the people perceive and associate police investigation with negative connotations. The house or the workspace of the victim, also falls under the investigative purview of the police. The places the victim visits, the streets, the venues, the restaurants, market-place, public or private spaces are revisited for potential clues.

The victim’s body leaves behind a trail that the investigator and his or her team must trace and retrace. James writes:

. . . the victim was central to his death. He died because of what he was, what he knew, what he did, what he planned to do. He died because he was uniquely himself. Murder destroyed privacy, laid bare with brutal thoroughness all the petty contrivances of the dead life. Dalgliesh would rummage through Berowne's past as thoroughly as he rummaged through a victim's cupboards and files. The victim's privacy was the first to go, but no one intimately concerned with murder was left unscathed. The victim had at least escaped beyond earthbound considerations of dignity, embarrassment, reputation. But for the living, to be a part of a murder investigation was to be contaminated by a process which would leave few of their lives unchanged. Murder remained the unique crime. Peer and pauper stood equal before it. The rich were, of course advantaged in this as everything. They could afford the best lawyer. But in a free society there was little else they could buy. (*A Taste for Death* 261–262)

A series of interrogations forms a part of the procedure which the living cannot escape. However, the living as opposed to the dead does not give definite answers, has the potential to claim alternate realities as the truth, and, even give false statements to mislead an investigation.

Miss Wharton, in this case, tries to recollect the incident but lacks an eidetic memory: “She had tried to be calm, accurate, matter-of-fact, but she knew there were gaps in her memory, that there was something the horror of the scene had blotted out” (147). Dalgliesh is aware of these challenges during interviews and knows that he must manipulate human emotions to instigate recollection of memory: “You exploited the suspect's fear, his vanity, his need to confide, the insecurity that tempted him to say that one vital sentence too many. Exploiting grief and loneliness was only another version of the same technique” (265). The victim's body, on the other hand, cannot be psychologically manipulated and exists as a collection of scientific facts.

The corpse would be “parcelled, labelled, dissected” (*The Murder Room* 446–447). James writes, “the corpse would be an exhibit, more important, more cumbersome and more difficult to preserve than other exhibits in the case, but still an exhibit, tagged, documented, dehumanised, invoking only interest, curiosity or disgust” (*A Taste for Death* 31). The autopsy also acts as a violation of the human body. The body will be unclothed, touched, cut open, which, even for a trained professional like Dalglish, equates to depriving the body of dignity it once had when it was living: “Kynaston nodded and got down to his familiar routine. Dalglish left him to it and went out into the passage. Watching this violation of the body’s orifices, preliminaries to the scientific brutality to follow, had always made him feel uncomfortably like a voyeur” (68). This violation of space (of the body and the private space) acts as a passage to discover discrepancies in earlier deaths, of that of Dianna Travers and Theresa Nolan. The body becomes a means to go back to the past to investigate the present. It also unravels the underlying practice of amniocentesis resulting in sex determination and abortion.

Sarah Berowne, Paul Berowne’s daughter, in a conversation with her grandmother Lady Ursula says: “You can’t get it into your head, you and your kind, that the world you grew up in is dead, it’s dead”, to which Lady Ursula replies, “I know that, my child. I was there in 1914 when it died” (397). *A Taste for Death* (1986) considers death at multiple levels and instances. It shows the death of ideology and time, as reflected in the conversation above. It underlines the death of Sir Hugo Berowne, Paul’s brother who died in the war. It talks of situations where an individual decides on death, such as Theresa Nolan’s suicide. In some cases, one faces the possibility of death in close proximity, such as Darren Wilkes who suffers from leukaemia, the ageing Lady Berowne, or deaths of family members such as Dalglish’s wife and child. Then, there is the practice of foeticide which lies on the border of choice and

murder. Ultimately, there is murder, where there is an intention to kill. In the process, there are collateral murders such that of Harry Mack and Kate Miskin's grandmother.

Bright and Mills (2016) understand death and investigation in Detective Fiction as a social reflection. They write:

Detective fiction deals explicitly with transgressions against property and person, but beyond the dichotomy of right and wrong, legal and illegal, there is an implicit idea of further transgression, against cultural and spiritual rituals. The dead body is near-ubiquitous as a stimulus for the detective plot, but outside that structure of pursuit and punishment, the dead body as an object expresses a post-World War I sense of fragility and anxiety. (Bright and Mills 32)

Despite so, Mills (2020) finds that these narratives have very little periods of mourning for the dead: "Inquests are usually given more space than funerals, and grief and loss are repressed or non-existent. . . . The detective's duty to the dead, however, and duty to recover the dead and read the signifiers inscribed upon the victim in the interests of justice, perhaps makes a satisfactory substitution, while emphasising the impossibility of adequately mourning the dead" (153). Ultimately, in a Procedural, the main focus is on the investigation. It is not always enough to find the culprit, it is more important to find the scientific and legal evidences that can be presented at the court. The body gives credibility and licence to conduct these procedurals. With the funeral, the corpse disintegrates and is released from the liminal space, however, it leaves behind anatomical clues on the autopsy records.

6.4 Conclusion

The corporeal or the embodied space in Police Procedurals is significant whether it is the vulnerable, disabled, ageing or a corpse. The body, as this chapter reveals, is a documentation of the geographical and the social. More significantly, it displays relations of power within the

society. The vulnerable and the disabled can be powerless, a victim of crimes and delineated or marginalised into separate space. When the power dynamics shift, the victimised can become the perpetrator such as in the case of Sylvia Kedge. It leads one to question, who is vulnerable and who is disabled. Does the physiological vulnerability affect the psychological and vice versa? Although Dalgliesh is not a disabled detective such as Lincoln Rhyme in Jeffery Deaver's *The Bone Collector* (1997), he is an ageing detective who is tired, exhausted and overwhelmed with crime (Cheyne 2019, 53–80).

Adam Dalgliesh's journey from Detective Chief Inspector to Commander to retirement from the police force during the narrative course of these fourteen novels, involves him being in a perpetual state of worry, anger, sadness, guilt, and recovery from injuries, along with professional duties. The police officer, as a part of this professional duty, engages with embodied spaces including the victim (victim's living past and the corporeal present), the victim's lived and experienced spaces, interrogation with those connected to the victim, along with human memory and psyche. The corpse in limbo during the investigation is a part of the embodied space. It contains within it a narrative (of how it lived and how it was violated), occupies the physical space (the body under investigation) and impacts the social space. The murdered body destabilises social relations. For some it instils within them a sense of loss and pain of losing a loved one. For the community, it instigates a sense of fear and suspicion, that one amongst them has violated humanity. The police officers and their team intervene here in resolving the mystery of who has committed the crime through a retrograde analysis of the crime scene and the victim. It is through the embodied space that time disintegrates: a corpse that takes you back to the past; with decay establishes the passage of time; and once investigated determines the future of individual lives and social communities.



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