

STRUCTURAL PECULIARITIES OF DETECTIVE STORIES

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INTRODUCTION

Although detective story has existed in the literature for a long time, still enjoys great readership interest. This is one of those genres that allows readers move to the mysterious world of crime and amazing puzzles. A criminal story implies the existence of murder, kidnapping or other types of crime. The plot is based around searching for the solution to the problem. Typically, the story ends with finding a perpetrator of the wrong act, while the investigation into the truth is the most exciting element of the work. Nowadays, it is assumed that a detective story can be divided into four types because of a structure as described below.

The greatest strength of a detective story lies undoubtedly in its own kind of alienation effect produced by it. Idyllic naturalness (ideological) everydayness loses its obviousness and in the traumatic light the fact of the murder begins to appear as an illusory effect of hidden artificial mechanisms. In the most known situations, notes are made casually, trifles are accidentally found, etc., there might be seen potential movers of horror, fear because “anything – could mean anything possible”. Such alienation effects are connected with some assumption: with the existence of a specific – although very misleading – normality and security.

The question about the so-called the social roots of murder is banned in the classic detective story – at least as a rule – a killer cannot be associated with any organization (e.g. mafia). The second, hidden side revealed by the detective, is not less ideological than the surface of idyllic everyday life: it is precisely ideological mirror image – the world of absolute selfish individuals.

1. The Inner Structure of a Detective Story

In the classic detective story there is a strict prohibition of directly presenting the inner course of detective thoughts. The thought process in his brain must remain inaccessible, limited to a single mysterious remark or questions to the final solution that will naturally underline the inaccessibility what’s going on in the detective’s head.

A real master of such stylistic figures, which, unfortunately, sometimes approaches mannerism is Agatha Christie, e.g. Poirot in a complicated investigation puts the inquiry in an eccentric tone like: “*By coincidence do not you know what color the maid’s stockings were?*” and after hearing the answer, he mysteriously murmurs: “*So everything is clear!*”. It is worth recollecting a dialogue from the novel by N. Meyer *The Seven Per Cent Solution*, which is a pastiche of S. Holmes’s adventures. Sherlock Holmes says in it: “*War is on in Europe, it’s obvious. – But how can you draw such a conclusion based on what you saw today? – From the relationship between Baroness Leinsdorf and her adopted son.*”. The situation is explained at the end when the detective with a hint of victory in the voice indicates the perpetrator and then tells the whole story in a linear shape. In other words, if the issue is considered from the point of view of the reader, in the classic detective story there is never the identification with the detective, but with a structural necessity, that is, a narrator or a person for whom the detective is a subject who is supposed to know – and if the solution is too obvious, if a reader does not want to be deprived of satisfaction from reading, he must try to believe cheating, even if it will be very naive.

The world in detective stories might be presented as closed community – both in the sense of the number of clues, suspects and space (e.g. *Ten Little Niggers* by Agatha Christie – a group of people imprisoned on the island cut off from the world). The novelty is the world presented as the area of full cognition, ordered as a result of the investigation, which restores its order, demolished only temporarily. Sometimes presented world in detective stories might be described as a morally ambiguous world – the investigation reveals the truth, and the crime itself is pure evil.

The protagonist in detective stories is mainly a detective amateur (Miss Marple, Dr Gideon Fell) who stands as a guard over morality or a private detective (H. Poirot, S. Holmes, Sir H. Merivale). The novelty is that the story’s structure could be divided into:

- the reversed structure order, going deeper and deeper (in the last chapter, the reader learns what really happened),
- numerous flashbacks,
- the feature dominant: emphasis on the investigation, the crime itself is hygienic, described at random,

- the method of narration: deductive (*The riddle is complicated, because it was made so. But we'll think about it*¹).

The events described by the narrator have “a double bottom” – a reader realizes that something is hidden from him. Such technique is also called “an updating act”, makes a reader curious about the ending, and during the reading tries to predict it. The goal is achieved by the author by giving some hints about the solution, but does so in such a way that a reader considers them misleading or irrelevant.²

R. Chandler, who was famous for his views on the creation of detective stories openly criticized, in his writing, adhered to the system of rules that he considered indispensable for the emergence of a good detective story. According to Chandler there are 10 rules of a good detective story:

- it must be credibly motivated, both in terms of the exhibition and its solution. It must consist of reliable actions of credible people in credible circumstances, and it must be remembered that credibility is largely a matter of style;

- it must technically agree with the methods of homicide and its detection. No fancy poison or the wrong effects of their action, like death after taking a dose that is not fatal. We do not use revolvers with silencers (they do not work) and snakes crawling on the rope from the bell. Such things immediately destroy the foundation of history. If the detective is a trained police officer, he must behave like one of them, and also have the psychic and physical characteristics of people performing this profession. If he is a private investigator or an amateur, he must at least be familiar enough with the police to avoid making a fool of himself;

- it must be realistic when it comes to characters, the setting and the atmosphere. It must be about real people in the real world. Few writers have the ability to create live characters, but that does not mean that this ability is unnecessary;

- in addition to the puzzle element it must have a valuable plot, for example, the investigation itself must be an adventure worth reading;

- there must be a simple crime plot so that it can be easily explained at the right time. The perfect ending is when you can

¹ Christie A. *Murder on The Orient Express*. Wydawnictwo Hachette, 2000. ISBN 83-7023-174-8. P. 190.

² Żabski T. (red.) *Słownik literatury ...* 2006. op. cit., P. 301.

completely clear the puzzle in one flash of action. This is rare, because good ideas are always rare. The explanation is not necessarily short (except for the movie), and often it cannot even be short, but it must be interesting in itself, so that the reader would like to get to know them;

- it must surprise a smart reader. Some of the best detective stories ever written in the ending do not surprise the intelligent reader. But the reader does not guess the complete solution and does not prove it with logical reasoning. Because readers have different degrees of intelligence, some will guess cleverly hidden murder, while others will deceive the most transparent plot. It is not necessary or even impossible to cheat a true crime passionate reader. There must, however, remain an important element of history that escapes the most inquisitive reader;

- the solution to the mystery must seem unavoidable once it has been revealed. The smallest weight is applied to this element, but it is one of the most important features of the whole story. It is not enough just to apply a scam, dodge or omit the reader. We should make him feel that he has been cheated with honor;

- do not try to do everything at once. If it is a story with a puzzle, taking place in a fairly quiet, reasonable atmosphere, it cannot be a stormy adventure or a passionate romance at the same time;

- it is necessary to punish the criminal in one way or another, not necessarily involving the law. Contrary to popular belief, this has nothing to do with morality. It is part of the logic of discovering the mystery. The lack of consequence of the crime makes history resemble an unresolved chord and leaves a feeling of irritation;

- it must be honest with the reader. Important facts cannot be hidden or distorted by misleading accents. Irrelevant facts should not be given in such a way that they seem important. It is the task of the detective to draw conclusions, but he should reveal some of his thoughts so that the reader can think of him.³

Some of these elements Chandler imported from earlier detective story's writer S.S van Dine who in 1928 wrote an article devoted to detective issues for *American Magazine*. The essay was to bring the genre closer and be a signpost for inexperienced writers. The

³ 10 niezbędnych elementów powieści detektywistycznej wg R. Chandlera. URL: [www.booklips.pl/zestawienia/10 niezbędnych elementów powieści detektywistycznej wg R. Chandlera](http://www.booklips.pl/zestawienia/10_niezbędnych_elementów_powieści_detektywistycznej_wg_R._Chandlera) (retrieved Feb. 10, 2019).

20 commandments of the author of the detective story created by van Dine are:

- the place hints in the story so that the reader can discover them together with the detective;
- the tricks used by the criminal must confuse them both;
- a story cannot contain a love story involving a detective;
- the detective cannot be the culprit;
- the offender can be exposed only through deduction;
- only the detective can solve the mystery;
- the theme of the novel does not have to be murder;
- a detective solving a puzzle can only rely on naturalistic methods;
- there can be only one detective;
- the offender must be a distinctive character who plays an important role in the story;
- a criminal cannot be a servant or a person of low descent;
- regardless of the number of victims, the killer can only be one;
- the criminal can not belong to the mafia, secret society etc.;
- the murder must be committed in a realistic way, and the methods of claiming the truth are to be rational and based on scientific considerations;
- the solution to the mystery should be kept “in view” all the time, but unspoken, so that the reader, after reading the book, was aware that he was able to solve the mystery himself;
- avoid digression, psychological analysis of characters, etc.;
- the criminal must be an amateur;
- the murder must be planned;
- the motive of the crime should be a personal injury;
- disqualifying for the writer are e.g. a cigarette butt fits the criminal’s cigar, finding the fingerprints of the murderer, etc.⁴

The fundamental element of every detective story is clearly outlined, cohesive and dynamic action, developing in the order of searching. The basic element of this dynamic action is recognition, which is characterized by a sudden turn of the story, thus leading the reader (also the protagonist) to a full understanding of events, individual sequences of the story, while introducing certain elements of uncertainty and mystery.

⁴ Copper Gass. URL: www.gaslight.mtroyal.ca (retrieved Feb. 10, 2019).

Enigma – a murder (most often), which in most cases in classic detective stories, is committed at the beginning of the story, is the element that reinvigorates the story. The investigation is surmounted with the answer to the question: “*Who and why killed?*”. However, as it turns out, the very solution to the puzzle is not yet a fundamental question of a detective story. The essence of the work lies in the entire action preceding the event.

The magic of mystery relies on maintaining, as long as possible, this dreamy, elusive awareness of time before recognition. The reader, like the detective, must cross a wide black river unknowingly kept alive. The stifling, risky night before recognition, even in its most terrible moments, preserves the charm, the seductive power of self-sustaining, unconscious memory. Recognition is only a reference point, because without it a longed-for return will not occur.⁵

In traditional detective story, there is a homicide first, followed by an investigation and the solution to the riddle. However, before the finale culminates with discovering the secret and catching the murderer, actions are carried out in the course of the investigation that refer to the past. The fact is that the finale of each such story must have a successful ending – the puzzle is resolved, the murderer caught and punished. The order and peace of citizens must be restored. Justice triumphs.

In the classic version of detective story, because this genre stands out not only by formal conservatism, but also concerning outlook – the world order destroyed at the beginning of the story by crimes, must finally be restored.

Catching the murderer is a consequence of the pursuer’s actions (most often it is a detective) who, like a reader, does not have the key to solve the puzzle. The only possessor is a criminal. S. Lasić, a well-known literature researcher, argues: the key is the strength of the murderer, but also his weakness. His omniscience demands a suitable partner: a persistent detective.⁶ So the pursuer walks in the footsteps of the murderer bravely, but is usually far from the idealized superhero. In the classic and contemporary detective stories, detectives are not deprived of

⁵ Stachura P. Noc przed rozpoznaniem - typologia rozpoznania w fabule kryminalnej [w] „Podteksty” 2006. URL: www.katalog.czasopism.pl/index.php/Podteksty (retrieved Feb. 9, 2019).

⁶ Lasić S. Poetyka powieści kryminalnej. Warszawa. PWN, 1976. ISBN 978-83-941843-3-9. P. 34.

flaws (Holmes' morphine addiction, Poirot's egotism, Hole's alcoholism, Kurt Wallander's self-deprecation and self-destruction).

However, characterological flaws are eliminated by the stubbornness, intelligence and effectiveness of protagonists – each puzzle is solved. So much in the classic version. In a modern detective story, generally the structural core remains the same, i.e. a crime – an investigation – a climax and finale. On the other hand, the function of the detective story, the author's workshop and the context change, in the sociocultural way.

Mentioned before R. Chandler, who became famous as a perfectionist and work titan, was able to maneuver perfectly between the popular genre and the tradition of Shakespeare, Eliot, and Hemingway. It is worth taking a look at the quote from *The Long Goodbye: You are a scribbler, Wade. Three adjectives, you damned creator. You cannot even write using a stream of consciousness, scribbler, without putting three adjectives.*⁷ Chandler's books are refined, literary gems, but also consist of groundbreaking texts. The series of Philip Marlowe's adventures are the beginning of the "black detective story" so eagerly continued and developed by Mankell or Nesbø.

The explanation of the puzzle does not bring the expected relief, because there is no black and white world, so it is not easy to return the order from before the event, because "normality", so glorified, even by Miss Marple, simply does not exist. The world of gentlemen like Hercule Poirot laid in the ruins of World War II. Contemporary investigators are savaged by life protagonists introducing the reader into the world of mundane reality.

The contemporary detective story has partly seized the tasks that belong to the belles lettres. It describes, explains and allows to understand the existing reality. It has good conditions for this – a loyal and wide public, efficient and intelligent creators. There is no doubt, this literature still remains a form of entertainment, scrumptious and interesting.

It is also worth mentioning about definition of composition in literature which is understood as an arrangement of elements of the presented world: protagonist, time, space, system of events, sender,

⁷ Chandler R. *The Long Goodbye*. VintageCrime/Black Lizard, 1988. ISBN 0394757688. P. 256.

recipient. This is the way in which the material that makes up the literary work is presented.

The novelty of the composition description includes: the organization of the presented world, the plot's content, the arrangement of themes and motifs, the construction of the character, the narrator's or lyricist's place in relation to the represented world. There are four types of composition: open composition, frame composition, casket composition, and closed composition.⁸

Literary critics circumscribe composition of detective stories in different ways. For R. Caillois detective story is a kind of movie displayed from the end to the beginning.⁹ For J. Siewierski it is a literary art with main theme which is a crime.¹⁰ Detective stories' composition is presented as: crime – the course of events which led to it – solving the mystery: who killed and why? This simple analysis already reflects the sense of the composition of a detective story. However, most fully this issue took care of the previously quoted S. Lasić, who in his *Poetyka powieści kryminalnej* analyzes the structure of a typical story of this genre. He considers a mystery as a basic element of detective story. In his opinion, it is best to show it on the plot and composition ground. Lasić distinguishes also three main areas of this ground which are: corpus – so-called “the content of the story” constituting its skeleton, plot – a sequence of logically complex events, as given by a story, composition – a system of closely interrelated events.¹¹

It is rather easily to extract the first two layers almost intuitively, but to determine the composition it is necessary to use the already chosen one method. Lasić helps in the case of a detective story, because, as he proves in his book, a detective story has only one compositional line that comes down to the problem: who is the murderer and why a crime was committed?

More interesting instead, there is a plot layout. Lasić extracts fictional units in the story and units that express a linear consequence of

⁸ The Free Dictionary. URL: www.thefreedictionary.com/literary+composition (retrieved Feb. 10, 2019).

⁹ Caillois R. *Powieść kryminalna* [w] *Odpowiedzialność i styl*. Warszawa. PIW, 1967. ISBN 9788306035704. P. 126.

¹⁰ Siewierski J. *Powieść kryminalna*. Warszawa. KAW, 1979. ISBN 978-83-941843-3-9. P. 111.

¹¹ Lasić S. *Poetyka powieści kryminalnej*. Warszawa. PWN, 1976. ISBN 978-83-936321-3-8. P. 121

events. Then he sets them together. This treatment allows to answer the question, what really fascinates in the detective story. It turns out that by passing the beginning, i.e. the preparation of the crime at the end, the writer builds this extraordinary tension, which readers value so much. From the puzzle readers heading to the climax and a sudden solution that leads to a kind of dampen of the story and composition. Lasić has also developed a method for studying the structures of detective stories. To do that, he created a general scheme of composition that might be used to study the web of story's individual composition.

According to M. Maciejewski there are three possible compositional methods in a detective story's mystery:

- a) the mystery is not solved by the author,
- b) the mystery is solved by the author correspondingly with expectations of the reader,
- c) the mystery is described by the author in the way that leads the reader to another deduction than the plot is presented.¹²

Of course, in a detective story it is generally used only the third method. However, the question asked by the authors is very important as a riddle of the crime.

It is worth mentioning that detective story is not simply a composition of tales of criminal acts. Few examples treating theft, smuggling, rogues are a marginal phenomenon. It is also impossible to sustain the division of crime literature into criminal stories and detective stories. Such a fracture is still actual in American and English literature where criminal fiction is divided into crime stories and detective stories.

A detective story in its historical development and in today's form, playing a specific and an undisputed role, was and is a detective story. It is based on an immutable scheme that contains three prime components: the victim, the detective and the suspect. Murdered person, whose end of life falls on time before the beginning of the story or the first its cards put everything in motion. The victim is somehow the lever that initiates the whole story.

Opposite there is the discoverer-muckrake who tries to solve the pre-case of murder. All other characters presented are either detective helpers

¹² Maciejewski M., 1970. Narodziny powieści poetyckiej w Polsce. *Pamiętnik Literacki : czasopismo kwartalne poświęcone historii i krytyce literatury polskiej*. 64/2. P. 310–317. (retrieved Feb. 10, 2019).

(they can also be malignant inhibitors and its effects) or suspects. None of the people are presented for themselves. The entire “staff cast” is always here associated with the scheme and fulfills certain functions in it.

The decisive role is played in the detective story in the way taken when proof of guilt is being carried out. A classic scheme for example in stories by Agatha Christie begins with a situation that obviously excludes a solution (e.g. *Murder in Mesopotamia*). Murders are accompanied by such circumstances, that none of the characters presented in story could not make it in any way. Then emerge the facts that make the possibility to get a solution. These facts, however, are in relation to themselves in a bright, insoluble contradiction. And here comes Hercule Poirot. To fill in insufficient material, he checks a few unverified details so far, expands them with a small provocation, puts hypothetical questions and answers to them as they reveal new mutual relationships and dependencies between knowledge and facts. A specific role in this the progressively adding complex of evidences always play the motive of the act. It is not, however presented as something that can be explored in a subjective or psychological way, but it appears as one of many facts. The action of the detective in such a classic case (next to Agatha Christie it could be listed here still a whole series of names, such as John Dickson Carr, Anthony Berceley, father Ronald A. Knox, Dorothy Sayers, Margery Allingham, Michael Innes, Nicholas Blake, Ngaio Marsh, Edmund Crispin, Thomas Muir, or Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, Erie Stanley Gardner, Rex Stout and married couple F.R. Lockridge) has a goal to be something completely material. The detective tries reconstruct the trail on the basis of individual, accidental fingerprints. He reminds someone who discovers the individual letter first, then whole text. In this case, remaining mainly within the metaphor, general concern is a letter. The point is to complete the clues, i.e. what lies between individual tracks, practice combinatorial ability.

It is characteristic that in many classical detective stories the narration of a crime at the end of story is superficial and token, many times incomplete. Reported stories are complete or not, depending on how these regularities are respected or avoided. It not present but guarantees infinite many possible variation of one story. Reconstruction of the unsaid clues allows the unidentified in story’s skeleton to be rigorously calculated scheme which is still new areas of possible contents.

It might be said that the content of detective stories exists thanks to getting a new form of assimilation of real-life actions and environments. It happens not only because of psychological, sociological or ethnological reasons but also because of topographic settings of the story. The last element was widely described by W. Benjamin¹³ in *One Way Street*, which could be described as a older type of detective story. He claims in it that: *The furniture style of the second half of the nineteenth century has received its only adequate description, and analysis, in a certain type of detective novel at the dynamic centre of which stands the horror of apartments. The arrangement of the furniture is at the same time the site plan of deadly traps, and the suite of rooms prescribes the fleeing victim's path. That kind of detective novel begins with Poe – at a time when such accommodation hardly yet existed – is no counter-argument. For without exception the great writers perform their combination in a world that comes after them, just as the Paris streets of Baudelaire's poems, as well as Dostoevsky's characters, only existed after 1900. The bourgeois interior of the 1860s to the 1890s, with its gigantic sideboards distended with carvings, the sunless corners where palms stand, the balcony embattled behind it balustrade, and the long corridors with their singing gas flames, fittingly houses only the corps. "On this sofa aunt cannot be murdered". The soulless luxuriance of the furnishings becomes true comfort only in the presence of a dead body. Far more interesting than the Oriental landscapes in detective novels is the rank Orient inhabiting their interiors; the Persian carpet and the ottoman, the hanging lamp and the genuine Caucasian dagger.*¹⁴

That kind of compositional presentation might be easily observed in such authors as A.C. Doyle or G.K. Chesterton but in A. Berkeley's or D. Sayers's fertility such clear topographic order is not obvious and there are unspecified descriptions of different places. Intermediate transformation is particularly important in many stories by A. Christie – interiors that, strictly speaking, are not them (the interior of the aircraft, the sleeper car, the mid-deck steamer on the Nile), interiors that seemed to stretch out tentacles, but without causing total transforming the environment into a landscape, cutting out the landscape, which have the character of interiors, because they are treated like rooms.

¹³ Benjamin W. (1892-1940) was a philosopher, literature critic and essayist.

¹⁴ Benjamin W. *One Way Street and Other Writings*. URL: www.archive.org/stream/BenjaminWalterOneWayStreetAndOtherWritings (retrieved Feb. 10, 2019).

Summarizing the composition of detective stories includes a description of the interior and landscape of place of crime but they are not a linguistic process for their own sake, they no appear in the form of language as an end in itself. Every time when a reader learns about described by Hammett San Francisco's topography, about Chandler's depiction of topography of districts destined for demolition and luxury streets of Los Angeles, something about Gardner's manor houses municipal and motels of California, about F.R. Lockridge's and Margaret Scherf's specific sections of New York districts, at Margot Neville about Sydney, at Arthur W. Upfield about Australian towns and farms, it always fulfills the role of pre-impression of the action, the presentation of crime scenes.

2. Plot Structure and Characters in Detective Stories

A detective story as distinct from classical story must have a plot. A plot for a detective fiction's writer is just figuring out a story. An author writes whatever comes to his mind but when asked about discriminants, they are not supposed to be so obvious. A good illustration of a difference between a story and a plot might be a fragment of E.M. Forster's *Aspects of the Novel: Let us define a novel. We have defined a story as a narrative of events arranged in their time sequence. A plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality. "The king died and then the queen died if grief" is a plot. The time sequence is preserved, but the sense of causality overshadows it. Or again: "The queen died, no one knew why, until it was discovered that it was through grief at the death of the king." This is a plot with a mystery in it, a form capable of high development. [...] a plot demands intelligence and memory also.*¹⁵

That is a well-turned definition of a plot. The novelty here is that it implements even a mysterious and almost a crime elements. It might be better understood by imagine a short story: what would happen if a man who discovered a death of a queen was lying? Maybe he was hiding the fact of a queen's murder until her son would be able to sit on the throne. Maybe inquiring pageboy began to inhabit a detective's character. Or maybe it is a detective story concentrating on a thread, motives and pricks of conscience of a murderer.

¹⁵ Fortser E.M. *Aspects of the Novel*. Rockefeller Foundation. New York, 1949. ISBN 1444765183. P. 130.

A plot structure also involves a perspective of protagonists. Good detective stories are not too complicated and plot is narrated in organized way. If a story is presented from protagonist's point of view usually it requires to be a witness of important events. Although sometimes crucial events are narrated by another character but that kind of message might lost of its relevance.

Many detective story's authors use a foreground narration and trough it they could feel as an actor playing a role. There might be many characters using that kind of narration but it involves from a writer to have a good ear to make them understandable for a reader. American writers mainly use so called vocal stories, when characters refer to readers directly and private detectives imitate speech of Chandler's P. Marlowe. British authors more often use a third-person narration.

Some detective stories have linear structure where there is an investigation at the beginning and then a detective is looking for any evidence or traces helpful to reveal a perpetrator. A linear structure might be depicted below:



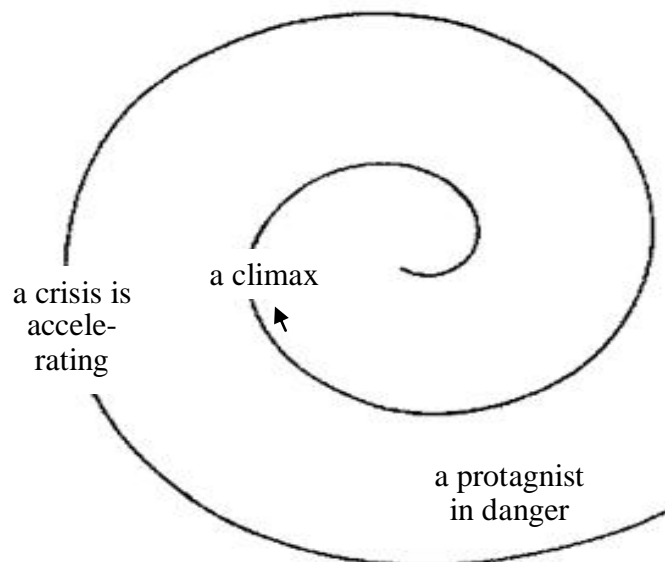
Nevertheless detective stories not always have a linear structure. They might have subtle narration and use different types of literary devices such as a flashback which could be applied in any moments and might start from any scene. A flashback is an evocation from the past and by implementing it an author might gain some time-zones which are helpful to make characters and events more authentic. This literary device should present crucial information, might explain some threads, develop plot structure, lend credence to protagonist's doings or complete their characteristic.

Flashbacks often are released through emotional impulses which mean that memories are coming up when they are connected with something familiar. Flashbacks might occur throughout the plot breakthroughs when truth is revealed in unexpected way. As example it is worth presenting a fragment from J. Irving's *The World According to Garp*: *Even Garp was unprepared for this much loathing. But he misunderstood the situation. It would be years before he realized the circumstances of his phone call. Poor Pooh Percy, batty Bainbridge,*

would one day explain it to Jenny. When Garp called, Cushie had been dead for so long that Stewart did not realize Garp was commiserating with him on Cushie's loss. When Garp called, it was the midnight of the dark day when the black beast, Bonkers, had finally expired. Stewart Percy thought that Garp's call was a cruel joke – false condolences for the dog Garp had always hated. And now, when Garp's phone rang, Garp was conscious of Helen's grip emerging instinctively from her sleep.¹⁶

The plot structure of detective stories is built around characters who work their way, they are doing their part, they are experiencing some adventures and they succeed. Those stories usually have calm beginning but then gain speed and abound with turn-ups for the books. By contrast, in psychological thriller plot structure is shrinking, tension is increasing along with characters' grief.

As distinct from a linear plot structure of detective stories thrillers have a spiral structure: at the beginning there is a description of a small community which with time is getting smaller till a climax. That method is useful to make a reader more concentrate on details similarly to protagonist. It seems that the best starting point here might be a smooth beginning but in fact a writer could start in any scene if only tension is increased. A spiral structure might be depicted below:



¹⁶Irving John. URL: www.grannyswag.files.wordpress.com/2016/07/irving-john-the-world-according-to-garp.pdf. P. 136. (retrieved Feb. 10, 2019).

In detective stories a protagonist is introduced usually at the beginning of a story to become more familiar to a reader. But sometimes crime fiction books start from an unexpected event such as in R. Jonasson's *Snow Blind* where a young woman was found lying half naked in the snow. She was bleeding and was unconscious. There is also another death in that story: a highly esteemed writer falls to his death in a local theater. Investigations are conducted by a rookie policeman who is dragged into the center of the community where he can trust no one and lies and secrets are a way of life. The past plays tag with the present events until the killer is captured.

Authors of crime stories seldom have to face with a kind of peculiar problem because modern detective story is not an updated version of classical detective story with a linear structure. Plot structure of modern detective stories many times is concentrated not on a character of detective who investigates from the beginning, but he occurs later in the action. Often a detective is announced by an author and after some time is presented when there comes a time. The illustration of that might be *Snowman* by J. Nesbø, when a detective Harry Hole is presented in the second chapter and in the next three there is a description of his character.

In detective stories an important character is a detective. The authors of these stories, trying to write such books, must find out about duties and responsibilities of real detectives in the country they intend to write about, in England, for example, they cannot wave weapons. Most of their actions are free of tension: they look for thieves in stores, follow unfaithful husbands or wives, look for the missing and get all the information their clients cannot get. For the needs of this genre of literature, the detective must be involved in murder. In old-fashioned stories, it happens that the ruffled police inspector calls for help a private detective to solve the case.

Many detective stories' authors implemented to the literature unforgettable detective characters, e.g. A.C. Doyle who figured out Sherlock Holmes. Holmes was a brilliant detective who used a deduction in solving the mystery. The novelty of Holmes's investigations is in his revealing the truth in the light of observations, psychology, chemistry, ballistics or mathematics. Many times he was guided by intuition. Holmes was also a talented violinist and boxer. He was mostly self-possessed, rarely reveals his feelings, and news of his friend Watson's engagement made him to say: *Love is an emotional matter, and everything that is*

*emotional is the opposite of cool reason, which I value above all else. I will never marry myself unless something changes my mind.*¹⁷

A. Christie brought to life two detectives who, along with Sherlock Holmes, permanently signed up on the pages of literature. They are of course Hercules Poirot and Miss Jane Marple. A retired policeman from Belgium became famous for having a fondness to symmetry. He repeatedly proved that sometimes a cool analysis of facts can be more effective than collecting fingerprints. He was often accompanied by Captain Hastings as a reflection of a naive reader who catches all the clues and gropes for a solution, ignoring the logical cause and effect sequence. Poirot was presented for the first time in *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (1921) and figured in more than thirty A. Christie's books. Poirot worked as a police officer in Belgium, but after I world war he moved to Britain and started to work as a private detective. Christie gave him characteristic features such as low growth, eggy head, well-groomed moustache, dandy cloths, obsessed with order and symmetry as well disdain for classical methods of investigation: *Poirot was an extraordinary looking little man. He was hardly more than five feet, four inches, but carried himself with great dignity. His head was exactly the shape of an egg, and he always perched it a little on one side. His moustache was very stiff and military. The neatness of his attire was almost incredible. I believe a speck of dust would have caused him more pain than a bullet wound. Yet this quaint dandyfied little man who, I was sorry to see, now limped badly, had been in his time one of the most celebrated members of the Belgian police. As a detective, his flair had been extraordinary, and he had achieved triumphs by unravelling some of the most baffling cases of the day.*¹⁸

He always relied on grey cells to determine who commit the crime: *"These little grey cells. It is 'up to them – as you say over here"*.¹⁹ Similarly to other Golden Age detectives he was not being married. H. Poirot was created as a rich person who had connections with aristocracy, the royal family, Prime Minister and other influential people.²⁰

¹⁷ Stories about Sherlock Holm. URL: www.sherlock-holm.es/stories/pdf (retrieved Feb. 11, 2019).

¹⁸ Mysterious Affair at Styles. URL: www.f.waseda.jp/glaw/CLASSES/MysteriousAffairAtStyles.pdf (retrieved Feb, 12, 2019).

¹⁹ Ibidem.

²⁰ Famous Detectives – Hercule Poirot. URL: www.HerculePoirot-amateurdetective.Famousdetectives (retrieved Feb. 12, 2019).

CONCLUSIONS

What makes this sometimes slow moving and rather large detective is so different? Above all, he is a sympathetic man. He has perfect insight into human nature, he is often fallible, he has an excellent approach to the crime. From the usual police inspector's methods, he definitely prefers to interview or question personally than to bring suspect to his office. He goes, looks, smells, touches, senses, feels the situation and the people he is dealing with. He inevitably is involved in action, tension, danger, laughter – and he sees it all through the sight of an extraordinary humanity.

Summarizing the detective stories' characters all provide investigation in their own style. Some of them are elegant detectives with impeccable manners while others seem to be rather abrupt, but they have a corporate goal: to reveal the truth and punish the villain. They strongly believe that world should be cleaned from such offensive individuals to be a better place to exist.

SUMMARY

The structural peculiarities of detective stories are the exciting plot and twists of action, but also by the wide socio-moral background that, apart from crimes, becomes the main component of the story. All these features allow to understand people's behavior, their motives, and based on that to build a structure of functions, sequences and blocks.

The structure of detective story, extended with a social and moral background and great psychological portraits of criminals and positive characters, is that it becomes a psychological story also.

There is evidently one of the basic principles of telling a story: cause and effect. In detective stories a reader notices more than in any other genre that each scene must be justified – each fiction event must be right in the story, because a reader or an audience perceive each scene as a potential cause of the effect that appears later.

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