

On the Use of Suspense and Logical Deduction Elements in the Detective Film-- Take the Movie “Murder on the Orient Express” (2017 Version) as an Example

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ABSTRACT. Detective mystery film, namely “to the detective as the protagonist, to logical deduction for the narrative content and the main interest of the type of film. It has a strong literary tradition, to solve a crime or mystery as the basis for the plot, professional detective as the protagonist, logic and reasoning as the primary form of elements, is the audience to follow the detective together for a “mind game”.

KEYWORDS: Crime solving, Detective, Logical deduction, Participation

1. Introduction

Detective mystery film to the detective “solve the case” as the plot of the core, to “the truth” as the only ending, expressing the human worship of science and reason, highlighting the ability to understand the world and the confidence of the institutions of the legal system. Since the primary formal element of the detective film is logical deduction, the interlocking plotting and tight logic of the film are the playwright's point of focus. How to advance the dramatic situation through the disclosure of information about the case, complete the structural unity of continuity, and involve the audience is also quite important.

2. Structure of the Play

Mr. Hao Jian, in his “Genre Film Tutorial,” divides the play structure of the detective film into two main categories: “One is that the crime at the beginning of the story has been completed...and the other is that the crime at the beginning of the story has not yet occurred, or has happened a little but has not been completed, and as the detective solves the crime, the criminal is still in the process of committing the crime...” With regard to the range of suspects in the case, there are also two types: all persons may be murderers, or all persons may not objectively be murderers. The Murder on the Orient Express falls into the latter of the two categories.

From the beginning of the film to about the 6th minute and 22 seconds, it shows Poirot solving a burglary case. This case is independent of the main murder of the film, is intended to portray Poirot as a resourceful detective and to convince the audience that he is, willing to follow him as he continues his exploration of the case. In the 8th minute of the film, one of the real heroes, Miss Mary DeBehan, appears. After that it continues until about the 31st minute and 06 seconds of the scene where the train stops at Winkovci, Secretary McQueen and the black doctor get off the train to talk. This long section carries out the display of groups of characters. Each person's general identity, personality, and potential conflicts are presented. There are three key points of information that can be sorted out: 1. Mary has a “secret plan” with the black doctor. 2. Ratchett receives threatening letters from suspected Mafia and wants to ask Poirot for protection, Poirot refuses. 3: The Austrian professor clashes with the black doctor and Mary over racial discrimination. All of this was a prelude to the real opening of the case.

Then everything from 31 minutes and 17 seconds of Ratchett's body appearing strange to 43 seconds of a blizzard outside the window - all seeming to suggest something was going on. ; the initial sound of a glass breaking in Ratchett's room around 52 seconds; Poirot opening the door to check at 32:03; Ratchett responding at 11 seconds “Nothing happened” to the conductor; Mrs. Hubbard rang the bell at 32 minutes 31 seconds; Poirot opened the door again to check at 37 seconds; and went back to bed at 46 seconds. of Poirot was again surprised by the movement of Ratchett's room, opening the door about 48 seconds later to see the woman in the red nightgown running out of Ratchett's room; at

about 49 seconds, the crew exited Mrs. Hubbard's room; at 33 minutes and 21 seconds, the train suffered an avalanche derailment. At this point, roughly a third of the way through the film, this two-minute scene shows the case in its entirety, with Poirot being awakened three times and three times he went out to check it out, and the audience followed him into it. And what exactly happened that night? This is what everyone wants to know most at the moment. The time comes the next morning, and around 36 minutes and 53 seconds into the film, the scene of the crime is quickly shown: Ratchett is dead, stabbed with 12 stabbings, the time of death could have been between midnight and 2 a.m. The train crew said no one entered during that time. At this point, the film really begins as the case opens. The core plot of the detective film is to solve the case, so the structure of the plot changes from following the progress of the case. The most straightforward way to determine this is to point to the suspect.

At around 41 minutes and 25 seconds, the film begins to enter the "evidence" section. Poirot quickly eliminates the possibility of hiding people on the roof of the train, and narrows down the suspects to the passengers in the "Calais" carriage. Booker is the only one sleeping in the other compartment, so he can be eliminated as a suspect and assist in the investigation. 41 minutes 25 seconds-41 minutes 30 seconds, Poirot questioning Reichert's secretary McQueen; 45 minutes 01 seconds-46 minutes 27 seconds, Poirot arrives at the scene of the crime to collect evidence, 12 stab wounds, varying wounds, watch time stopped at 1:15 - this may be the time of death, varying depth of wounds, Reichert's pistol by the pillow, barbiturates - a drug that makes you sleepy, expensive lady's handkerchiefs with the letter H, pipe pass strips. Among the complex evidence, Poirot quickly decided that only one thing was true: at 46 minutes and 27 seconds, he found the ashtray burned halfway through the word note. And as the word note message is revealed, around 47 minutes and 45 seconds, Poirot deduces the one tragedy behind the case - the Armstrong tragedy. And Ratchett's true identity is that of Cassady, little Daisy's murderer. At 49:02-55:19, Mrs. Hubbard provides the key to the killer's identity information - a button for a train crew uniform. Around 50:44-53 minutes, Poirot questioned Masterman; around 53:22-56:20 minutes, Poirot interviews the nun, Professor Hammond, and Marquis, all of whom are not suspicious, and the detective seems to have hit a bottleneck. It wasn't until after about 56:45-59:10 of the questioning of Miss Mary that Poirot seemed to make any progress at all - Mary's concealment of "secret plans". But what this plan is, and how it relates to the case, will remain a running mystery. Soon, however, McQueen's behavior becomes too suspicious due to the bourbon and burn books incidents, and Poirot is already working with a tightly controlled, unpredictable team. Logic dictates that McQueen's perfectly adequate motive for the crime - to "avenge" his father's death - would have convicted him almost directly (1 hour, 09 minutes, 23 seconds) However, in a sharp turn of events, Mrs. Hubbard is stabbed in her room by the killer (1 hour, 09 minutes, 34 seconds) - which completely disproves Poirot's previous reasoning and extends the murderer's scope to everyone else in the car at once! But there is really no logical flaw in their testimony either.

The search for evidence comes to a final stage, and it is often here that the detective, having been given sufficient clues, will have made significant progress in his reasoning. 1 hour 11 minutes 04 seconds - 1 hour 13 minutes 25 seconds, Poirot completed his questioning of the Countess - 1 hour 14 minutes 15 seconds. Seconds later, he dismantled an astonishing lie - and boldly deduced the Countess' true identity: that Sonia Armstrong's sister, and the Count's furious action of throwing Poirot out of the room confirms Poirot's theory. With the revelation of this important piece of character information, it foreshadows that a breakthrough has been found in the case, and Poirot is about to crack more secrets.

With the revelation of the Countess's true identity, the film enters a "spin" sequence in which Poirot dismantles the Austrian professor's lies (1 hour 15 minutes 38 seconds - 1 hour 17 minutes or so); Marie's lies - and deduces her motive, which is also perfectly logical, and almost convicts her (1 hour 19 minutes - 1 hour 21 minutes). The black doctor then suddenly shoots Poirot in the arm, voluntarily confessing that he is the murderer and confessing that he is trying to avenge Armstrong's death, gets into a physical confrontation with Poirot, the detective's life is threatened, and the doctor is eventually knocked out by Booker, who arrives just in time (1 hour 21 minutes, 04 seconds - 1 hour, 22 minutes, 45 seconds). Up to this point, all the theories seem to have been disproved again, the case is about to be uncovered, but it's heading into the unknown, and the pace of the plot picks up sharply, while the The detective himself is in crisis - and the audience is now desperate to test some sort of result or conjecture - who is the killer? What the truth really is.

In the second part, I will analyze in detail the use of "suspense" in connection with the replay of the "reveal" part starting at about 1 hour and 24 seconds, which is also the "hinge" in the beginning and the end of the case. In summary, the structure of *Murder on the Orient Express* follows the classic pattern of detective mystery films, with the layering of plot and logical deduction closely following the case, and the use of the closed space of the *Orient Express* helps to establish the "uniqueness" of the logical deduction and increases the tension of the film.

3. "Mystery" and "Suspense"

The word "suspense" is defined in the Euro-American Dictionary of Academic Language as "the expectation of the viewer or reader to learn, as the plot unfolds, the future course of events and how the characters will cope with them. An anxious uncertainty about what is going to happen, especially to the fate of those characters we have infused with pity,

is called suspense. If an event happens that we don't expect, it's called an accident." And suspense and surprise usually go hand in hand.

The suspense of a detective mystery film is different from the "fear for the hero's life" panic of a thriller. Rather, it is a desire to "know", to know the truth, to verify one's own reasoning, knowledge, thinking and logical abilities, like a "thinking game". Thus in the structure of the detective film, the ultimate suspense, the most interesting to the audience, begins with the final "uncovering" of the truth. And this scene is often presented with a logical and clear narrative by the detective.

In *Murder on the Orient Express*, from about 24 minutes and 20 seconds into the first hour of the film, everyone is gathered in the tunnel, looking tense, waiting for the outcome of the "trial", with detective Poirot as the "judge" who will decide their fate and expose the lies of the murderer. The black doctor is the first to ask him "why you are still alive", and Poirot is the first to tear down the illogic of his actions: a marksman couldn't have missed at such close range - and yet he did. This is direct proof that he didn't want to hurt Poirot, because he's not a murderer, and then it can be inferred that everyone isn't a murderer. Immediately thereafter, at approximately 1 hour, 24 minutes and 50 seconds, Poirot presented the case with two conclusions.

For one, Ratchett's enemies, the Mafia, slipped on the train at the Vinkovci station, killed Ratchett and escaped from Mrs. Hubbard's compartment. However, Booker asks the question for the audience: then why did the killer hide the uniform? Who knocked Ratchett out again? Who stabbed Mrs. Hubbard? Obviously these problems cannot be explained, and this conclusion is untenable. Poirot agrees, and goes on to state his reasoning: that Ratchett's true identity is that of the murderer Cassady, and that the murderer must have been the greatest beneficiary of Ratchett's death. At this point Poirot takes the audience's thoughts and the film's camera and points to the real and clearly identified Countess, Sonia's sister, Ratchett's death would ease her mental anguish. That's a powerful enough motive. But then, at 1 hour 25 minutes and 55 seconds, Poirot changes his tune and forcefully deduces a second conclusion—"The killer is among us."

This is followed by Poirot's revelation of everyone's identities: the doctor meets Mary, the governess, who is close to Little Daisy and the Countess; Princess Dragomiroff is Little Daisy's godmother and the owner of the handkerchief - the H is pronounced "N" in Russian, the initials of the Princess's name "Nathalie"! The princess's maid, with her particular taste in food, was the Armstrongs' cook; the missionary girl, who was the nanny who looked after little Daisy, felt guilty for not being able to prevent the kidnapping of the child after one too many glasses of wine and was converted; Masteman, Ratchett's manservant, began his story as an orderly for Colonel Armstrong at one of his stations and retired as his butler in New York; and Marquez, who was the colonel's chauffeur and was able to secure a loan because of the colonel's sponsorship, started a prosperous automobile business. The previously exposed Austrian professor was not only a "private detective", but also the police officer assigned to the case back then. He falls in love with Susan, an innocent scapegoat maid. While McQueen's father insisted on the arrest of Susan, she eventually chose to commit suicide, resigning after witnessing the human perversion of justice. The conductor, Michelle, is Susan's brother. And Mrs. Hubbard, the Linda Arden, Sonia's mother and little Daisy's grandmother, who retired from Broadway but is here to give her last show.

Poirot goes on painfully - the murder could not have been done by one person alone, everyone was involved - and the film follows Poirot's narrative and begins to flashback. Poirot then analyzes their plans as being disrupted by the sudden avalanche and the appearance of the detective, thus necessitating an impromptu performance using bathrobes, uniforms, buttons, and "stabblings." Mrs. Hubbard confessed that she had hatched the plan and summoned the others: she told Hammond to track down Cassady, and had McQueen, Ma. Stedman goes to work for Cassadee, and McQueen can arrange for him to travel while Michelle is on duty. At this point, the characters' identities have been fully revealed, and the detective and the audience can draw a picture in their minds of their relationships graphic.

At about 1 hour 31 minutes, the night of the murder is shown in its entirety. By 1 hour, 32 minutes and 48 seconds, the two-minute play shows the night of the murder in its entirety - the audience has now been given the answers, you can validate your suspicions. But the suspense isn't over - where will Poirot lead them? Mrs. Hubbard, wanting to take the blame herself, begs Poirot to spare the others. And the righteous detective believes that "everything is either right or wrong." He took out a pistol and said he wouldn't lie, wouldn't cover up the crime - if they tried to get away with it, kill him. 1 hour At 34 minutes and 40 seconds, Mrs. Hubbard picked up the gun, pointed it at Poirot, and at 42 seconds, pointed it at herself and then pulled the trigger, and the gun did not fire- because Poirot had already cleared the chamber. At the end of the film, Poirot finally confesses the first conclusion to the police and tells the crowd that "the scales of justice will never be balanced", and decides to Accept this imbalance. There are no murderers here, only people who want to be reborn.

In summary, in this suspenseful game constructed by the truth of the case, the audience not only gets a sense of immersion and participation, but also follows Poirot's footsteps to ponder and gain more insight into the grey area between good and evil.

4. Concluding Remarks

The film "Murder on the Orient Express", as an adaptation of the classic detective literature, continues the formal elements of "logical deduction". At the same time, it combines the feature of "visual image" in the film, using cinematic means to reason, cleverly integrating the element of "suspense" into the deepening of the situation, and often before the reasoning to strengthen the urgency of the plot, in order to arouse the audience's eagerness to know who the murderer is.

In addition, the film begins by placing Poirot, the great detective, as a participant in the development of the case, rather than a mere afterthought - Poirot actually represents the audience, and both have the same access to information and the same chance of solving the case. Through Poirot's reasoning and analysis, the playwright and director are actually trying to understand the audience's thinking and psychology, leading them sometimes to the truth but also to "go astray", fully mobilizing their sense of participation, immersing them in the reasoning, and finally creating the satisfaction of "unexpected" and "sudden enlightenment" when the suspense is revealed.

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