

REVENGE REFLECTED IN AGATHA CHRISTIE'S *MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS* NOVEL (1934): PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH

Aliffia Yasmine; Yeny Prastiwi

Department of English Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,
Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menjelaskan tentang dendam Linda Arden pada novel *Murder on the Orient Express* karya Agatha Christie. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis novel menggunakan teori pendekatan psikoanalitik. Penulis menggunakan dua sumber data: sumber data primer dan sumber data sekunder. Sumber data primer dari penelitian ini adalah novel karya Agatha Christie berjudul *Murder on the Orient Express*. Sedangkan sumber data sekunder yang digunakan adalah buku, artikel atau jurnal yang berhubungan dengan penelitian. Metode dalam pengumpulan data penulis menggunakan penelitian diskriptif kualitatif. Penelitian ini mempunyai beberapa tujuan, Pertama untuk mengetahui motif dari dendam yang dilakukan oleh Linda Arden. Kedua untuk mengetahui bagaimana dendam tersebut terrefleksikan pada novel. Berdasarkan analisis, penulis memperoleh hasil akhir. Pertama, motif Linda Arden adalah karena ia telah kehilangan cucunya, Daisy Armstrong, yang telah diculik dan dibunuh oleh Ratchett Cassetti, lalu disusul dengan kematian anaknya, Sonia, dan menantunya Colonel Armstrong. Serta penuduhan terhadap pengasuh Daisy, Susanne. Kedua, pembalasan dendam yang dilakukan Linda Arden dilakukan dengan cara membunuh Ratchett Cassetti yang sudah ia rencanakan dengan baik dengan bantuan orang-orang yang juga terdampak oleh kejahatan Cassetti.

Kata kunci: *Murder on the Orient Express*, balas dendam, Agatha Christie, pendekatan psikoanalitik.

Abstract

This research describes Linda Arden's revenge on Agatha Christie's novel entitled *Murder on The Orient Express*. This study aims to analyze the book based on the Psychoanalytic Approach. The researcher uses two data sources: primary and secondary. The primary data source of the study is *Murder on the Orient Express* novel by Agatha Christie. Secondary data of the study is the supporting data taken from literary books, articles and journals related to the study. The method of data collection is descriptive qualitative research. Based on the analysis, the researcher gets some conclusions. First, the main motive of Linda Arden's revenge is the kidnapping case of her beloved granddaughter, Daisy Armstrong, who was not only kidnapped but also killed by Cassetti, followed by the death of her daughter, Sonia, and son-in-law, Colonel Armstrong and also the death of Susanne, Daisy's nursemaid. She has her way of doing her revenge against those who killed her beloved ones. Second, the vengeance that Linda Arden planned to end Cassetti's life with the help of the others affected by Cassetti's crime.

Keywords: *Murder on the Orient Express*, revenge, Agatha Christie, psychoanalytic approach

1. INTRODUCTION

After the author finished reading Agatha Christie's novel *Murder on The Orient Express*, the author is interested in gaining a deeper understanding of what a revenge is. Revenge (Grobbink et al., 2014) is associated with emotions such as hostility, fury, and detestation. The idea of revenge as a pursuit is a more helpful approach. Whether the purpose will be achieved, revenge is intrapersonal and independent of reality. He stated that revenge might restore the

psychological balance that accompanies feelings as well as primary emotions, such as aggression (Grobbink et al., 2014).

Based on the description above, it can be known that revenge is associated with the psyche. Thus, the writer chooses psychoanalytic theory for this research. Psychoanalytic theory (T. Konvalina-Simas, 2016) explains human behaviour in terms of the interaction of various components of personality. Sigmund Freud was the founder of this school of thought.

First laid out by Freud in 1933, psychoanalytic theory refers to the definition and dynamics of personality development that underlies and guides psychoanalytic and psychodynamic psychotherapy (Yuliastuti, 2013). Psychoanalytic theory proposes that personality characteristics primarily reflect the content of the unconscious part of the mind (Putri, 2021).

Murder on the Orient Express (1934) is a novel by Agatha Christie which has an amazing story about a detective who is accidentally witnessed a murder. The director of the train who is his old friend, asked for his help to solve the mystery. With all of the 13 passengers aboard, he began to solve the problem. But the researcher wanted to focus on the murder. Linda Arden who is an actress was the main artist of the murder. She wanted to take a revenge of what Rachett did in the past, which is, kidnapped and killed her granddaughter, because of that also, she lost her daughter and her son-in-law.

The reasons why the researcher takes this title are; first, the author of the novel is very attractive and popular, the story also very weighted with emphasis on revenge. Second, because there are many causes of revenge that may lead someone to do a crime or murder. Third, we can also reduce stress and daily boring activities by reading this novel. Fourth, we will also have a new idea about what a revenge is. The last reason is because the behind story of the murder that Linda Arden did. As a result, this study will be useful for future studies.

There are many studies conducted using the same novel as the object like Farida (2020), Pandia (2020), Bastan (2021), Fatimah (2021), Setiani (2022), and Smyrli (2022) none of them are using psychoanalytic approach as the theory of their research. One of the researchers, Putri (2018), also focuses about the revenge in the novel, but she uses a sociological perspective in her study. Thus, the researcher intended to extended the previous studies by using a psychoanalytic approach to conduct the study.

Based on the previous reason, the researcher will observe *Murder on the Orient Express* novel by using an individual psychological theory, so the researcher constructs the title Revenge Refelcted In Agatha Christie's *Murder On The Orient Express* Novel (1934): A Psychoanalytic Approach.

2. METHOD

In analyzing *Murder on the Orient Express* novel by Agatha Christie (1934), the investigator employs qualitative research. Qualitative research (Moser, 2017) aims to offer comprehensive insights and comprehension of real-world predicaments. Qualitative research fundamentally involves posing open-ended queries whose responses cannot be easily quantified, such as ‘how’ and ‘why’ (Tenny, 2022). Brannan (2022) affirmed that the capability of qualitative research lies in elucidating processes and patterns of human conduct, such as experiences, attitudes, and behaviors. The writer categorizes her research as qualitative because it does not necessitate statistical data for analysis and exploration of the facts.

The type of the information in this study is written data. It includes terms, expressions, and paragraphs. The sources of the information include two groups, namely the primary information source and the secondary information source. The primary information source is the novel *Murder on the Orient Express* written by Agatha Christie and published in 1934. The secondary information sources consist of additional references such as articles, journals, books, and research that share the same principles as this study.

The analysis begins from the structural analysis of the piece and ultimately concludes with the psychoanalytical analysis of the literary works. The stages of scrutinizing the information are as follows: initially, evaluating the data according to its structural components, subsequently, evaluating the data according to the psychoanalytic perspective.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

The kidnapping case of Daisy Armstrong is the motive of the revenge in this novel. Daisy was three years old when she was kidnapped by a mafia gangster Samuel Edward Ratchet or Cassetti. This cruel man asked for a high sum as the price for Daisy. Her parents paid the sum right away yet they got nothing but Daisy’s dead body. This case left nothing but a wound for all the people around the Armstrong family.

Sonia Armstrong, Daisy’s mother, who was pregnant at that time could not bear the stress of losing her child. She and the baby inside her unfortunately died because of it. The tragic thing also happened to Colonel Armstrong, the father of Daisy, he ended his own life due to the unbearable pain he felt after losing his kids and beloved wife.

“Do you remember reading of the Armstrong baby? This is the man who murdered little Daisy Armstrong. Cassetti.” “I recall it now. A shocking affair—though I cannot remember the details.” “Colonel Armstrong was an Englishman—a V.C. He was half American, his mother having been a daughter of W. K. Van der Halt, the Wall Street millionaire. He married

the daughter of Linda Arden, the most famous tragic American actress of her day. They lived in America and had one child—a girl whom they idolized. When she was three years old, she was kidnapped, and an impossibly high sum demanded as the price of her return. I will not weary you with all the intricacies that followed. I will come to the moment when, after the parents had paid over the enormous sum of two hundred thousand dollars, the child's dead body was discovered; it had been dead for at least a fortnight. Public indignation rose to fever point. And there was worse to follow. Mrs. Armstrong was expecting another baby. Following the shock of the discovery, she gave birth prematurely to a dead child, and herself died. Her broken-hearted husband shot himself.” (page 39).

Besides Daisy's parents, there is also one person who ended their own life because of this case. The poor soul is Susanne, Daisy's nursemaid. She was accused of teamed up with Casetti to committed the crime. Accusation is informally stating that a person has committed an illegal or immoral act (Bergstra, 2023). This unfortunate lady decided to end her life by tossing her body out of a window because no one believe her even though she told the truth in the court. After she died the court revealed that she had no connection with Casetti and she was innocent. The death of Susanne left a big wound for her loved ones including Pierre Michel her father and Cyrus Hardman her lover. Thus, Susanne's death is also a motive of the revenge.

“There was also another death, if I remember rightly?” “Yes, an unfortunate French or Swiss nursemaid. The police were convinced that she had some knowledge of the crime. They refused to believe her hysterical denials. Finally, in a fit of despair the poor girl threw herself from a window and was killed. It was proved afterwards that she had been absolutely innocent of any complicity in the crime.” (page 54).

The death of Daisy Armstrong and Susanne was the main reason why this revenge happened. All of the twelve passengers of the Orient Express were haunted by the lack of justice given to them. Casetti, the murder of Daisy Arsmtrong, was acquitted over some technical inaccuracy because of his wealth and influence. He did not get the punishment he deserved, instead he ran away and changed his name to Samuel Edward Ratchett.

Five years after the death of Daisy, Mrs Hubbard, Daisy's grandmother, gathered all of the mourning people to avenge the murder of little Daisy. She then gathered all of the information regarding Casetti, now Ratchett, to show him what he deserved.

Mrs Hubbard, then discovered to be Linda Arden the American actress, idea was to draw lots to decide who was supposed to take Casetti's life but Antonio Foscarelli suggested that all of them should take Casetti's life together. Foscarelli used to be the chauffeur of the Armstrong

family and he adored little Daisy so much that it hurt him knowing the little girl kidnapped then murdered by Casetti. Foscarelli agreed to join Linda Arden to find justice for little Daisy.

Linda Arden then asked Mary Debenham and Hector MacQueen to get the details about Casetti. Miss Debenham was the governess of Daisy Armstrong meanwhile MacQueen was a big fan of Sonia, Daisy's mother. He managed to be Casetti's secretary so that he could easily get Casetti and the other twelve to get on the same train to execute him enroute.

She then assigned Cyrus Hardman to track down Casetti. Hardman was in love with Susanne, the unfortunate nursemaid of Armstrong. He was a private detective working for McNeil's Detective Agent in New York. Then they managed to try and get Edward Masterman, a batman of Colonel Armstrong, and MacQueen to be Casetti's employee. Colonel Arbuthnot who was a best friend of Colonel Armstrong naturally joined the group. He said that twelve is a perfect number because it resembles the jury. She also managed to get Pierre Michel, the father of Susanne, who actually works at the train to join her. MacQueen then adjusted Casetti's travelling schedule so he would board the train the same time as Pierre would be on duty as a conductor. The rest of the group also boarded at the same time.

Because Hercule Poirot unexpected presence on the train, the group had to change the plan. Linda herself stayed in a compartment right beside Casetti. The plan began when Masterman gave Casetti a sleeping draught without his knowledge. Then at midnight Linda made a chaos insisting someone was in her compartment. Passed midnight when Poirot is asleep, the twelve of them came to Casetti's compartment followed by Linda to be the last one who stabbed Casetti to death. She made the plan so well that it made Poirot almost give up to solve this case. At the end, she told Poirot to take the blame on her so that the others would be free saying that she would have stabbed Casetti twelve time willingly.

The id is the only component of personality that is present from birth. This completely unconscious element of personality consists of instinctive and primitive behaviors (McLeod, 2016). This part of personality is entirely unconscious and serves as the source of all libidinal energy (Cherry, 2020). Freud (in Levine, 2021) also acknowledges that the id is the part of the mind which is obscure and inaccessible and recognizes nothing external. Thus, what the id understands is only about the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. Id has devoted to one purpose which is finding pleasure whether it is appropriate or not.

Then, Freud (in Pasos, 2022) explains that the ego is the conscious self created by the dynamic tensions and interactions between the id and the superego, which has the task of balancing their opposing needs with the requirements of the external reality. In other words, the ego deals with the conflict between the id and superego, and keeps the balance between

them in relation with the external world for the sake of the harmony within someone's total personality.

The last one is superego. McLeod (2019) stated that superego consists of two systems: the conscience and the ideal self. What is meant by conscience is the guilt feelings that tend to come whenever ego gives in to id's demand, or our "inner voice". Superego is the opposite of id, where morality, norms and guilt feeling laid (Khofifa, 2022).

Here, the writer wants to analyzed the Id in Linda Arden based on Sigmund Frued's psychoanalytic approach. The first Id that the writer find is when Poirot find out her entire disguise. She said that she had no regret ending Cassetti's life because of the pain that he caused to her. This quotation shows that Linda Arden willingly to do the bad to someone who killed her granddaughter, daughter and son-in-law. She also willingly to be framed as the only suspect because all of this was her idea. This shows her eager to commit the crime to find justice for herself even if it meant that she has to murder someone.

"Well," she said, "you know everything now, M. Poirot. What are you going to do about it? If it must all come out, can't you lay the blame upon me and me only? I would have stabbed that man twelve times willingly. It wasn't only that he was responsible for my daughter's death and her child's and that of the other child who might have been alive and happy now. It was more than that: there had been other children kidnapped before Daisy, and there might be others in the future." (MOTOE: 136).

The writer also found the Id in Colonel Arbuthnot. He had zero doubt to fight someone who made his loved one cried. Here Poirot was questioning, or cornering, Mary Debenham. Arbuthnot has a special relation with Mary that it angers him seeing someone break her heart. He acted so fast to protect Mary.

"And suddenly, without warning, she broke down, dropping her face down upon her outstretched arms and crying as though her heart would break. The Colonel sprang up and stood awkwardly beside her. "I—look here—" He stopped and turning round scowled fiercely at Poirot. "I'll break every bone in your damned body, you dirty little whipper-snapper," he said." (MOTOE: 124).

Then the writer notices something from him. Even though he showed a little bit of doubt at first meaning that his Ego is showing but the Id in him is showing more. He seemed doubtful at first about ending someone's life but decided to do it at the end. Arbuthnot known to be a good friend of Colonel Armstrong and he is the one who suggest Linda Arden to make a group of twelve people to resemble the jury.

“Colonel Arbuthnot was very keen on having twelve of us. He seemed to think it made it more in order. He didn’t like the stabbing idea much, but he agreed that it did solve most of our difficulties.” (MOTOE: 136).

The researcher finds the Superego in Mary Debenham. She lied to Poirot earlier and she felt uneasy about it. Then she decided to tell the truth. She knows that lying will make things worst. Besides, she feels like she does not have a reason to lie knowing that Poirot already knows the truth.

“Yes,” she said. “That is true.” “No, Mademoiselle, it was false.” “You misunderstood me. I mean that it is true that I lied to you.” “Ah, you admit it?” Her lips curved into a smile. “Certainly, since you have found me out.” (MOTOE: 123).

The writer finds another Superego in this novel coming from Masterman who suddenly came to Poirot confessing that he lied earlier. He felt guilty and realized that what he did was wrong meaning that his Superego is showing.

“It was the valet—Masterman. He came straight up to Poirot and spoke in his usual quiet, unemotional voice’. “I hope I’m not intruding, sir. I thought it best to come along at once, sir, and tell you the truth. I was Colonel Armstrong’s batman in the War, sir, and afterwards I was his valet in New York. I’m afraid I concealed that fact this morning. It was very wrong of me, sir, and I thought I’d better come and make a clean breast of it.” (MOTOE: 127)

Then there was Hardman, the researcher finds that this particular dialogue is interesting. This dialogue might seem ordinary but there is something about him which was interesting. Here Poirot talked about his opinion on foreign girls, especially French and Belgian. Instead of responding, Hardman turned away to look at the snow. Then suddenly tears came into his eyes and pretended that his eyes hurt because of the snow. Hardman was in love with Susanne, the poor French nursemaid of the Armstrong family, he might still love her up until now. He might want to cry at the moment but he concealed it well making it look like he is showing his Ego.

“I find the American women less charming than my own countrywomen. The French or the Belgian girl, coquettish, charming—I think there is no one to touch her.” Hardman turned away to peer out at the snow for a minute. “Perhaps you’re right, M. Poirot,” he said. “But I guess every nation likes its own girls best.” He blinked as though the snow hurt his eyes. “Kind of dazzling, isn’t it?” he remarked.” (MOTOE: 94).

The writer finds two dialogues by Poirot and Linda both showing that all of the twelve passengers intended to murder Cassetti because he had escaped justice back then. This shows

their Id because of their determination to take a revenge by murdering someone who ruined their life.

“Ratchett had escaped justice in America. There was no question as to his guilt. I visualised a self-appointed jury of twelve people who had condemned him to death and who by the exigencies of the case had themselves been forced to be his executioners. And immediately, on that assumption, the whole case fell into beautiful shining order.” (MOTOE: (134).

“We decided then and there (perhaps we were mad—I don’t know) that the sentence of death that Casetti had escaped had got to be carried out. There were twelve of us.” (MOTOE: 136).

3.2 Discussion

The researcher finds the motive of this planned well revenge by Linda Arden is the death of Daisy Armstrong, Sonia Armstrong and Colonel Armstrong, Linda’s granddaughter, daughter and son-in-law. Daisy was kidnapped then Casetti asked for a high sum for the price of Daisy. The parents paid the sum right away yet they got nothing but their daughter’s dead body. This devastating news made Sonia, Daisy’s pregnant mother, broke down and had a premature baby but unfortunately none of them survived. The poor dad and husband, Colonel Armstrong, could not handle the stress them decided to shot himself with a gun. Unfortunate thing also happened to Susanne, Daisy’s nursemaid, whose father is Pierre Michell. The poor nursemaid was accused of being Casetti’s right hand which was not true. No one believe her in the court then the poor lady decided to throw herself from a window. The killer, Casetti, managed to let go from the case because of his wealth and connection then he ran away and changed his name to Samuel Edward Ratchett. This heartbreaking tragedy left a big wound not to only one person, but twelve. Thus, they gathered as twelve to resemble the jury to show Casetti what he deserved.

Linda Arden planned the murder of Casetti really well that it made the famous detective Hercule Poirot almost gave up solving the case. Each of them played their role really well pretending to be stranger with their own business travelling with that train. Started by the gathering all of the twelve people, then Linda asked Mary Debenham and Hector MacQueen to get the details about Casetti. Miss Debenham was the governess of Daisy Armstrong meanwhile MacQueen was a big fan of Sonia, Daisy’s mother.

She then assigned Cyrus Hardman to track down Casetti. Hardman was in love with Susanne, the unfortunate nursemaid of Armstrong family. He was a private detective working for McNeil’s Detective Agent in New York. He then became Casetti’s private detective. Then they managed to try and get Edward Masterman, a batman of Colonel Arsmtrong, to be

Cassetti's valet and MacQueen to be Cassetti's secretary. Colonel Arbuthnot who was a best friend of Colonel Armstrong naturally joined the group. He said that twelve is a perfect number because it resembles the jury. She also managed to get Pierre Michel, the father of Susanne, who actually works at the train to join her. MacQueen then adjusted Cassetti's travelling schedule so he would board the train the same time as Pierre would be on duty as a conductor. The rest of the group also boarded at the same time.

They executed the plan really well. But they had to improvise because of the snow storm and the presence of Hercule Poirot. The plan began when Masterman gave Cassetti a sleeping draught without his knowledge. Then at midnight Linda made a chaos insisting someone was in her compartment. Passed midnight when Poirot is asleep, the twelve of them came to Cassetti's compartment followed by Linda to be the last one who stabbed Cassetti to death. They also came up with an idea that some unknown stranger was in the train when the accident occurred by stating that there was an unknown conductor on the train and the presence of the lady in a red dragon sleeping gown. They also lied about the presence of a short black man with a womanish voice to make it look like someone from outside of the train was the killer.

All of the twelve passengers of the Orient Express have a dominant Id showed by their determination to plan the revenge. They have a dominant Id because they only follow their own desire even though it is not acceptable in society. They just thought that it was the only way to find peace and justice within their self. The Id is not rational, it dreams, imagines to get what we want (Shouma, 2020). Freud (in Levine, 2021) also acknowledges that the id is the part of the mind which is obscure and inaccessible and recognizes nothing external. Thus, what the id understands is only about the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. Id has devoted to one purpose which is finding pleasure whether it is appropriate or not. Cherry (2020) stated that the Id demand and insist its needs to be met to be pleased.

Linda Arden is someone who has a dominant Id of all the passengers. Remembering that she is the one who arrange the plan of the revenge so. She gathered all of the mourning people to carry out the plan. They successfully played their role to murder Ratchett. Linda also shows no regret of what she did instead she said that she would take all the blame of another passengers.

Another passenger who shows Id is Colonel Arbuthnot shown by his way of protecting Mary Debenham when Hercule Poirot bombarded her with questions. He has a special relation with Debenham. This man also willingly joins Linda Arden to kill Ratchett for what he did to his friend, Colonel Armstrong. He shows no doubt in doing things to protect her beloved ones.

The researcher also finds Superego in this novel portrayed by Masterman and Debenham. McLeod (2019) explained that superego consists of two systems: the conscience and the ideal self. What is meant by conscience is the guilt feelings that tend to come whenever ego gives in to id's demand, or our "inner voice". Superego is the opposite of id, where morality, norms and guilt feeling laid (Khofifa, 2022). They feel uneasy lying to him. Miss Debenham broke down in tears while confessing that she was lying while Masterman said that he regrets lying to Poirot. They show how guilty they are lying to someone as they knew lying is not a good thing.

4. CLOSING

After the researcher analyze the novel, the researcher makes some conclusion. The first is the motive behind the revenge. It begins from heartache that is upsetting to be a revenge on a grandmother and mother, Linda Arden. The revenge was caused by Ratchett, he kidnapped and killed Daisy Armstrong, a little grandchild of Linda Arden. This tragedy made Daisy's pregnant mother, Sonia, depressed and her baby was born prematurely, then they were dead together. A few days after his wife passed away, John Armstrong, the father of Daisy, felt depressed then he committed suicide with his gun. Another old man was also in grief, he is Pierre Michel. His daughter Susanne, daisy's nursemaid, committed suicide. She was accused that she was involved in Ratchett's crime whereas she was not. After her dead, the truth was appeared that she was not related with Daisy case.

The researcher also finds that the characteristic of the thirteen people on that train mostly Id. Because they all want to take a revenge without thinking if it is a bad thing or not. Even though some of them show their Superego, it mostly because of how desperate they are. As for Linda Arden, she has a dominant Id showed by her way of planning the murder without a single doubt and regret.

Murder on the Orient Express is a fantastic novel by Agatha Christie with an amazing plot twist. The researcher recommends this novel for all the reader especially for those who love detectives. It is the reason why the researcher chooses this novel. With all of the imperfection in this study, the researcher hope that it will be useful for all readers. For the next researcher who wants to do a research about this novel, the researcher suggests to develop the study with another issue and approach. For example, to only focus on one character of the novel. The researcher also hope that the reader will find this study interested.

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