

A Study of Development Strategies for Suspense Movies Remakes

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Abstract:

Nowadays, suspense movies are becoming more and more popular among the audience. This paper primarily focuses on examining the strategies for adapting suspense movies in Chinese cultural contexts. The process of remaking suspense films involves intricate choices that respect the original work's atmosphere while catering to the cultural preferences of a new audience. Since the successful adaptation of suspense films requires a deep understanding of both the source material and the local culture, it's necessary to analyze the important elements suspense movie remakes need to include and combine them with real examples. Through detailed investigations, this study identifies that a suspense film remake's success is often closely linked with its cultural adaptation efforts. The research findings underscore the importance of integrating local cultural elements, such as location choices and character development, to enhance audience engagement and preserve the story's suspenseful essence. This study highlights the creative and immersive nature of suspense film adaptations. The insights gained from this research can provide valuable guidance for filmmakers and producers, helping them make informed decisions to support the growth of both the suspense film remake industry and cross-cultural storytelling. Overall, this study emphasizes various existing articles and examples and extracts the key factors out of these examples.

Keywords: Suspense movie, Local adaptation, Movie remake strategies

1. Introduction

1.1 Topic selection and significance

Suspense remakes are a kind of film genre that has attracted much attention in recent years. According

to incomplete statistics, from 2020 to 2023, there are a total of 23 films remade in China, of which 5 are suspense remakes. The suspense genre is popular with the public because of its compact plot and unique atmosphere, so it also occupies a place in the remake film. Audiences often compare the original

with the new work to judge the quality and innovation of the film. But among the many suspense remakes, there are many successes and failures. This article will explore how mystery remakes adapt film elements at the cultural and social level to achieve success in remakes. By analyzing a series of classic suspense remakes, we will explore the innovation and changes in the narrative structure, role shaping, audio-visual effects and other aspects of the films, explore the phenomenon of film remaking from a cultural perspective, explore the changes made by film elements in response to different cultural and social backgrounds, and how to adapt to the appreciation and aesthetic needs of local audiences, so as to gain the welcome of local audiences. In the current prosperous film market, as a kind of popular genre, the cultural and social influence of suspense remakes cannot be ignored. Through the in-depth study of this phenomenon, we can better understand the influence of culture and society on shooting elements in film works, and also provide new inspiration and thinking for film creation. It is hoped that the research results of this paper can provide some useful reference and inspiration for scholars and filmmakers in related fields.

1.2 Literature review

In recent years, suspense remakes have gradually occupied an important position in the global film market. As a cross-culture and cross-era art form, remaking a film should not only retain the essence of the original, but also integrate local cultural and social elements. This complex creative process involves multiple dimensions of research, and this article explores strategies for how mystery remakes can be successful. Among the existing literatures on CNKI, there are a total of 125 literatures on remaking movies, which are classified and studied on the strategies and prospects of remaking movies and the remaking movies in different countries. Among them, the remaking of suspense movies mainly analyzes different movie cases.

1.2.1 Cultural background and localization

Suspense films often need to be adapted locally in the process of remaking, and there are 11 articles on this topic. Hu Xiya, from the School of Criminal Investigation of Southwest University of Political Science and Law, published the *Localization Dilemma and Outlet of Remaking Korean crime Films under the Dual vision of Professional narrative and cultural characteristics*, which focuses on the phenomenon of adapting to the local remaking of Korean crime films, analyzes the localization dilemma of remaking films from two perspectives of professional narrative and cultural characteristics, and puts forward relevant suggestions.^[1] Ren Mohan and Zhang Jingyi jointly published "An Analysis of the Localization of remake films - Taking Korean Films as an example", which summed up the

problems in Korean remake films and provided successful experience by analyzing the cases of remake films.^[2] Xu Chenwei's *Localization Transformation of Transnational Remakes - Taking the Film "Accidental Killing" as an Example* analyzes the strategy and significance of localization transformation from the perspective of text and industry, and studies the future development possibility and trend of transnational remakes on the basis of it.^[3] Yuan Zhizhong and Ji of the School of Journalism and Communication of Southwest University analyzed the cultural identity, heterogeneous representation and aesthetic trend of Chinese and Korean reproductions from the perspective of Oriental ethics in their book "Localization of Korean Films in China from the perspective of Oriental ethics".^[4] In addition, in Yang Yixin's "Research on Transnational Remaking and Local Adaptation of the Legal Genre Film *Twelve Angry Men*", Zheng Yumeng's "Analysis on the Localization of Remaking Films - Taking the Chinese version of "The Dedication of Suspect X" as an Example," Wu An Yang's "From Old Hands to Big Characters": The Localization Expression of film Remakes, Lu Wu and Wang Chenxi's *Studies on the Localization of the Movie "Crazy Phone Call" from the Perspective of Remakes and adaptations*, and He Liujia's *Studies on the Localization Adaptation of Drama Remakes: A Case Study of the Localization Adaptation of the Tokyo Woman's Illustrated Book from the perspective of Shanghai Woman's Illustrated Book*, etc., authors from different perspectives such as cultural background and narrative structure, Based on the comparison between the original film and television works and the localization works, this paper summarizes the practical experience and development trend of the localization of suspense films, and points out the shortcomings of the localization of suspense films in China.

1.2.2 Strategic research

There are two articles on the strategy research of film remaking: Ma Junfeng and Ren Jingjing of the College of Culture and Communication of Hebei University of Economics and Business analyzed Korean films remade in China since 2013, pointed out the strategies and problems existing in the localization process of films with different themes, and put forward targeted suggestions in their research on the Strategy of remaking Korean films. Zhou Wen of the Chinese National Academy of Arts, in *A Study on Chinese Remake Strategies for South Korean Films*, summarized the common characteristics and difficulties faced by Chinese remake of South Korean films, and put forward benign development strategies for Chinese filmmakers to carry out cross-cultural remake in the future.

1.2.3 Comparative studies

There are two articles on comparative research: Yang Zheng from Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology pub-

lished a Comparative Study on Japanese and Korean remakes of the film *White Night Journey* from the perspective of cross-cultural Communication, which studied the differences between the localization adaptation and cultural communication of the Japanese and Korean film *White Night Journey* from the perspective of cross-cultural communication, providing new thinking and new directions for Chinese film remakes and related studies. Qian Qian from Fujian Normal University reviewed the development process of Chinese remake and Comparative Study of Korean crime films since 2015, analyzed the current situation and creation of the remake, and discussed the cultural differences exposed in cross-cultural comparison and their implications for the creation of Chinese crime films. In “Silence” and “National Witness”: A Comparative Study on the Localization of Remake Films, Wang Yan from the School of Foreign Languages, Dalian Minzu University, takes the Korean remake film “Silence” as an example to discuss the strategies and effects of localization integration in the process of remake from three dimensions: life scenes, external images of characters and inner humanity, so as to give the film new vitality.

Presently, although there have been some important researches on the remaking of suspense films, there are still insufficient researches in general. To be specific, most of the existing studies focus on localization adaptation and its strategies, but there are few special discussions on suspense films, especially in the detailed analysis and comparative study of specific cases.

First, the existing literature discusses the localization of remakes in detail, especially the remakes of Korean films in China. However, most of these studies focus on the macro-level of cultural background adaptation, and relatively few studies involve specific details and operational levels.

Second, the existing strategic studies have summarized the successful experience and common problems of remaking films, but lack the comparison and in-depth analysis of

specific suspense films.

In view of the lack of focus on suspense films and the lack of thorough analysis of suspense film cases from content to methods, the research focus of this paper is determined to be the analysis of the successful factors of localization of suspense remakes. The following innovations will be made in this paper:

First of all, different from existing research on the analysis of a broad category of remakes, this paper will focus on the remakes of suspense films to fill the research gap in this field. By analyzing the characteristics of suspense films in detail, this paper probes into their localization adaptation strategies and effects under different cultural backgrounds, and systematically studies the process of remaking suspense films by combining content analysis and comparative analysis. By comparing the theme, meaning, content, roles and form elements of the original and remade versions, this paper reveals the differences in adaptation strategies and effects under different cultural backgrounds.

Secondly, based on the latest remakes from 2020 to 2023, this paper analyzes the characteristics and status quo of suspense remakes, with timeliness and first-hand information. This will make the research closer to the current reality and provide more real and reliable research conclusions.

Thirdly, in the process of research, this paper not only focuses on the adaptation of film text and elements, but also analyzes from the perspective of content, audience acceptance, market response and other levels, and comprehensively reveals the successful experience and existing problems of the remake of suspense films and makes comparisons.

2. The Status Quo of Suspense Remakes in Recent Years

According to the statistics of recent years, the following are the box office and remake sources of five suspense movies in 2020-2023:

Table 1. The box office and remake resources of five suspense movies in 2020-2023

Film Title	Box Office	Douban Score	Original
She Is Gone	3.523 billion	6.2	Trap for the Bachelor
Save the Suspect	569 million	6.2	Seven Days
The Invisible Guest	1.14billion	6.7	The Invisible Guest
Door lock	2.42billion	5.7	Imminent
The Manslaughter 2	11.21billion	5.6	Door Lock
The Country Where the Film Was First Shot	Remake Time	Original Film Shooting Time	Original Douban Score
Former Soviet Union	2023	1990	7.1
Korea	2023	2007	7.5

Spain	2023	2016	8.7
America	2021	2002	8.4
Korea	2021	2018	6.9

During 2020 and 2023, China's suspense film market shows a diversified development trend, with different box office and reputation. According to box office and rating data, *She Is Gone* led the way with 3.523 billion yuan in ticket sales, although it only scored 6.2 points on Douban. The film, adapted from the former Soviet Union's *Trap for the Bachelor*, has attracted a large audience through local adaptations and multiple plot twists. "Save the Suspect" is adapted from the South Korean film *Seven Days*, the former box office reached 569 million, the score is also 6.2 points, in the box office and score appear mediocre. Despite the film's tight plot, it doesn't significantly improve the audience's experience compared to the original. *The Manslaughter 2* is adapted from the United States *Imminent*, which also made 1.121 billion yuan. The large-scale shooting techniques and suspenseful plot are loved by the audience. The film, adapted from Spain's *The Invisible Guest*, earned a low box office of 114 million yuan, but scored 6.7, reflecting the high quality of its performance. On the other hand, *The Lock*, which was adapted from the Korean film of the same name, earned 242 million yuan at the box office but scored only 4.3, showing that it failed to effectively retain the essence of the original in the adaptation process. To sum up, although these suspense films performed differently at the box office, they generally received lower ratings than the original books. It is not easy to create new and attractive films in the process of adaptation. At the time of shooting, suspense films also need to succeed from the following aspects.

When analyzing a film, we should analyze it from the perspective of the overall theme, content and visual and audi-

tory language of the film. Specifically, we should "evaluate the theme, characters, details, scenes, artistic characteristics, and the use of film language. In addition, we can also evaluate specific films, such as screenwriters, directors, actors, cinematography, art and music."^[5] Based on this theory, I believe that the success or failure of adapted films depends on the core composition of many films: the main idea and meaning are the most important, followed by content and characters, and finally the form elements. This paper is divided into the above three levels of analysis, and mainly uses three representative successful and failed film cases to study, to get the following analysis.

2.1 *She Is Gone* vs *Trap for the Bachelor*

So far, the most successful case of a mystery remake is the 2023 release of *She Is Gone*. The film is a remake of the Soviet film *Trap for the Bachelor*. There are similarities between the two in terms of theme and plot composition, but many innovations have been made in the localization adaptation of *She Is Gone* to make it more in line with the cultural background and aesthetic habits of Chinese audiences. In terms of theme, the story of *She Is Gone* is set in an island town in Southeast Asia, and revolves around the process of Chinese tourist He Fei's search for his missing wife Li Muzi. The story advances through a series of twists and suspensions that keep the audience in doubt and on edge. *Trap for the Bachelor* takes place in a large villa, and the plot is simple and straightforward, relying mainly on dialogue and interaction between the characters to drive the plot.

Table 2. Comparison of *She Is Gone* & *Trap for the Bachelor*

	<i>She Is Gone</i>	<i>Trap for the Bachelor</i>
Plot Similarity	60%	
Character Similarity	70%	
Main characters	Hero (killer), Lawyer (best friend), Missing wife, Fake wife, hotel maid, cop	Hero (killer), Missing wife, Fake wife, Pastor, sheriff, homeless
Story background	The newlyweds came to Thailand for a holiday	The newlyweds vacationed in a small French town
Innovation	In the end, the lawyer and the pretending wife jointly expose the husband's lies	The fake wife was trying to extort the inheritance, which was a lie made up by the police
Shot transition	More scenes and close-ups	There's a lot of character interaction
Director	Chinese mystery film director Chen Sicheng	Former Soviet + Russian suspense comedy director Aleksei Korenev

2.1.1 Theme and Meaning

Thematically, the movie *She Is Gone* explores the relationship between memory, reality and identity through complex character relationships and multiple reversals. Through the setting of the “Mandela effect”, the film reflects on the fragility and plasticity of human memory. Another big success of *She Is Gone* is that it does not simply use the original foreign script, but uses the news of “a Thai pregnant woman falling off the cliff” as the basis for adaptation. This real event has attracted wide attention, and the crew used this event for reference in the adaptation, so that the film not only has suspense, but also increases the sense of urgency and authenticity of reality, so that the audience can feel that this is a real case that happened in life. By dramatizing this real event, the film becomes more compelling in terms of plot. In *She Is Gone*, the film triggers the audience’s thinking and resonance on the relationship between men and women and marriage issues in contemporary society through Southeast Asian tourism, gambling and cheating men and women. The plot of He Fei falling into a debt crisis because of gambling and then murdering his wife deeply reflects the harm of gambling and the dark side of human nature. The plot of Li Muzi, a wealthy single woman who is framed by her husband, inspires the audience to think and discuss social reality, further enhancing the emotional value and topicality of the film. Van Gogh’s painting “*Starry Night*” appears many times in the film, and the dreamy scene echoes the Easter egg at the end of the film, as if Li Muzi and He Fei live a happy life. But the reality is not so, the moral of “*Starry Night*” is also more in an irrational marriage in the illusory fantasy. At the same time, the theme song of the film is called “*Cage*”, which also shows that in a marriage relationship, more is timely communication and emotional support, rather than allowing it to become a shackle. *Trap for the Bachelor* more presents the confusion and helplessness of human beings in misunderstanding and dislocation, and the interpretation of the plot is more absurd. Through exaggerated performances and dramatic plots, the film shows people’s reactions in the face of unexpected situations, and more importantly, it is a relaxed and pleasant thinking about life. As a result, the plot topic of *Trap for a Bachelor* is much less social concern, and it lacks a reflection of the gender relationship in this society.

2.1.2 Content and Characters

The main characters are He Fei, fake Li Muzi and elite lawyer Chen Mai. The film has a cool tone and a seaside setting that enhances the suspenseful atmosphere. He Fei’s mental illness propels the plot as the audience follows him deeper into the deranged timeline. With the progress of the plot, He Fei’s image is gradually enriched, and

the truth is revealed through episodic narration, and the audience can experience the process from trust to doubt and then to truth disclosure. Chen Mai is the key role in the plot. She gradually reveals He Fei’s flaws from the lawyer’s perspective. The actress Ni Ni played Chen Mai as a lawyer, step by step reveal He Fei’s flaws. Through her perspective, the audience gradually discovers the suspicious place of He Fei, and together with Chen Mai, they experience the process from trust to doubt and then to reveal the truth. Chen Mai’s perspective provides the audience with a path to solving the puzzle, allowing the audience to actively participate in the suspenseful reasoning while maintaining a tight pace. This makes the final unexpected ending a big climax. The character relationships in *Trap for the Bachelor* are simple, focusing on the interaction between the bachelor and other characters, and relying more on misunderstandings and misalignments between the characters. The character of the bachelor is used throughout the film, and his every action and reaction directly effects the progress of the story. Characters such as the police commissioner and the priest add interest to the plot through their investigations and dialogue. Both are similar in that the husband kills his wife, and the disguised wife is believed to be in a fraud ring to defraud the wife’s inheritance, while the police investigate the case. *She Is Gone* only borrows this plot element, and the degree of coincidence is not very high. It joins more of the traditional Chinese audience’s shooting of the mystery film decryption process. When *She Is Gone* was adapted, it was localized, shifting the story background from France to Southeast Asia, and adding Chinese tourists to the setting, close to the life of Chinese audiences. Create an uneasy atmosphere with Southeast Asian street-scenes and humid environments. The film adds multiple reversals and the original character Chen Mai, which not only increases the depth of the character’s relationship, but also enhances the layered sense of the film. In contrast, *Trap for the Bachelor* is dialog-based and humorous, using actors and dialogue to drive the story. *She Is Gone* on the other hand, enhances visual impact and suspense through tight dialogue and special effects, allowing the audience to experience deeper immersion in the decryption process.

2.1.3 Anaphase Technologies

She Is Gone uses a lot of location shooting, especially seaside shots, to add an exotic feel and create a suspenseful atmosphere through cool colors. The use of chases and close-ups in the plot adds a sense of urgency to solving the case, while providing clues for the audience to immerse themselves in the process. For example, Thai street-scenes and chaotic scenes outside police stations show Southeast Asian characteristics so audience can fully emerge in the plot. The film is tightly paced, with fast-paced editing and

a tense score to match the plot twists and keep the audience’s attention. The soundtrack is inclined to suspense thriller, and the theme song is closely related to the case, revealing the greed and bondage of human nature. In the chase scene, the shots show the tense rhythm and reflects the suddenness of the event. The close-up shots and multi-angle shooting increase the change of perspective. Trap for the Bachelor, by contrast, was shot mostly inside a villa in bright, cheerful tones that fit the comedic style. The camera focuses on the dialogue and interaction of the characters, and the comic effect is repeatedly presented through exaggerated actions. The scene of the outdoor

sunshade falling adds a relaxed feeling, the overall rhythm is relatively calm, and the music is relaxed, consistent with the positioning of the film. There are fewer camera cuts, more emphasis on the interaction between the characters to promote the plot, and the atmosphere is soothing.

2.2 Chinese version of The Door Lock vs Korean version of the Door Lock

Unlike She Is Gone, the film Door Lock did not have high box office and ratings, and the plot is largely borrowed from the Korean original Door Lock.

Table 3. Comparison of Chinese version of Door Lock & Korean version of Door Lock

	Chinese version of Door Lock	Korean version of Door Lock
Plot Similarity	90%	
Character Similarity	80%	
Main characters	Fang Hui (main character), bestie, doctor (murderer), security, agency, boss	Zhao Jingmin (main character), bestie, Officer Li, security (murderer), boss
Story background	Women who live alone are being stalked	Women who live alone are being stalked
Innovation	The ending emphasizes the confrontation and fighting of the characters	The ending highlights that the heroine is still trying to get rid of the psycho killer
Shot transition	Close-up of the details	Close-up of detail and first perspective brought in
Director	Chinese mystery film director Bie Ke	South Korean film and television director Lee Kwon

2.2.1 Theme and Meaning

The Chinese version and the Korean version both discuss the safety of women living alone, and the plot is about 90% similar, but there are significant differences in the expression techniques and theme depth. The Chinese version reflects the potential threats of contemporary women living alone by showing the multiple crises that the heroine Fang Yun encounters, such as stranger intrusion, cheating by real estate agents, and sexual harassment in the workplace. However, the plot is loose, and fails to explore these issues in depth. It does not effectively integrate various crisis events. The villain behind the story is set as the heroine’s friend, and the plot is too complicated and lacks tension. In contrast, the Korean version of “Door Lock” is more compact and real, a delicate portrayal of the fear and helplessness of women living alone, highlighting the social neglect of women’s safety issues. Zhao Jingmin found traces of strangers in her home, experienced a series of horrific events, and finally revealed that the apartment security guard was the murderer. The Korean version successfully creates a realistic horror atmosphere through layers of suspense and a tense rhythm. At the end, the Chinese version adds tension with exaggerated fight scenes that make it unreasonable for the police to be alone. The Korean version is more realistic, the heroine gradually re-

veals the truth, and the police’s collective action to catch the murderer enhances the logic and sense of reality of the film.

2.2.2 Content and Characters

The protagonists of both the Chinese and Korean versions are women who live alone, Fang Hui and Zhao Jingmin, respectively. Fang Hui character is strong but sensitive, in order to protect themselves pretend to have male cohabitation at home, always keep alert. Zhao Jingmin is an ordinary white-collar worker, who gradually becomes strong after being invaded by strangers, and the film exquisitely shows her nervous mood when she finds the house abnormal. The difference between the two films is that the Chinese version introduces the character of the pet doctor, who is gentle on the surface but a psychopathic serial killer. The Korean version of the security guard is the main villain, creating a more realistic image of the stalker, increasing the sense of oppression. In the Chinese version, the security guard Xiao Wu is portrayed as a hero to save beauty, undermining the authenticity of the character. The Chinese version of the multi-line narrative sets up multiple crises, but the rhythm is slow and the tension is insufficient. The frequent inversion design and the lack of logic in the plot make it difficult for the audience to concentrate. For example, in the film, Fang Hui found the gang-

ster after several probes in her home, and the four-minute suspense shot was too long, and repeated close-ups and stacked sound effects were counterproductive. In contrast, the Korean version of Cho Kyung-min gradually reveals the crisis by discovering unusual clues in the home, such as the lifted toilet seat and fingerprints on the door lock, and manages to maintain the audience's tension with a tight pace and gradual suspense. The Chinese version's multiple villains and complex plot are redundant, such as the fact that three stalkers simultaneously know that the password set in Fang Hui's home is unrealistic, which easily confuses the audience. The genre of the film, which begins as a thriller, gradually morphs into a mystery, and eventually into a police drama, makes it difficult to create a coherent viewing experience. The Korean version, on the other hand, uses a single-line narrative and a tight story that always revolves around Cho's search for the murderer, with detailed descriptions and close-ups throughout the film effectively enhancing the atmosphere of horror. Audiences feel relieved when the mystery is solved at the end of the film, while the Chinese version ends with a chase and fight that fails to sustain the thriller of the previous one. Overall, the Korean version manages to create a suspenseful atmosphere through tight pacing and realistic portrayal, while the Chinese version is more chaotic in narrative and pacing, weakening the film's overall tension.

2.2.3 Anaphase Technologies

In terms of camera language, the Chinese version of *Door Lock* has a somber tone and creates tension through dark images, but the effect is not ideal. The pace of the film is slow, the first half is slow, lack of tension, the second half is too fast, so that the audience is difficult to adapt. Compared with the Korean version of *Door Lock*, the film lacks many reflections on the female protagonist's inner activities. Faced with the situation of someone entering the home, the Korean version of the movie has many hints from various aspects of daily life, making the atmosphere more tense and highlighting the seriousness of the incident. In addition, the adapted version of *Door Lock* dialogue design is blunter, lack of natural and smooth dialogue, less use of special effects, mainly rely on live shooting. The Korean version of *Door Lock* successfully creates a tense and scary atmosphere through clever camera language and color design. For example, in the protagonist's home, the adapted version of *Door Lock* contains blue tones, so that the house is brighter. In the original film, the heroine's home is dark green, which makes the overall atmosphere more eerie. The film gradually reveals the heroine's inner world and the threats she faces through delicate narrative methods. The long shot at the beginning of the film shows the tense state of the heroine on the bus and on her way home late at night, which enhances the

audience's sense of engagement and resonance. The music and sound effects are also well designed to match the plot and successfully enhance the horror of the film.

3. The Successful Strategy of Remaking Suspense Films

Suspense films are usually suspenseful, with multiple twists and a suspenseful atmosphere throughout the plot, attracting the audience to keep guessing the truth until the final answer is revealed. The script logic of a suspense film is often more important than the story line in the early stages of creation, because the suspense genre is built on logic. However, playwriting can't follow logic alone, it will lose the sense of suspense. Therefore, the way of script creation in reverse order or even out of order needs a clear logical icon to help the creator keep the logical line clear, so as to enhance the sense of suspense without affecting the overall logical order. The script of suspense film is different from the traditional script, it cannot add plot or dialogue at will after the creation is completed, because it will destroy the original logical line, resulting in the audience to feel the logic. It is a difficult point to set up characters in the script of a doubtful theme. Directors need to adapt characters' personalities and even identities to local contexts. In addition, the number of characters is closely related to the complexity of the plot. In the event that the plot is changed to some extent, the number of characters and character settings will change. If there are too few characters, complex events and logical lines are concentrated on a small number of characters, which not only increases the difficulty of screenplay writing, but also affects the audience's understanding.

In the localization adaptation and remake of suspense films, I believe that the following points are particularly important:

3.1 Retain the core element of suspense

When remaking a mystery film, one of the most important tasks is to preserve the core suspense elements of the original. A good remake of a mystery film builds on a solid and successful original. The success of the original film means that its plot structure, suspense elements and character formation have been tested by the market, and it has a certain audience base and reputation. Therefore, during the remake, it was crucial to retain the core suspense elements of the original. For example, in the remake of the film *She Is Gone*, the director retained the plot of the true and false wife in the original and reversed the plot, giving the audience a deeper impression and stronger impact on the plot effect. As one of the most characteristic elements of the original film, such reference also increased the uniqueness of the remake. In addition, suspense films

also need to pay attention to keeping the plot logic clear, the characterization concise, reasonable plot rhythm control and the laying of clues. Overly complex character relationships and lengthy plot development tend to weaken the tension and suspense atmosphere of the film. Therefore, in the process of adaptation, the director needs to appropriately simplify the plot of the original, retain key clues and plot turning points, and avoid unnecessary accumulation of details, so that the audience can follow the development of the plot and maintain a high sense of tension and attention. The film *Door Lock* failed to control the relationship in the adaptation of the character and plot. Compared to the original film, the adapted version of *Door Lock* breaks down and adds the negative character, the pet doctor. Under the premise of combining the two villains in the original film with the reversal of multiple clues and hints, the addition of new similar characters makes the audience feel confused, and the plot becomes without impressive points. The interspersing of different timelines and clues also makes the reasoning process less smooth, and the overall viewing effect decreases.

3.2 Adaptation of localization elements

In the choice of environment and location, the film needs to integrate into the domestic background, so as to better resonate with the audience. In the process of remaking, choosing an environment and location suitable for local audiences can not only enhance the authenticity of the film, but also make it easier for the audience to enter the story. During the adaptation of *She Is Gone*, the characters made a lot of changes for localization. In the original film *Trap for the Bachelor*, the story takes place in a villa in a small French town through the role of a priest and his wife. The show gives many scenes of the garden and the priest character's characteristic behavior. However, in the Chinese cultural background, pastors are more of a religious role, and people rarely have the opportunity to interact with pastors in their daily lives. Therefore, in the adaptation, the film changed the role of the priest to that of the lawyer, who is also the best friend of the missing wife. In the impression of the Chinese audience, the lawyer is not only more familiar, but also appears with more legal authority. A lawyer therefore plays a crucial role in investigating a case.

3.3 Epochal

The adaptation of a suspense film also needs to keep up with the current background of *The Times* under the premise of conforming to the original plot. The cultural and historical background of the adapted film is different from that of the contemporary era, which will lead to the audience's understanding and acceptance of the suspense element. Therefore, when adapting, the director needs to

take into account the cultural habits and social cognition of the local audience, adjust the suspense elements in the original work, and add the environmental background with the characteristics of the time to make it more in line with the expectations of contemporary audiences. Compared with the narrative structure of a single perspective adopted by the *Invisible Guest*, the adapted version of *The Invisible Guest* adds a narrative mode of multiple perspectives, making the story more complex and modern. This kind of narration is more in line with the contemporary film audience's pursuit of narrative complexity and multiple clues. In terms of scenes, highly recognizable scenes such as Shanghai street-scenes and modern office environments, which appear repeatedly in the film, make it easier for the audience to resonate. Another film with contemporary themes is *She Is Gone*, which has been well received. The film fits in with the topic of gender relations and marriage, which is the focus of contemporary society, causing many viewers to think more rationally about their views on marriage and love when watching.

3.4 Use of camera and sound effects

The use of camera language and close-ups plays a crucial role in the adaptation of suspense films. Through clever camera design and the use of close-ups, the director is able to direct the audience's attention and enhance the suspense atmosphere and emotional tension of the film. For example, in the process of adapting *Door Lock*, the director showed the tension and fear of the heroine in the solitary environment through a large number of close-up shots and the first perspective, which enhanced the audience's sense of inclusion. The use of close-ups can not only highlight the inner state of the characters, but also increase the sense of suspense and tension of the film through the depiction of details. The choice and use of the lens can create a complex atmosphere through the clever arrangement of space and time, and guide the audience into the mystery of the plot. For example, the chase scene in *She Is Gone* successfully created a sense of urgency and crisis through rapid camera switching and tight plot development, making the audience feel as if they were in the process of watching the movie, and gradually pushing the plot development to a climax. The combination of sound effects and shots plays a role in enhancing the thriller element and creating atmosphere in suspense films. With just the right sound design, the director can enhance the suspense and tension of the film. For example, in the film *Door Lock*, the director enhanced the audience's perception of space through the clever use of environmental sound effects, making every sound in the film seem to hide danger. When the heroine senses danger, the sudden appearance of a scary sound effect in the silence will attract the audience's attention more. Such sound design

can not only enhance the thriller effect of the film, but also guide the emotional ups and downs of the audience through the change of sound. The combination of shots and sound effects makes the suspense of the film more intense, and the audience can feel an invisible sense of pressure and tension in the process of watching the film. This kind of thriller atmosphere created by the combination of audio-visual elements is one of the keys to the success of suspense films.

3.5 Directors and actors

Although casting is not the most important factor in the success of a mystery film, good actors and directors can often add a lot to the film. In the process of remaking a mystery film, choosing the right actors and directors can better interpret the characters and suspense elements in the film. For example, in *She Is Gone*, actress Wen Yongshan successfully portrays a complex and multi-faceted character through her outstanding acting, which makes the suspense of the film more intense. Her expression and behavior can let the audience fully feel the drama in the film, and also attract a lot of viewers in the promotion stage of the film. The director Chen Sicheng is a more mature suspense film director. The film *She Is Gone* and *The Manslaughter 2* mentioned in this article, as well as the highly grossing *Detective Chinatown* series and this year's new film *Silent Kill* are all his works. Through precise control of the rhythm of the story, it successfully guided the emotional changes of the audience, making every reversal of the film full of surprises and surprises. In contrast, the unsuccessful case of *Door Lock* with low box office and ratings was remade by Chinese director Bie Ke. Compared with the former, the director has much less experience in shooting, and the number of films he has shot is small and the categories are not very rich, so he will lack the skills required for suspense films in remakes. From this point of view, enhancing the emotional tension and suspense of the film through the cooperation of actors and experienced directors is one of the important factors for the success of suspense films.

4. Conclusion

During 2020 and 2023, China's suspense film market

shows a diversified development trend, with different box office and reputation. Overall, although these suspense remakes performed differently at the box office, they generally received lower ratings than the original films. This shows that the audience has high requirements for the plot and the quality of the adaptation, and many remakes do not meet the audience's expectations. Those successful remakes not only need exciting plot content, but also have characteristics in terms of camera images and actors' performances to meet the audience's expectations for audio-visual effects.

Future adaptations of suspense films will pay more attention to the psychological resonance of contemporary audiences and film plots, incorporating more innovative narrative techniques and advanced technical editing. The author believes that the adaptation of future suspense films will occupy a large part of the film market, combined with reasonable changes in the theme plot, character settings and later editing such as shots. From the plot to the director, many popular suspense films are adapted from their own suspense films, coupled with the popularity of the director, the audience is becoming more and more concerned about this kind of film, and the box office is increasing. With the advancement of *The Times*, the future suspense remakes will achieve greater success if the above points are taken into account.

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