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Murder Taken out of the Venetian Vase and Dropped into the Alley: Adapting Hard-boiled Masculinity and Femininity

Dissertation

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I declare that I have worked on this thesis independently,
using only the primary and secondary sources listed in the bibliography.

……

Author's signature

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You're right on the money with that. We're all like detectives in life. There's something at the end of the trail that we're all looking for.

—David Lynch

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INTRODUCTION

> Ideally, we lose ourselves in what we read only to return to ourselves transformed, and part of a more expansive world. In short, we become more critical and more capacious in our thinking and in our acting.
>
> —Judith Butler

The mystery genre is a frequent presence in book collections which many of us, craving for a safe thrill, proudly dust every once in a while. This popular genre consists of numerous sub-genres from which the detective fiction, which centers upon the private investigator, is, for many, one of the most appealing forms.

The genesis of the detective fiction can be traced back to the 19th century and an American writer Edgar Allan Poe. With publication of a short story "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" in 1841 Poe introduced a first modern detective, an aristocratic amateur detective Monsieur C. Auguste Dupin, who "solves problems by means of a pure disembodies intellect that combines scientific logic with artistic imagination" (Meyers *Edgar Allan Poe: His Life and Legacy* 123), and his nameless associate who narrates the story. All the elements that are today recognized as the pivotal characteristic of this sub-genre are present in this story—an independent, honorable and intelligent detective; vicious murder; and a confused police employed to function as the counterpart to the detective. This "formula" has been utilized in countless detective novels and short stories ever since. Moreover, the popularity and innovative quality of Poe's short story is demonstrated by its numerous adaptations—first film adaptation of the story was produced in 1914; then loosely adapted in 1932; in 1943 Roy Del Ruth directed *Phantom of the Rue Morgue*; and in 1971, 1986 and 2012 (*Morgue Street* is an Italian short film)

was this short story remade into film, again reminding wide audience of Poe and his literary work. These film adaptations are the result of a symbiotic relationship between the motion picture industry and mystery fiction. They both provide an escape for the audience into the fictional world, an idealistic world, where the evil suffers a rightful punishment and the good triumphs. Adaptations of mystery fiction into films have been immensely successful—e.g. *L.A. Confidential* (1997), *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), *The Big Sleep* (1946), etc. are films which are included in the Library of Congress' National Film Registry.

Furthermore, film adaptations are the connecting point between literature and cinema. Film adaptations and remakes allow us to see the literary work they are based on from a different perspective because they are subjective interpretations which, however, express also the aspects and values of the culture in which they were produced and consumed. The main argument which this dissertation aims at, then, is that popular literary fiction, here the American hard-boiled detective fiction, and also its cinematic portrayals, represent gender norms characteristic for the era of their production. Moreover, I strive to create an elaborate study in which theories on gender, American hard-boiled literary tradition, Hollywood film noir and adaptation theories intertwine and create a unique work presenting fresh readings of the canonical novels and films.

The hard-boiled detective novels that are the main subject of this thesis and fulfil the selection criterion—they have been adapted for screen at least twice—are *The Maltese Falcon* (1930) by Dashiell Hammett; *The Big Sleep* (1939) and *Farewell, My Lovely* (1940) by Raymond Chandler; and *I, the Jury* (1947) by Mickey Spillane. These literary figures are synonymous with American hard-boiled detective fiction.[1] The film counterparts to the novels in question are adaptations and remakes produced between the

[1] Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler and Mickey Spillane have had the most profound influence on the shaping of the iconography and narrativity of the hard-boiled detective fiction in and also beyond America.

years 1930 and 1982—*The Maltese Falcon* a.k.a *Dangerous Female* (1931); *Satan Met a Lady* (1936); *The Maltese Falcon* (1941); *The Falcon Takes Over* (1942); *Murder, My Sweet* (1944); *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975); *The Big Sleep* (1946); *The Big Sleep* (1978); *I, the Jury* (1953); *I, the Jury* (1982).

The main aim of this work is to investigate the representation of masculinity and femininity portrayed in the American hard-boiled detective fiction and in its subsequent film adaptations and remakes; to compare all films with their literary origins to establish the differences and elucidate their occurrence. Here I argue that the film versions offer a range of enjoyable and encouraging interpretations for the female spectator, even if the main female characters, in the end, seem to conform or fall prey to the patriarchal status quo presented on the screen. Moreover, it is my position, that the films, when compared to the source novels, further "intensified" the male/female relationship favoring the male comradeship, thus the female equal to the male hero is frequently discarded from screen.

In this thesis the film versions of the novels are considered to be subjective interpretations and are analyzed and compared to their literary sources as texts. Furthermore, the thesis discusses the intertextual play between the novel and the film and highlights their differences and similarities. The analyses emphasize the importance of judging the novels and the film versions on their own merits, disregarding the prevalent practice of privileging the literary source over the film version. These analyses are built upon the theoretical background carefully compiled and presented in the first part of the dissertation.

Gender is ever-present, it is thoroughly embedded in our daily existence, our conversations, beliefs, actions, desires, but also conflicts. Gender strongly influences the position, the role, one plays within social institutions which are also frequently mirrored

in literary and cinematic fiction. Therefore, the first chapter, "The Privileged and the Other," of this work presents an introduction to theoretical perspectives on the subject of gender—defining gender, gender roles; focusing on the gender binary of masculinity and femininity; and presenting the feminist film theory which centers around the misrepresentation of women in cinema. This chapter creates a methodological groundwork and sets up terminology employed throughout the rest of the work.

The second chapter, "The Hard-boiled Formula," is the pivotal chapter and functions as the backbone of the whole dissertation, engages directly with the American hard-boiled detective fiction, its development, and characteristics; presenting a critical inquiry into all four novels in question, focusing on the masculinities and femininities portrayed by Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler and Mickey Spillane. Here I examine the roles of male and female characters within the American hard-boiled detective narrative, aiming, predominantly, at the main male hero, the detective, and his female counterpart, the femme fatale. These two characters, the streetwise tough private investigator, and the femme fatale, the sexually open female betrayer, are the central representatives of both masculinity and femininity in a hard-boiled detective formula. Findings, then, are used as comparative tools when approaching the individual film incarnations of the novels.

The third chapter, "The Baffling Film Noir," focuses on film noir and particularly on its roots, its canon, its connection with hard-boiled fiction, and representation of masculinity and femininity from the 1940s to this day. The connection between film noir and the hard-boiled fiction is the most important element since it bridges literature and film. Special consideration will be given to the scrutiny of the noir's portrayal of women and men. I center on the socio-historical changes of the given eras that (may have) influenced these portrayals. Even though film noir is not the main focus of the thesis its

inclusion is essential in regard to the subsequent film analyses—employing findings on film noir's portrayal of female and male characters.

The fourth chapter, "Written Words into Moving Pictures," presents a theory of adaptation and remaking and thus outlines the theoretical background and basic terminology which is necessary for the film analyses. It includes information on how to assess adaptations and remakes and also highlights some fallacies that should be avoided when considering adaptations and remakes. Therefore, in this thesis the cinematic incarnations are viewed as collaborations that provide different "reading," interpretation of the source text they are based on while being affected by historical, societal, economic, and technical contexts and constraints of the period they were produced in. This chapter should lead to the better understanding that there is a great freedom in defining what film adaptations and remakes are.

The fifth and final chapter, "Adapting the Hard-boiled Masculinity and Femininity," of this work presents detailed analyses of the films, analyzed case by case and compared to both, their literary base and film precursor(s), providing novel conclusions and readings of the literary works and their film versions.

Raymond Chandler in 1948 wrote: "the mystery and the solution of the mystery are only what I call 'the olive in the martini', and the really good mystery is one you would read even if you knew somebody had torn out the last chapter" (*Raymond Chandler Speaking* 130). I believe that what Chandler tried to imply is that the wholeness of a well-written work may be found in its parts which, a willing and eager reader, will eventually discover. I try to be such reader, a detective searching for clues, trying to reshuffle, to create order and thus provide insight in a form of a coherent whole.

1 THE PRIVILEDGED AND THE OTHER

RIP. You know, the trouble with women is—they ask too many questions. They should spend all their time just being beautiful.

CORAL. [with irony] . . . and let the men do the worrying.

RIP. Yeah. You know, I've been thinking: women ought to come capsule-sized, about four inches high. When a man goes out of an evening, he just puts her in his pocket and takes her along with him, and that way he knows exactly where she is. He gets to his favorite restaurant, he puts her on the table and lets her run around among the coffee cups while he swaps a few lies with his pals …

CORAL. [with astonished expression] Why, I …

RIP. …without danger of interruption. And when it comes that time of the evening when he wants her full-sized and beautiful, he just waves his hand and there she is, full-sized.

CORAL. Why, that's the most conceited statement I've ever heard.

RIP. But if she starts to interrupt, he just shrinks her back to pocket-size and puts her away.

CORAL. [now confident] I understand. What you're saying is: women are made to be loved.

RIP. [confused] Is that what I'm saying?

CORAL. [decisively] Yes, it's a confession. A woman may drive you out of your mind, but you wouldn't trust her, and because you couldn't put her in your pocket, you get all mixed up.

—*Dead Reckoning* (1947)

Dead Reckoning (1947), a noir film, materializes on the screen a masculine daydream of total control over a woman. This daydream draws a clear line between the roles of men and women, between what it means to be a man and a woman. However, this patriarchal fantasy of women obeying men without hesitation proves to be a fantasy unattained.

Even today we are being constantly reassured that men and women are completely different, that we are even supposed to be from two distinct planets:

> They say we have different brain chemistries, different brain organization, different hormones. They say our different anatomies lead to different destinies. They say we have different ways of knowing, listen to different moral voices, have different ways of speaking and hearing each other. You'd think we were different species, like, say, lobsters and giraffes, or Martians and Venutians. (Kimmel *The Gendered Society* 1).

This gender binary is probably the most basic classification we use for "sorting" human beings. This binary mentality is also the key issue when discussing how media represent a particular gender because these representations undeniably shape our perceptions of the masculine and the feminine. We come across many different male and female role models, many of them stereotyped, in everyday media consumption. The study of gender representation is important and, therefore, a discourse that matters, since it analyzes and highlights the social and cultural changes that have been shaping these representations over time. As gender relations are constantly changing, so are media portrayals of gender. Gender studies of media discourses attempt to "make sense" of these transformations and bring the study of the representation of men and women in film to the academia: "[h]ow gender is portrayed on film does to some extent reflect concerns and anxieties in our society about who we are and which are re-enacted through stories, through the narrative" (Nelmes 242).

Therefore, this opening chapter focuses on the concepts of gender, gender roles, masculinity and femininity to create a vital base for the development of the thesis'

argument. As a starting point, the difference between sex and gender will be presented, then the gender dichotomy will be described and thus confirm that gender is a culturally based division. Moreover, this chapter will ascertain what is perceived as masculine and feminine. The sub-chapter, "Filming Gender," focuses on the feminist film theory and the underrepresentation of women in cinema.

"Gender is so much the routine ground of everyday activities that questioning its taken-for-granted assumptions and presuppositions is like thinking about whether the sun will come up" (Lorber 54). Yet, there is still confusion when it comes to the differentiation between the terms "sex" and "gender," they have been used interchangeably since they are closely linked, however, they are not synonymous. One of the first sociologists who made the distinction between the two within the society was Simone de Beauvoir in her book *The Second Sex* (1953).[2] Beauvoir's formulation that "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society; it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature" (237), suggests that gender is "acquired" gradually and therefore does not mean the same as "sex" which "refers to the biological identity of the person and is meant to signify the fact that one is either male or female" (Andersen 20). Beauvoir, one of the most significant feminists of the 20th century, and an important figure in second-wave feminism, by the sex/gender distinction pointed out that gender is culturally based and not a biological phenomenon. Thus being a man does not necessarily imply masculinity because "femininity and masculinity are cultural concepts and, as such, have fluctuating meaning, are learned differently by different members of the culture, and are relative to

[2] "De Beauvoir's discussion makes clear the ways in which gender differences are set in hierarchical opposition, where the masculine principle is always the favoured 'norm' and the feminine one becomes positioned as 'Other.' . . . so that civilisation was masculine to its very depths, and women the continual outsiders" (Pilcher and Whelehan 56).

the historical and cultural contexts in which they emerge" (Andersen 20). These have problematic and complex definitions, which at times appear to be quite elusive.

The United States, among other Western societies, acknowledge only two genders, a man, and a woman. However, there are some societies that have three genders—in India "Hijras,[3] as neither men nor women, function as an institutionalized third gender role" (Nanda ix). These "third genders show us what we ordinarily take for granted—that people have to learn to be women and men" (Lorber 57). What, in fact, teaches us how to be men and women is our culture—we see what is expected and learn what is expected, and thus create gender order. Therefore, when the male/female dichotomy has challenged the reaction from the society, which is frequently very negative—"the conflicts we encounter when we try to cross or deny the boundaries between the sexes are good evidence of the strength of gendered expectations in our culture" (Andersen 33).

The poststructuralist feminists took this gender division even a step further with their belief in the multiplicity and variability of gendered possibilities. In her very influential and, at that time, controversial book *Gender Trouble* (first published in 1990), philosopher Judith Butler terms gender as "a kind of impersonation that passes as the real" (Butler xxviii). I ally myself with Butler's notions of gender where she deemphasizes the binary construction of masculinity and femininity and focuses on the notion of gender as a kind of performance that is not an inborn quality linked to sex but "rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a *stylized repetition of acts* [emphasis in the original]" (179). In other words,

[3] "The hijras are a religious community of men who dress and act like women . . . the hijras undergo an operation on which their genitals are removed. The hijra emasculation operation consists of surgical removal of the penis and testicles, but no construction of a vagina. This operation defines them as hijras—eunuchs—neither men nor women. . . . the hijras are given a special place in Indian culture and society" (Nanda ix).

gender is not what you are but what you do, therefore "gender is not exactly what one 'is' nor is it precisely what one 'has'" (Butler *Undoing Gender* 42), so if gender is "just" an act, a performance, there is no gender "category" one can refer to.

Moreover, Butler argues that the gender norms and prohibitions prescribed by society produce an "identity along the culturally intelligible grids of an idealized and compulsory heterosexuality. That disciplinary production of gender effects a false stabilization of gender in the interests of the heterosexual construction and regulation of sexuality within the reproductive domain" (*Gender Trouble* 172). Therefore, every other sexuality is seen as deviate and imperfect. This Butler's "performative theory" of gender has been a base for the queer theory. The queer theories, along the poststructuralist feminist theories, analyze alternative masculinities[4] and femininities outside the dichotomous gender division.

Moreover, these theories have been shaped by the change of women's place in societies since the emergence of the second-wave feminism—the gender roles altered. The second-wave feminism "began to draw attention to the ways in which academic disciplines and sets of knowledge acted to exclude the experiences, interests and identities of women. Women were almost invisible in pre-1970s' gender-blind sociology, only featuring in their traditional roles as wives and mothers within families. Thus, in sociology during the 1970s, differences and inequalities[5] between women and men came to be regarded" (Pilcher and Whelehan ix). Most of the work on gender since the 1960s was done by women who tried to document lives of the female population. This also gave

[4] For example Judith Halberstam in her book *Female Masculinity* (1998) presents various masculinities in female bodies – "masculinity without men" (1).

[5] They were mainly focusing on the issues of inequality at the workplace and within the family (e.g. domestic violence, rape, divorce law) and opened up debates about sexuality. They were fighting for equality that would break the stereotyped gendered roles that were prescribed to them because of their sex.

rise to the research on masculinity since to analyze women without taking into account men was not possible.[6]

The human population is divided into two gendered categories starting at birth—"It's a girl!"[7] Since our birth we are being "forced" by our parents, probably sometimes unintentionally, into gender roles—"the expectations for behaviour and attitudes that the culture defines as appropriate for women and men. These roles are learned through the process of socialization. Gender roles are the patterns through which gender relations are expressed" (Andersen 31). The second-wave feminism pointed out to, and tried to fight against the view of the male gender as "usually the touchstone, the normal, the dominant" and female as "the other . . . deviant, and subordinate" (Lorber 60). Suzanne Pharr in her book *Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism* (1997) says that gender roles serve the male dominant society, the patriarchy, which is "the ideology and sexism the system that holds it in place" (8). Moreover, she states that "sexism, the system by which women are kept subordinate to men, is kept in place by three powerful weapons designed to cause or threaten women with pain and loss . . . the three are economics, violence, and homophobia" (9). Even though, the society has developed and changed since the first voices of the second-wave feminism were heard and the position of women in the contemporary Western societies has also markedly developed, the traditional gender expectations still challenge us.

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[6] "Gradually, though, and arising out of men's pro-feminist politics, there began to develop in the 1980s a body of knowledge and theorising around men *as* 'men'. Consequently, books (both popular and academic) on men and masculinity proliferated in the 1990s, to the extent that 'men's studies' is now recognised as a specialist area of academic focus [emphasis in the original]" (Pilcher and Whelehan xi).

[7] Judith Butler in *Bodies That Matter* (1993) argues that when a baby is born "the medical interpellation which . . . shifts an infant from an 'it' to a 'she' or a 'he,' and in that naming, the girl is 'girled,' brought into the domain of language and kinship through the interpellation of gender. But that 'girling' of the girl does not end there; on the contrary, that founding interpellation is reiterated by various authorities and throughout various intervals of time to reenforce or contest this natural-ized effect. The naming is at once the setting of a boundary, and also the repeated inculcation of a norm" (7–8).

Notwithstanding, gender being a subject to change, in almost every contemporary society around the world, men wield greater power, have better opportunities, their presence in public life is more manifest, and thus are more highly regarded than women. Moreover, the traditional gender roles do not support independent working women who are trying to enter the "male world" of power and achievement, and at the same time they are unwilling to open the domestic, nurturing and emotional sphere of life to men. Furthermore, "men's roles are more rigidly defined, as witnessed in the more severe social sanctions brought against boys not to be sissies, compared with girls who are thought of as tomboys. For girls, being a tomboy may be a source of mild ridicule, but it appears to be more acceptable (at least until puberty) than being a sissy is for boys" (Andersen 34).

The cross-identification behaviors of boys, and thus male gender deviance, is not frequently tolerated by the society. This negative response may be perceived as an example of homophobia,[8] which Pharr defines "as a weapon of sexism, because it is joined with powerful arm, heterosexism" (16). Moreover, Andersen notes that homophobia works as an omnipresent social supervision which forces men into the promotion of their masculinity even more fiercely, in order to negate any false assumptions about their sexual orientation. Thus, homophobia disconnects masculinity from femininity even further—"by discouraging men from so-called feminine traits such as caring, nurturing, emotional expression, and gentleness" (34). Therefore, "in this way, homophobia reinforces the gender of sex, keeping men acting hypermasculine and women acting ultrafeminine" (Kimmel *The Gendered Society* 239).

As already indicated above, the lives of women have changed in the past fifty years—e.g. women gained a place in the workforce, made gender visible when women

[8] "Homophobia—the irrational fear and hatred of those who love and sexually desire those of the same sex. . . . Like racism and anti-Semitism, it is a word that calls up images of loss of freedom, verbal and physical violence, death" (Pharr 1).

studies became a part of the curriculum at American universities, sexual revolution of the 1960s and the invention of birth control pill gave women a new sense of sexual freedom. These changes did not only alter the lives of the female population but also that of the male part. In last five decades, men have been learning how to cooperate with women, have been introduced to the struggles that women as the "other gender" face, and definitely have been enjoying the newly-gained female sexual freedom. However, what has not changed is the basic ideology of masculinity. As social psychologist Robert Brannon summarized it in 1976, four basic rules of masculinity, with subtle alternations, still remain:

> 1. "No Sissy Stuff!" Being a man means not being a sissy, not being perceived as weak, effeminate, or gay. Masculinity is the relentless repudiation of the feminine.
> 2. "Be a Big Wheel." This rule refers to the centrality of success and power in the definition of masculinity. Masculinity is measured more by wealth, power, and status than by any particular body part.
> 3. "Be a Sturdy Oak." What makes a man is that he is reliable in a crisis. And what makes him so reliable in a crisis is not that he is able to respond fully and appropriately to the situation at hand, but rather that he resembles an inanimate object. A rock, a pillar, a species of tree.
> 4. "Give 'em Hell." Exude an aura of daring and aggression. Live life out on the edge. Take risks. Go for it. Pay no attention to what others think. (Kimmel *Guyland* 45–6)

It is interesting to note how the women's lives and changes in their perception of themselves shifted, while most men, usually, seem to be blind to the gender

differentiation. It is so due to their sense of privilege, sense of "entitlement to patriarchal power" (Kimmel *The Gendered Society* 246)—"privilege is invisible to those who have it" (Coston and Kimmel 97).

However, one must keep in mind that there are differences within each gender—all men, as well as all women are not the same—"there are a variety of different 'masculinities' or 'femininities' depending on class, race, ethnicity, age, sexuality, and region" (Kimmel *The Gendered Society* 85). Therefore, R. W. Connell's groundbreaking notion about multiple masculinities[9] and especially hegemonic masculinity[10] has been accepted as central concept when dealing with the question of gender. However, "a compelling and empirically useful conceptualization of hegemonic femininity and multiple, hierarchical femininities as central to male dominant gender relations has not yet been developed" (Schippers 85). The paramount notion in gender relationships, either between men and women or men and other men, is the one of superiority and submission. Looking at this hierarchical relationship, the masculine characteristics "can include physical strength, the ability to use interpersonal violence in the face of conflict, and authority [and] femininity includes physical vulnerability, an inability to use violence effectively, and compliance" (Schippers 91). Therefore, when women try to break from the submissive label and reach success in the public sphere, which is connected to traits as "competency, assertiveness, ambition, . . . they're not seen as feminine; when they are

[9] "With growing recognition of the interplay between gender, race and class it has become common to recognize multiple masculinities: black as well as white, working-class as well as middle-class. This is welcome, but it risks another kind of oversimplification. It is easy in this framework to think that there is a black masculinity or a working-class masculinity. To recognize more than one kind of masculinity is only a first step. We have to examine the relations between them. Further, we have to unpack the milieux of class and race and scrutinize the gender relations operating within them. There are, after all, gay black men and effeminate factory hands, not to mention middleclass rapists and cross-dressing bourgeois" (Connell 76).

[10] "Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women. This is not to say that the most visible bearers of hegemonic masculinity are always the most powerful people. They may be exemplars, such as film actors, or even fantasy figures, such as film characters" (Connell 77).

seen as feminine, kind, and caring, they are not seen as competent. . . . For men, success confirms masculinity; for women, success *disconfirms* femininity—it's seen as more of a tradeoff. To be taken seriously as a competent individual means minimizing, or even avoiding altogether, the trappings of femininity [emphasis in the original]" (Kimmel *Guyland* 251–2).

"The social order as we know it in Western societies is organized around racial, ethnic, class, and gender inequality" (Lorber 62). And even if challenged in the past half-century, the gender inequality, and male dominance still persist. Many might call for the dismissal of "the entire ideology of masculinity . . . [but] many elements of masculinity are enormously valuable; indeed, qualities such as honor, respect, integrity, doing the right thing despite the costs—these are the qualities of a real man . . . [and] a real woman. There is nothing inherently masculine about honor and integrity" (Kimmel *Guyland* 270).

The "traditional" definitions of masculinity and femininity are limiting—many men are unable to live up to the expectations and are left confused, frustrated, and discontented, and many women striving to "escape" the household are now trying to balance careers and family life. The gender division of the 19th century that was based on the physical differences between the sexes, seen for a long time as natural, made women strive to change the view on femininity and made men, gradually, realize the restriction this "regime" placed on their lives. Therefore, "the direction of the gendered society in the new century and the new millennium is not for women and men to become increasingly *similar*, but for them to become more *equal*. For those traits and behaviors heretofore labeled as masculine and feminine—competence and compassion, ambition and affection—are distinctly human qualities, accessible to both women and men who are grown up enough to claim them [emphasis in the original]" (Kimmel *The Gendered Society* 268).

1.1 FILMING GENDER

> It's always a little annoying to be labelled a female film director because men are just "directors."
>
> —Mary Lambert qtd. in Marks

Media reflect and construct gender and, however, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, their representation of gender is constantly changing and shifting. Also, the representation of women in film has changed over the years—second-wave feminism activism (the Women's Liberation Movement) can be seen as a major catalyst along with the development of women's studies in academia.

One of the starting points for Western feminists was Betty Friedan and her work *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), in which Friedan critiques the mass media and encourages women to look for new opportunities outside the home. Friedan's book "has been credited—or blamed—for destroying, single-handedly and almost overnight, the 1950s consensus that women's place was in the home . . . *The Feminine Mystique* ignited the women's movement, launched a social revolution and transformed the social fabric of the United States and countries around the world" (Coontz xv). Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the popular media came under attack for their misrepresentations of both women and men, for representing myths about femininity and masculinity. These misrepresentations and their influence on the spectators are central to the feminist criticism and film theory.

Early feminist criticism focused on the stereotypization of women in, predominantly, Hollywood films. They called for positive images of women in cinema. The works by Claire Johnston, *Notes on Women's Cinema* (1973), and Laura Mulvey,

"Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema" (1975), are considered the initial theoretical studies of feminist cinema. Johnston's essay "Women's Cinema as Counter-Cinema" calls for an alternative narrative cinema where women become subjects rather than objects. Johnston "believed feminist critics still need to investigate and feminist filmmakers still need to infiltrate mainstream filmmaking in order to combat women's objectification and introduce female desire and fantasy into Hollywood texts" (Hollinger 13). Johnston's theory was further developed by Laura Mulvey who, with the employment of psychoanalysis,[11] argues that women in film[12] functioned solely as the objects of the male gaze and as signifiers of castration and they had, therefore, to be controlled or punished—as in film noir, where the femme fatale must be destroyed because she does not yield to the role the patriarchal society ascribes her (841–44). Mulvey further argues that cinema, the film, is constructed for the heterosexual male viewer, the active subject and woman is only the passive object:

> In a world ordered by sexual unbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy unto the female figure, which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be seen to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*. Women [are] displayed as sexual objects . . . she holds the look, plays to and signifies male desire [emphasis in the original]. (Mulvey 837)

[11] "Mulvey moved feminist criticism firmly into the realm of cinepsychoanalysis, employing key Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytic terms like the Oedipus Complex, the mirror stage, castration anxiety, fetishism, voyeurism, and scopophilia to describe the workings of a mainstream film" (Hollinger 11).
[12] Mulvey revealed and criticized the representation of women in Hollywood cinema for the 1930s to the 1960s. She focused on how sexual difference is reproduced in the act of watching classical cinema.

This gaze, or the look, comprises of three different looks: "that of the camera as it records the pro-filmic event, that of the audience as it watches the final product, and that of the characters at each other within the screen illusion" (Mulvey 843). In the end, Mulvey calls for cinema's rejection of these looks and thus advocates "the complete rejection of mainstream cinema and the sexist pleasures it offers, something many viewers both male and female are just not prepared to do"[13] (Hollinger 13). Mulvey's discussion of the male gaze laid the foundation for an entire field of critical inquiry. Therefore, feminist film theory, for the most part, has taken shape around the notion of the male gaze.[14] Ever since the first feminist voices in film theory made themselves heard, they called for a destruction of the film's structure as the only means to liberate women from sexual objectification on screen.

Moreover, the early 1970s produced an American journal which highlighted the misrepresentation of women in Hollywood cinema:

> 1 Systemic discrimination: women are mostly employed as "receptionists, secretaries, odd job girls, prop girls," and so on. The process of filmmaking itself excludes women by "an elitist hierarchy, destructive competition, and vicious internal politics."
>
> 2 Cultural construction: the persistent projection of false images of women on the screen no matter how "liberal"-looking some characters appear, while in marketing, women are packaged as sex objects, victims of gangs, or vampires of horror stories.

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[13] According to Mulvey the destruction of the visual pleasure of the spectator was not problematic for women—"Women, whose image has continually been stolen and used for this end, cannot view the decline of the traditional film form with anything much more than sentimental regret" (844).

[14] See also Marjorie Rosen, Molly Haskell, Pam Cook, Carol J. Clover, Mary Ann Doane, E. Ann Kaplan, Ella Shohat, Gina Marchetti, among others.

3 Academic ignorance: male critics celebrate male auteurs, which further perpetuate the industry's male hierarchy, discouraging women from becoming production students and film professors. (Cheu 9)

Sadly, the trend of misrepresentation of women on screen and male dominance in film industry still prevails. Even though films that feature strong and independent women as leading characters are being made, gender inequality is dominant in contemporary Hollywood. The characters of the female "warrior"—lethal, tough and dangerous woman determined either to destroy the "evil organization," predominantly led by a male figure, in order to save the world, right the wrong, or simply fight for herself and thus secure her own independence—"embody the intellectual and sexual power of their generations" (Gray 75), but at the same time are still depicted as objects of male sexual desires, the victims of the male gaze, repeatedly punished for their determination to succeed.[15] Women are under-represented in cinema, which then falsely implies that men are the standard and women are "the other," invisible, unimportant.[16] Why is it so? Because "the patriarchal system constantly makes sure that the male supremacy will remain at the top of its hierarchy" (Kaklamanidou 64), even in the 21st century film.

One of the most recent studies supports this view—"Gender Inequality in Popular Films" focuses on the representation of speaking characters which are "evaluated for demographic and hypersexuality attributes" (Smith et al. "Gender Inequality" 1) in 600

[15] This notion can be seen in films like *Kill Bill* (2003, 2004), *Salt* (2010), *Haywire* (2011), *The Girl with a Dragon Tattoo* (2011), *The Hunger Games* series (2012–2016), etc.

[16] "The Media present a distorted version of cultural life in [America]. According to media portrayals: White males make up two-thirds of the population. The women are less in number, perhaps because fewer than 10% live beyond 35. Those who do, like their younger and male counterparts, are nearly all white and heterosexual. In addition to being young, the majority of women are beautiful, very thin, passive, and primarily concerned with relationships and getting rings out of collars and commodes. There are a few bad, bitchy women, and they are not so pretty, not so subordinate, and not so caring as the good women. Most of the bad ones work outside of the home, which is probably why they are hardened and undesirable. The more powerful, ambitious men occupy themselves with important business deals, exciting adventures, and rescuing dependent females, whom they often then assault sexually" (Wood 31).

films between 2007–2013. The study proved that female characters are still more objectified and hypersexualized than male characters, women appear more frequently nude or dressed provocatively on screen.[17] Moreover, the number of female characters on Hollywood screen has not changed since 1946, notes Powers et al. (154).[18] The main conclusion of this trend is that "the lack of female characters does not appear to be a problem that will self-correct over time . . . [and that] the presence of a female producer is associated with a decrease in the sexualization of female characters" (Smith et al. "Gender Inequality" 12–3). Therefore, the increase in the number of influential women in Hollywood's studios would contribute to change of the women's portrayal on screen:

> media images exert a powerful influence in creating and perpetuating our unconscious biases. However, media images can also have a very positive impact on our perceptions. In the time it takes to make a movie, we can change what the future looks like. There are woefully few women CEOs in the world, but there can be lots of them in films. How do we encourage a lot more girls to pursue science, technology and engineering careers? By casting droves of women in STEM, politics, law, and other professions today in movies. . . .if she can see it, she can be it. (Davis)

[17] "Across 4,506 speaking characters evaluated, 29.2% were female and 70.8% were male in the 100 top-grossing films of 2013. Of these 100 films, 28% of the films had a female lead or co-lead. The percentage of female characters in 2013 does not differ from the other years in the sample (2007=29.9%; 2008=32.8%; 2009=32.8%, 2010=30.3%; 2012=28.4%). . . . Females (30.2%) were far more likely than males (9.7%) to be shown in sexualized attire (i.e., tight or revealing clothing). Females (29.5%) were more likely than males to be shown with partial or full nudity (11.7%). It was also the case that females were more likely than males to be referenced as physically attractive (13.2% vs. 2.4%)" (Smith et al. "Gender Inequality" 1–2).

[18] Only 25% of film characters were women in films studied between 1946–1955, only 26% in films between 1956–1965, only 26% in films between 1966–1975, and only 28% between 1976–1990 (Powers et al. 154).

Moviegoers are unaware of these biases. The general public is not watching films thinking about gender and gender roles and how the representation on screen impacts their and their children's lives. "After all, filmmakers make more than just movies, they make choices" (Smith et al. "Gender Bias").

2 THE HARD-BOILED FORMULA

> If you have a story that seems worth telling, and you think you can tell it worthily, then the thing for you to do is to tell it, regardless of whether it has to do with sex, sailors, or mounted policemen.
>
> —Dashiell Hammett qtd. in Sexton 34

Dashiell Hammett is considered the "founding father" of the hard-boiled detective fiction, Raymond Chandler is his heir who managed to combine popular literature with the sophistication of the high art, and Mickey Spillane is a representative of the second wave of hard-boiled writers who massively popularized this genre in the 1950s. The novels *The Maltese Falcon* (1929) by Dashiell Hammett, *The Big Sleep* (1939) and *Farewell, My Lovely* (1940) by Raymond Chandler and *I, the Jury* (1947) by Mickey Spillane are the main subject of this thesis. These novels share certain stereotypes that are characteristic for hard-boiled detective fiction[19] and have been adapted for screen at least twice, thus this chapter creates a backbone of the thesis and also represents a springboard for the film analyses.

2.1 UNDERSTANDING THE GENRE EMERGENCE

The detective story in America, and also in the world, started with the publication of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* in 1841, where the author introduced Monsieur Dupin and an idea of solving crime by applying reason, by analyzing

[19] The hard-boiled crime fiction does not include only detective stories but also noir fiction (roman noir)—the protagonists are not professional detectives but rather victims, suspects or damaged and often criminal characters. This thesis focuses on the hard-boiled detective fiction.

clues. Dupin was an inspiration for creation of such detectives as Sherlock Homes, Hercule Poirot, Lord Peter Wimsey, and many others. The Golden Age detective fiction (1920s/1930s) was mainly a British realm;[20] even if American authors like John Dickson Carr, Ellery Queen or S.S. Van Dine contributed to the genre, they followed the style of their British cousins—"the whodunit, the locked-room mystery" (Scaggs 28).

Therefore, as Edward Margolies points out, "one literary strand of the hardboiled genre extends to Poe, another reaches back to the western or frontier adventure tale" (5). The majority of hard-boiled fiction is set in California that represents an extension of frontier depicted in western stories, with the only difference that the cowboy has been removed and placed into an urban setting full of crime and corruption and became a private detective with typical tough American vernacular. According to this progression, the American hard-boiled detective fiction, which fully developed in the early twentieth century, is recognized as a typically American sub-genre of detective fiction. The main elements by which the hard-boiled detective fiction can be recognized and labeled as a distinctively American product in comparison to classical Golden Age detective fiction are: the setting, the language, the detection, and the detective.

The tradition of hard-boiled fiction can be traced back to dime novels, which since 1860 offered the public stories of adventure, romance and action in a cheap, easily obtainable format.[21] These frequently western adventure stories were the ones that

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[20] The Golden Age in Britain has a "point of origin in the publication of Agatha Christie's first novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, in 1920, and the reign of the 'Queen of Crime' continued until long after the Golden Age is normally considered to have ended, in the wake of the Second World War" (Scaggs 26). In addition to Christie, Dorothy L. Sayers, Margery Allingham and Ngaio Marsh also defined the British Golden Age detective fiction. This style was adapted by American writers as well—e.g. John Dickson Carr with detective Dr. Gideon Fell; Ellery Queen (pen-name for two cousins) with detective of the same name; S. S. van Dine with detective Philo Vance and Rex Stout with detective Nero Wolfe and his partner Archie Goodwin. Stout is a "a transitionary figure between two 'schools' that are normally seen as mutually distinct (Scaggs 29)—the Golden Age and the hard-boiled detective fiction.

[21] Dime novels "were sensational . . . they were tales of adventure and combat. There is nothing more grotesque than the charge that they were 'immoral,' since they were so amusingly strict in their moral standards. They were brief historical novels, or romances of love and warfare, written by authors who were well up in the second rank of writers of their time" (Pearson 8).

introduced the character of a detective that was later (at the turn of the century) adapted by the pulp magazines, dime novels' descendants. Dime novels, according to Leroy Lad Panek, "set up certain conventions which were to continue in American detective fiction. The non-intellectual, intensely moral, occasionally violent private eye who participates in a hunt and chase story reflecting local colour and told in a simple language goes back to the dime novel detective. The dime novel detective, in other words, continues in the hard-boiled story, but he continues in a much altered form" (148). The most famous dime novel detective was Nick Carter. He was an innovative detective when compared to his predecessors like Old Sleuth or Old Cap Collier.[22] Nick was a young, strong, upper-class, well-educated, American hero of action-oriented detective stories, who was phenomenal in obtaining clues, and a master of disguise. He established detective organization in New York City, had a wife and trained young boys to become such renowned detectives as himself. "Nick Carter began his long career in the age of the horse and buggy and was still active when the automobile and airplane took over" (Cox 51).[23] Even if the dime novels were in terms of characters, readership and writers male-oriented, female dime novel detectives were created to attract female readers, too. These beautiful and intelligent women; however, appeared only few times in the series of *Old Sleuth* series.[24] Moreover, by the portrayal of female detective along the male detective provided insight into the prescribed gender roles of the late Victorian America:

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[22] Old Sleuth created by Harlan P. Halsey is the first dime detective—first published in *The Fireside Companion*, 1872 (Pearson 192). To read more about these characters and stories they appeared in, to see the original covers of the dime novel series carrying their names please have a look at Edmund Lester Pearson's *Dime Novels: Or Following an Old Trail in Popular Literature*, 1929, 138–97.

[23] "the first dime novel is *Nick Carter Detective. The Solution of a Remarkable Case,* Aug. 8, 1891" (Cox 51).

[24] Four dime novels featuring three main dime female detectives appear reprinted in Robers et al. *Old Sleuth's Freaky Female Detectives* (1990). One of them is Kate Edwards "who possesses nearly all the skills, intelligence and strength of her male detective counterparts" (Roberts et al. 5).

> at a specific moment in the story, no matter how "fantastic" Kate the detective is, the very next moment she becomes Kate the vulnerable woman. No matter how many men Kate can knock to the ground, the very next moment she is love-sicken by another man. Ultimately, Kate's strengths are framed by the traditional feminine weaknesses of romantic melodrama, and her story becomes a mixed blessing for the woman's image in early popular fiction. (Roberts et al. 8)

The popularity of dime novels did not prevent the development and due to its financially undemanding character, the collections of detective, romantic, cowboy, sea and many other stories, were printed on paper made of pulp wood—this gave birth to the pulp magazines. Pulps were "factory-like" produced periodicals aimed at working-class readership which featured characters and situations that frequently reappeared to ensure their popularity. The working-class readers of these magazines experienced the Prohibition, the Depression, the World Wars, government corruption and despair and therefore in this milieu these magazines sold like hotcakes.[25]

The pulp formula was to offer "lusty masculine fare," feed the readers with "lurid tales of vice and crime" and thus pulp "was also excessively masculine in its orientation in action and hard-boiled variants" (Stanfield 49). Therefore, when the dime novel's era came to an end, the female detectives from the dime novels' pages died out as well—female detectives did not make it to the pages of detective pulp magazines. These characters were assigned new gender specific roles of either perfect, caring and devoted housewives and girlfriends or dangerous, attractive and sexually open femmes fatales.

[25] "The period 1950 to 1954 marked a turning point in magazine publication. It saw the end of the dominance of the pulp format magazine and the start of the digest magazine, now setting up in rivalry to the burgeoning pocketbook field" (Ashley 220).

The pulps of post-war (post-Victorian) era toughened the detective formula because "manhood was no longer a moral quality but a physical attribute; it was to be proven on the playing field, in the bar, in the bedroom, in the streets, and on the factory floor" (Breu 6). Therefore, the pulp private eye roams the streets of the corrupt city ready to fight, he does not need to use disguise anymore as the dime detective and he definitely does not belong to the privileged upper-class anymore.

The development into the quintessential hard-boiled detective started on the pages of the pulp magazines and the most important publication in encouraging the new kind of detective story, hard-boiled fiction, was the pulp magazine *Black Mask* that was founded in 1920.[26] *Black Mask* promoted hard-boiled style to increasing audience and "had attracted a number of writers who refined and fashioned the violence of Prohibition into a style for the 1920s and 1930s" (Landrum 10). The hard-boiled fiction gave birth to the most recognizable iconic figure of detective stories, the hard-boiled investigator who is tough, often solitary and cynical.

2.2 LOOKING, ACTING, FEELING AND THINKING MASCULINE/FEMININE

The first professional detective that came to the hard-boiled world is Carroll John Daly's one-dimensional, simple-minded, tough and ever-violent Race Williams[27] who "is clearly the prototype for many hard-boiled heroes, from Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe to Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer" (Scaggs 55). However, by 1926, when the editorship of *Black Mask* was taken over by Captain Joseph T. Shaw, Dashiell Hammett's stories had become models for the "Black Mask School" because he was "Shaw's favorite

[26] "The magazine initially published classical detective fiction, ghost stories, and horror stories, along with the early noir fiction" (Breu 35).
[27] June 1, 1923, issue of *Black Mask* saw the publication of the first hard-boiled story—Carroll John Daly's "The Knights of the Open Palm."

[and] he asked his authors to measure their writing against Hammett's" (Margolies 12). Hammett's stories were fast-moving, often brutal, told in terse prose and they did "not seem like the detective tales of Doyle. The detectives seem new, the criminals different, the plots fresh, and the writing original and vital" (Panek 150). These hard-boiled pulp stories fascinated with rough genuineness of gangsters' and detectives' lives and their struggle in the jungle of venal politics, corrupted police, deception and illegal business. Hammett's well-known detectives, Continental Op[28] (*Red Harvest* 1929, *The Dain Curse* 1929) and Sam Spade[29] (*The Maltese Falcon* 1929) who have roots in Hammett's own experience as a private detective, brought something new to the icon of the hard-boiled hero who was subsequently adopted by many other hard-boiled writers yet to come (like Raymond Chandler, Ross Macdonald, or Mickey Spillane). Dashiell Hammett

> wrote at first (and almost to the end) for people with a sharp, aggressive attitude to life. They were not afraid of the seamy side of things; they lived there. Violence did not dismay them; it was right down their street. Hammett gave murder back to the kind of people that commit it for reasons, not just to provide a corpse; and with the means at hand, not hand-wrought dueling pistols, curare and tropical fish. He put these people down on paper as they were, and he made them talk and think in the language they customarily used for these purposes. (Chandler "The Simple Art of Murder")

[28] The nameless operative of the Continental Detective Agency first appeared on the pages of the *Black Mask* in 1923 and then found its way to the novels as well.

[29] Sam Spade made a debut on pages of the *Black Mask* in serialized form of the novel *The Maltese Falcon* in 1929. However, Hammett did not employ this iconic hard-boiled detective until its portrayal by Humphrey Bogart in film adaptation from 1941 massively popularized this character and therefore was "revived" in form of collection of short stories (three featuring Spade) written by Hammett back in the 1930s—*Adventures of Sam Spade and Other Stories* (1944) and *A Man Called Spade* (1944).

To demonstrate the hard-boiled detective's dissimilarity from the British prototype of a detective, a comparison, for example, with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's detective Sherlock Holmes seems as an apt step.

The hard-boiled detective's perspective of the world around him and his personality is given by the first-person narration. The first-person narration is also found in Holmes' stories but the narrator is his friend, Watson, who tells the story from his perspective, thus providing the picture of the detective from the position of an observer. This type of narration, first-person, of hard-boiled fiction was the biggest innovation that was brought to the detective fiction by the first contributors of *Black Mask*. It also contributed to the omission of a detailed theoretical process and startling deductions associated more with classic detective fiction; furthermore it encouraged the reader to identify with the detective.

Both detectives live on the borderline between the world of criminals and the world of law. They appear in the midst of these two environments because they are able to think like criminals but they are on the side of the law. However, the hard-boiled detective is even more detached, it is due to the hard-boiled code, he has to be isolated. Moreover, the hard-boiled protagonist, unlike Holmes, works in urban milieu of big American cities—a jungle of venal politics, corrupt police, deception and illegal business, where the upper-class is presented as the most vicious and degenerated.

The hard-boiled detective is tough, takes beating "like a man," never rests and rarely smiles, trusts no one, and gets quickly to the point because he does not have time for detailed investigation, unlike Holmes; he just goes and does his job. The focus of hard-boiled fiction is on the detective at his job, he is either observing or acting, and it is the hero's remarkable sprightliness that is the most attractive feature. The most of the narrative's action is based on the detective's relationship with other men of the stories—

this antagonism between men is either based on the detective/perpetrator axis or even along the lines of race and sexuality. The masculinity of this white heterosexual male is elevated when he encounters and ridicules obviously homosexual male characters or characters of different race, which is an implication of something unknown and thus dangerous. Nevertheless, the hard-boiled private investigator, in the eyes of Raymond Chandler is a man who:

> is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid . . . He is the hero, he is everything. He must be a complete man and a common man and yet an unusual man . . . a man of honor, by instinct, by inevitability, without thought of it, and certainly without saying it. He must be the best man in his world and a good enough man for any world . . . he is neither a eunuch nor a satyr; I think he might seduce a duchess and I am quite sure he would not spoil a virgin . . . He is a relatively poor man, or he would not be a detective at all. He is a common man or he could not go among common people. He has a sense of character, or he would not know his job. He will take no man's money dishonestly and no man's insolence without a due and dispassionate revenge. He is a lonely man and his pride is that you will treat him as a proud man or be very sorry you ever saw him. He talks as the man of his age talks, that is, with rude wit, a lively sense of the grotesque, a disgust for sham, and a contempt for pettiness . . . He has a range of awareness that startles you, but it belongs to him by right, because it belongs to the world he lives in. ("The Simple Art of Murder")

This independent man, a lonely knight, is "the rough man of action who would never harm a fly but would stamp out injustice with a vigorous passion" (Durham 5), a

rescuer of dames in distress and reminder of moral values. His rough appearance and mysteriousness, apparently, make him very attractive for women.

In the universe of hard-boiled fiction, almost every woman is attracted to and willing to do anything for this man but he is drawn to the femme fatale like a moth to a flame. Why does the detective always choose the "bad girl"? Because she embodies the male sexual desire—she is a fantasy and the "average Jane" is not that alluring. It seems that the more unattainable and lethal she is, the more attractive she appears to the male protagonists. Men that fall for her are manipulated by their own fantasy, illusion of an independent, attractive and openly sexual woman. But their fate is in her hands because she knows that she is the object of their desires and thus she is able to exploit them very easily, they become her personal puppets. Femme fatale is a fantasy that enters the "real world" of the detective and other fallen men and tears it apart. When compared to the violent actions between males the encounters of the detective with the femme fatale, "whether she is the perpetrator or the victim, is figured as both secretive and libidinally charged—a dark secret which the tough-guy protagonist both participates in and disavows" (Breu 15).

The logical succession of the story brings the detective at the end to the femme fatale whom he has to confront. The only way out for the detective, we are told, is to suppress the sexual desire for this woman and hold strong to his professional and moral code. The conflict between those two is a lethal clash of individual desires which can result only in resignation, escape or bloodbath. Why do these two characters of the hard-boiled detective stories always end up in such a clash? Because none of them wants to forego their desires—the detective does not want to give up his desire for truth, justice and code of honor and the femme fatale her desire for independency, better life, money and power, the American Dream. Even if they come out of this conflict alive they are

punished for their desires, and for their lust—the femme fatale is imprisoned and the detective's moral concept shattered.

The contrasting figure to the femme fatale that cohabits with her in the hard-boiled world is the character of the subservient housewife, reveling in domesticity and capable of complete devotion to a man—who represents the "preferred" type of American woman from the 1920s to the 1950s. A strong, independent woman, who could be a female equal to the male hero, rarely appears on the pages.[30]

All these female characters are defined in terms of their relationships with the male characters. Therefore, to "elevate" the moral standing of the hard-boiled hero—the tough, solitary man of honor always adhering to the moral code—the femme fatale had to be created. A male criminal would not provide a sufficient antithesis to the hard-boiled hero. But the incorporation of a deadly, extremely attractive, and tempting woman as the perpetrator of the crime that the detective is investigating does the trick. This gender opposition creates more tension, allows for sexual attraction between the two characters and gives room for deceit. This way the detective—the American male hero—can prove that he stays true to his code of honor and is able to suppress his desire for the femme fatale even if she is trying to manipulate him through the power of her open sexuality.

[30] The image of the World War II *Rosie the Riveter* should not be omitted as the picture of a strong, emancipated, working woman. However, this new role was short-termed: after the war, the same media calling women to step forward to be patriotic by becoming part of the workforce attempted, with a great deal of success, to force them back into their original and preferred roles of mothers and wives.

2.2.1 Dashiell Hammett's Blond Satan in Temptation

Dashiell Hammett's novel *Red Harvest* appeared on the American literary scene in 1929 and this moment is quite frequently considered as the birth of the hard-boiled novel. As mentioned above, Hammett broke the rules of the classical formula of detective fiction and introduced a detective who is a common American man, he is not distanced for the action he surveys but is an inseparable part of it. Unlike Sherlock Holmes who guarantees that the use of reason will solve the wrongdoings and bring justice, the hard-boiled gumshoe is unable to reorder the world because the crime may be solved but the criminals may go unpunished. In the hard-boiled universe the crime is not a rarity in otherwise "healthy" society but is omnipresent and as the detective dives into it in his search for truth the filth, corruption, death and deceit surface.

The realism of Hammett's writing is drawn from his own experiences as a Pinkerton detective. He based his characters on people that he knew:

> The assistant manager of the Baltimore [Pinkerton] office was James Wright, who became model for Hammett's Continental Op. Short, thick-bodied, and rough-talking, Wright taught Hammett the Pinkerton methods and code, and he appears to have informed his pupil that morality was strictly personal. (Marling 97)

In short, Hammett's novels[31] and short stories were and still are widely appreciated for their innovations in the realm of detective fiction and also because Hammett "has the craft of good narration well in hand. He writes fresh, muscular prose; he controls his materials; he knows how to seize and then hold the reader" (Wolfe *Beams*

[31] Hammett wrote only five novels altogether and these were produced between years 1929 and 1934.

Falling 9). Justifiably or not, Hammett has been recognized as the founder of the "Hard-boiled School."

The Maltese Falcon (1929) is generally acknowledged to be Hammett's best detective novel. Even though the first-person narration prevailed in his former works, here, Hammett is telling the story in third person, an "objective" point of view—he shows the reader only the actions and not thoughts of the detective, Samuel Spade. This choice of narration provides an additional sense of mystery to the one that is being unraveled on the pages of the novel—if the reader was aware of the thoughts and feeling of the detective, the character would be deprived of its mysterious nature. The novel develops around the hunt for a gemmed statue of a Maltese falcon and a murderer who is one by one eliminating the competition, it "portrays a world full of self-interested free agents who offer money and each other as barter for a statuette that turns out to be a lead weight rather than a legendary treasure" (Cassuto 47).[32]

Spade is a handsome, tough male at his prime who "looks rather pleasantly like a blond satan" (Hammett 3). He is very popular among women—has a sexual relationship with his partner's wife (Iva Archer) and is definitely aware of his secretary's (Effie Perine) feelings towards him. He poses as cold, emotionless philanderer who "caresses one woman [Effie]; than another comes in [Iva], and he (soon) caresses her. His motives

[32] The novel has a very convoluted plot, therefore a short synopsis is essential for the thesis's development: Sam Spade and Miles Archer are hired by enchanting Miss Wonderley to locate her sister who eloped with a shady man called Floyd Thursby. Archer is shot dead and thus Spade becomes a suspect since he had an affair with Archer's wife Iva. Effie, his secretary, tries to help Spade solve the murder. Meanwhile, Spade learns that Miss Wonderley is in fact a treacherous Brigid O'Shaughnessy who is looking for a priceless gemmed statue of a Maltese falcon. More men interested in the statue appear and Spade is hired by Joel Cairo and later by Casper Gutman (with his henchman Wilmer) to retrieve the statue for $5,000. Spade continues to deal with shady figures and at the same time he is being investigated by the police. At the novels finale Spade is in possession of "the bird" and all individuals involved are gathered together in Spade's apartment. Spade receives $10,000 for the statue but they realize that it is a fake. All except for Spade and Brigid leave—Spade keeps $1,000 for expenses. Spade calls the police and informs them about the whereabouts of Cairo, Gutman and Wilmer. Then he makes Brigid talk about Archer's murder and consequently hands her over to police, even if she tries hard to convince him that they love each other.

and feelings are unknown, but his sexual empathy is broad and repeatable, like something mechanized" (Marling 130). Spade is sexually very active and it seems that every woman he encounters is enchanted by this strong-willed, adamant, solitary model of hard-boiled masculinity. Effie, his secretary, and a colleague, has with Spade a relationship that is neither openly sexual nor purely professional. She is his trustworthy partner, but at the same time Spade treats her as a possible future love interest—when he finally realizes that sleeping around will not do him any good. The tension between the two is tangible—Effie gets jealous when other women appear interested in Spade. Nevertheless, Spade's sexuality, his desire for women, is his greatest weakness. Apart from flirting with his secretary, he has an ongoing affair with Iva, who after her husband's death is finally available and thus becomes for Spade undesirable. Moreover, Iva, the scorned mistress, becomes a trouble for Spade since she tells the police about their affair and thus implicates Spade in Archer's murder. Nevertheless, a woman that challenges Spade's sexuality is Brigid O'Shaughnessy, the femme fatale who, as the gemmed statue of the Maltese falcon, becomes an object of desire and subsequent doom for many characters involved, they either wind up behind bars or dead.

The statue is the catalyst that forces the femme fatale, beautiful Brigid,[33] contact Spade and invade his world. The Maltese falcon is a projection of Brigid's desire for wealth and thus power and independence. To gain these, she approaches the "Spade and Archer" private detective agency and tries to hire Spade to tail a man—Thursby. He refuses but Miles Archer, obviously enchanted by her attractiveness, hurriedly agrees to do the job: "Maybe you saw her first, Sam, but I spoke first" (Hammett 10). However, he ends up killed and as we learn at the end of the novel she is the one who cold-bloodedly

[33] "She was tall and pliantly slender, without angularity anywhere. Her body was erect and high-breasted, her legs long, her hands and feet narrow. She wore two shades of blue that has been selected because of her eyes. The hair curling from under her blue hat was darkly red, her full lips more brightly red. White teeth glistering in the crescent her timid smile made" (Hammett 4).

shoots him to frame her lover Thursby for the murder. These men do not overcome their desire for the fatal woman, they were deluded by their sexual thirst for her, and as a result they are punished. Brigid is a woman who seduces, exploits and then destroys the man under her lure. She is evil and lethal, but also smart, ambitious and courageous and therefore she is a very strong competitor to the male character.

Spade is also drawn to the black widow, Brigid. He seems to be attracted to her not just because she is sexually desirable and available to him, as Iva Archer is, but also because she embodies danger, the unknown, and she possesses the same characteristics as Spade—she is witty and manipulative. Brigid is a rival to Spade but he cannot help himself, he is a male predator seeking adventure and the smell of hazard. On the pages, their mutual attraction seems more as a pure possessive lust: "'Can I buy you with my body?' Their faces were few inches apart. Spade took her face between his hands and he kissed her mouth roughly and contemptuously. Then he sat back and said: 'I'll think it over.' His face was hard and furious" (Hammett 57). Furthermore, their relationship, even if they become sexually involved, is devoid of any affection because they both use it to achieve their goals—Brigid to stay close to Spade so she could attain the statue and use him for her escape and Spade to search her apartment while she is spending the night in his.

Spade's and Brigid's relationship climaxes when he figures out that she killed his partner. He sends Brigid off to jail for Archer's murder, even if she tries hard to convince him not to, he rejects a role of a "sap" for her:

> I don't care who loves who I'm not going to play the sap for you. I won't walk in Thursby's and Christ knows who else's footsteps. You killed Miles and you're going over for it. I could have helped you by letting the others go and standing off

> the police the best way I could. It's too late for that now. I can't help you now. And I wouldn't if I could. . . . I'm sunk if I haven't got you to hand over to the police when they come. That's the only thing that can keep me from going down with the others. (Hammett 213)

Brigid's power over Spade is neutralized, she is punished for her transgression and thus the order is reinstalled. In this scene we witness that Spade resists the allure of the dangerous female and resists his personal desires to suppress his moral code and responsibilities towards the society, thus he is awarded the best prize one could wish for—his life. Even if one might think that Spade at the end stands strong, true and undefeated, Hammett depicts him in a way battered and damaged—Hammett does not let him get away with his desire for women that easily. When Spade comes back to the office, Effie, his secretary who seems to be in love with her boss, rejects and even despises him.[34] Moreover, Iva is back and wants to see him, he shivers with disgust.

Spade is predestined by Hammett to live a lonely life in a world where he cannot trust anyone because he succumbed to his passion and desire for women, he created an illusionary woman. Therefore, "when fantasy disintegrates, you don't get reality, you get some nightmarish real too traumatic to be experienced as ordinary reality. That would be another definition of nightmare. Hell is here" (Žižek qtd. in Fiennes).

Effie, Iva and Brigid are female characters that represent the three options that the male readers of Hammett's novels can face: Effie, the perfect wife-to-be, loyal, competent and honest, "the most moral character in the novel . . . she's willing to sacrifice for him,

[34] Effie is angry with for what he has done to Brigid, she warned him about it at the very beginning: "Sam, if the girl's in trouble and you let her down, or take advantage of it to bleed her, I'll never forgive you, never have any respect for you, as long as I live" (Hammett 42).

while the converse is less certain" (Cassuto 50). Nevertheless, Effie is still a woman who is dependent on a man, Spade, he is her boss, not an equal partner. Then there is Brigid, bad news for the detective. She is a master of disguise—at the beginning she plays a role of shy, softly speaking and scared Miss Wonderly, then she pretends to be Miss Leblanc waiting for him in a hotel room where she finally reveals her real name, Brigid. She is probably the most deceitful, vicious woman who steals and murders to find her way out and gain the statue, but at the same time, she is a tempting and luring creature because of her sexual openness. Therefore, she has to be destroyed at the end.

Not even marriage offers any comfort and security for a man and a woman. Iva and Archer's marriage is a disaster—Iva cheats on her husband with his partner and Archer teases her when he tells her on the night of his death that he has a date with Brigid. Moreover, Iva for a short moment believes that Spade killed Archer so he could have her for himself—she completely misunderstands their relationship since Spade at the end fears that the widow will assume that marriage is their next logical step. Hammett employs this character to present a cautionary example for both female and male readership.

The Maltese Falcon's gender hierarchy, in the end, forms a complex matrix of relations in which, ultimately, all female, male and ambiguously sexed characters are inferior to the heterosexual, white, working-class, American male, Sam Spade. Spade is dominant in relation to female characters because of his gender supremacy and thus his role, women in his life are dependent on him—he is Effie's employer; he is Iva's promise of matrimony; and Brigid needs him to obtain the statue. Moreover, Spade's masculinity is highlighted by his superiority, physical and intellectual, over male characters—Joel Cairo, Casper Gutman and Wilmer Cook—whose sexuality is in the novel depicted as deviant.

Joel Cairo is coded as homosexual by his physique, demeanor, apparel and his scent: "a small-boned dark man of medium height. His hair was black and smooth and very glossy. His features were Levantine . . . His black coat, cut tight to narrow shoulders flared a little over slightly plump hips. . . . He held a black derby hat in a chamois-gloved hand and came towards Spade with short, mincing, bobbing steps. The fragrance of *chypre* came with him" (Hammett 42).

Moreover, Spade labels him a "fairy" (Hammett 94). Spade disarms Cairo twice, even Brigid assaults Cairo physically, thus his masculinity is undermined completely. Moreover, a young Wilmer Cook, whom Spade calls a "gunsel" (Hammett 110)—meaning a "young, homosexual partner of an older man" (Witschi 383)—is Cairo's homosexual lover. Spade's masculine dominance over this young man is in the novel further emphasized by Wilmer's small size in comparison to Spade. Casper Gutman is a criminal genius who devoted his life to finding the Maltese falcon, he employs Wilmer, Cairo and also Brigid. Gutman is an image of excess—he is physically enormous, overweight, he is extremely wealthy, his desire for the statue is limitless, and he would take extreme measures to acquire it. Gutman's sexuality is ambiguous—he has a daughter but at the same time Wilmer is, supposedly, his "gunsel," moreover, his obsession over the statue appears to be fetishistic.

Hammett created a male hero who exerts masculine dominance over women and also men. He interacts with women on the edge of innocent flirtation and rough sexual lust—he caresses them and kisses them. Women are in the novel defined through a patriarchal lens, acquiring the role of a temptress or a devoted and loyal wife-to-be. With men, Spade is physically dominant, taller and stronger, and he asserts his supremacy through violence: "He caught Cairo by the throat and shook him. . . . Spade grasped the

Levantine's writs, wrenched it away from the coat, forced it straight out to the side, and twisted it until the clumsy flaccid fingers opened to let the black pistol fall down on the rug" (Hammett 69).

2.2.2 Raymond Chandler's White Knight and Spider Women

The above mentioned characterization of hard-boiled detective was further evolved by Raymond Chandler, revered member of the "Hard-boiled School," the successor of Dashiell Hammett, who "thought that perhaps [he] could go a bit further, be a bit more humane, be a bit more interested in people than in violent death" (Chandler qtd. in Tuska 70). He created Philip Marlowe, the private eye from *The Big Sleep* (1939), *Farewell, My Lovely* (1940) and six other novels.[35] In comparison to Hammett, Chandler's

> adoption of Hammett's tough-guy tone is tempered by a romantic individualism constructed around the viewpoint of his private eye hero, Philip Marlowe . . . [who] is an idealized figure, a questing knight of romance transplanted into the mean streets of mid-twentieth-century Los Angeles. Like the questing knight, Marlowe's is a quest to restore justice and order motivated by his own personal code of honor, and in this respect, Marlowe's credentials are water-tight. (Scaggs 59, 62)

[35] Raymond Chandler wrote six novels between 1939 and 1953 and then in 1958 *Playback* (based on an unproduced screenplay) was published. Chandler's eight novel *Poodle Springs* (he left it unfinished) was completed in 1989 by Robert B. Parker.

Chandler's Marlowe, besides Hammett's detective Sam Spade's characteristic features like toughness, forthrightness, ironic and bitter remarks and solitude, embodies a complex figure that is contemplative, philosophical, self-sacrificing and witty. The reason why Marlowe is different from such detectives as Hammett's Sam Spade or Continental Op, Spillane's Mike Hammer or Macdonald's Archer is Chandler's style, distinctive and unmistakable, "product of an aestheticized, classically trained sensibility coming into contact with a demotic vocabulary" (Naremore 86). His often praised style has its roots in his educational background gained by attending schools in France, Germany and England where he studied the classics.[36] Chandler, in his works, mixed popular culture with high culture. With his mastery of classical languages he knew how language worked and was able to spice up his works with dramatic or comic effect. Chandler himself supports this perception by saying: "I'm an intellectual snob, who happens to have a fondness for the American vernacular, largely because I grew up on Latin and Greek. As a result, when I use slang, solecisms, colloquialisms, snide talk or any kind of off-beat language, I do it deliberately. The literary use of slang is a study in itself" (qtd. in Tuska 69).

Chandler brought something new to the genre, in addition to the fast speed of a plot rotation that is essential in hard-boiled fiction, he attempted to create also a psychological portrayal of Marlowe and a vivid depiction of other characters.

Marlowe is the one who provides information, because Chandler's novels are narrated in the first person.[37] The reader may thus indentify with Marlowe, or at least

[36] "The syllabus he took in his first year at Dulwich was typical in its central tenet: that the monuments of human achievement worthy of study were Athens, Rome, the Bible and the British Empire. . . . 'Classics' meant Euripides, Horace, Livy, Plato, Aristophanes, Ovid and Virgil" (Hiney).

[37] "The old rule was that the story of the classic supersleuth is always told by someone else than the protagonist, because first-person narration would give away the workings of the detective's mind, but stories about private eyes, following the lead of Chandler, read better with the protagonist as narrator" (Dove 104).

become his companion. On the other hand, the first-person perspective has limitations,[38] we are allowed only into Marlowe's train of thought, he is the eye through which the reader sees the fictional world created by Chandler because "wherever the hero went he vividly described what he saw—the streets, houses, yards, weather, and people—and no detail was too small to escape his observant eye" (Durham 51). These detailed descriptions are rare in hard-boiled fiction and Chandler was the first who took advantage of it and in this way he manages to evoke in the reader feelings of involvement. Marlowe on his quests maps the 1940s Los Angeles society; his encounters with different characters provide the picture.

Nevertheless, in his novels, Raymond Chandler rejects a picture of an ideal American society and suggests that crime must be constantly re-examined; it is not as simple and straightforward as it seems. The psychology of the perpetrator and the original causes of the crime also play a significant role. He does not create a distinctive dichotomy between good and evil; instead, he gives the reader the opportunity to reassess and analyze, without sentimentality, the hard-boiled world built up on the ugly realities of 1940s America.

Moreover, he does not focus only on the crime that was committed and its need to be solved and punished, but he frequently and openly depicts issues afflicting the American nation: the questioning of American democracy, materialism, corruption in law enforcement and politics, organized crime and its connection to prostitution, racism, social class problems, negative attitudes towards women, and sexual orientation. Chandler states that: "the realist in murder writes of a world in which gangsters can rule nations and almost rule cities, in which hotels and apartment houses and celebrated

[38] "First-person narrative has its weaknesses, but it is well suited to the detective story or the suspense novel where the narrator's ignorance of whodunit or the real state of affairs and the gradual discovery of meaning are essential to the structure of the work. So Philip Marlowe and Lew Archer (though not Sam Spade, for first-person is not compulsory) and many another detective tell their own stories" (Gunn 145).

restaurants are owned by men who made their money out of brothels, in which a screen star can be the fingerman for a mob, and the nice man down the hall is a boss of the numbers racket" ("The Simple Art of Murder").

Moreover, Chandler, as "the realist in murder," writes about strong female characters, the femmes fatales, avoiding the implication according to which these women are pure evil, manipulative and egoistical, whose thirst for more and better is the driving force causing men around them to suffer violent deaths. Chandler questions the societal definition of the appropriate role of women; and therefore, he does not pigeonhole these characters; instead, he creates femmes fatales as ambiguous characters worthy of empathy.[39] Nothing in Chandler's hard-boiled world is black-and-white, good or bad.

Nevertheless, female perpetrators dominate the hard-boiled world that Chandler created in his novels—almost every crime in his fiction can be traced back to women. This is certainly the case of his two novels—*The Big Sleep* (1939) and *Farewell, My Lovely* (1940).

[39] Despite Chandler's portrayal of female perpetrators as ambiguous, he is "known for creating murderous females as the antagonists in his novels. In fact, the female murderers outnumber the male killers in Chandler's stories and novels by a wide margin" (Phillips *Creatures of Darkness* 17). Statistically, this does not reflect reality, however: from a factual point of view, men commit more crimes than women, and women are predominantly the victims of criminal activity (Fox and Zawitz), while, as argued by Smith and Zahn, the "1940s [in America] were a time with a relatively low and stable homicide rate" (17). Strong female antagonists, the femmes fatales who appear in Chandler's fiction, remain mysterious and undetected until the novel's finale. This may be attributed to the fact that murder is more of a masculine venture. Hard-boiled femmes fatales stand in contrast to the reality of female offenders—"women are far less likely to be involved in serious offenses . . . they typically act as accomplices to males who both organize and lead the execution of the crime" (Steffensmeier and Allan 460).

Chandler's novel *The Big Sleep*[40] features three female characters who are involved in all crimes appearing in the novel. There are two sisters, Vivian and Carmen Sternwood, the daughters of the elderly and disabled General, a wealthy oil mogul who is raising them on his own and passively accepts their deviance. Carmen is the younger of the two, a "child who likes to pull the wings off flies" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 10). She is an ambiguous character—on the one hand, she poses as an innocent child sucking her thumb and giggling all the time, but, on the other, she is a beautiful, yet mentally unstable, sex-obsessed, drug addict and a coldblooded murderess mixed up in a pornographic racket. Carmen is a female predator always dressed provocatively or not dressed at all—she appears naked in Marlowe's apartment but he is disgusted by her and makes her leave, which enrages her. Carmen tries to kill Marlowe at the end of the novel but he expects it and loads the gun with blanks.

Vivian is "spoiled, exacting, smart and quite ruthless" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 10); she is Carmen's older sister who loves gambling. Vivian is aware of her sexuality, knows how to draw men's attention and how to use it to her advantage. She tries to disturb Marlowe's investigation and tries to seduce him but he can withstand her advances.

[40] The novel has a very convoluted plot, therefore a short synopsis is essential for the thesis's development: Marlowe is invited to the house of an elderly, wealthy oil mogul General Sternwood to deal with a blackmailer Arthur Geiger—he is blackmailing his younger daughter Carmen. General has another daughter Vivian who is married to Rusty Regan who has vanished, General is very fond of Rusty. Marlowe's investigation uncovers a pornographic racket, disguised as a rare bookstore, owned by Geiger. Marlowe follows Geiger and while on the stake out he hears shots fired in Geiger's house, finds Carmen drugged and naked in front of an empty camera and Geiger dead. Marlowe takes Carmen home. The next day, Sternwood's chauffeur Owen Taylor is dead, found in a car which drove off a pier. Marlowe finds out that Joe Brody and Agnes (the bookstore clerk) moved Geiger's "inventory" and are blackmailing Vivian with Carmen's nude photographs, Marlowe goes to confront them. While they are gathered in Brody's apartment, Carol Lundgren, Geiger's homosexual partner, shoots Brody under the assumption he killed Geiger (Owen Taylor shot Geiger because he tried to protect Carmen, he loved her), Lundgren is imprisoned. The case of blackmailing seems to be closed, but Regan's disappearance bothers Marlowe. Vivian tells Marlowe that her husband ran off with Eddie Mars's wife, Mona. With information gained from Agnes and her new submissive male partner, Harry Jones, Marlowe learns that Mona is kept in a house by Mars's hired killer Canino. Harry is poisoned by Canino while trying to extract information about his intentions. Marlowe finds Mona and learns that she is loyal to her husband and she does not know where Regan is. Marlowe kills Canino in self-defense. Next day Marlowe visits General who wants Regan found, offers Marlowe a lot of money. When returning Carmen her gun she tries to kill him, he loaded the gun with blanks. Marlowe takes her back ordering Vivian to institutionalize Carmen and leave, not revealing to General that Carmen murdered Regan.

Vivian, with the help of hired gunmen, wants to prevent Marlowe from figuring out that her sister, Carmen, in blind rage, shot her husband Rusty Regan, when he refused to have sex with her and, with the help of gangster Eddie Mars, got rid of Rusty's body. Vivian tries to protect her sister from being imprisoned, to make sure that the family name will not appear in the media, and to spare her dying father the truth: "I don't want him to die despising his own blood. It was always wild blood, but it wasn't rotten blood" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 106). In the end, Marlowe gives Vivian three days to institutionalize Carmen and vanish before he tells the whole story to the police. This way, the secret will be kept within the family, Carmen may be cured and Vivian will not be punished. Behind her lethal actions is a genuine love for her sister and father, as she tries to keep them safe and protect the family name, even if using illegal means to accomplish it. Vivian is not the femme fatale; she is a woman whose risk-taking is seen as more protective than in violation of the law.

The third dangerous female is Agnes Lozelle. At the beginning of the novel, she works as a front desk clerk for a pornography rental shop, disguised as a rare bookshop, run by Arthur Geiger. After Geiger's death, she moves everything from the store and, with the help of her accomplice, Joe Brody, tries to run it; she also blackmails Vivian with Carmen's nude pictures. Agnes is now in charge of everything. She is fearless and dedicated to her cause—to get money and thus independence. After Brody's death, she finds another scapegoat, Harry Jones, who is also killed when trying to protect her. In the end, she runs away with the money from the blackmail scheme and is never punished for her crimes: "Three men dead . . . and the woman went riding off with my two hundred in her bag and not a mark on her" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 129). I see her as the quintessential hard-boiled femme fatale—every man involved with her ends up dead while she escapes unharmed.

The criminality is in *The Big Sleep* associated, predominantly, with femininity, a femininity that seems weak and in need of Marlowe's protection at the beginning—Carmen and Vivian. In the novel, Chandler portrays femininity as dangerous with animalistic attributes—Carmen hisses and chatters her "little sharp predatory teeth," Vivian when turned down by Marlowe tears a handkerchief "with her teeth, slowly, time after time" and Agnes, who "let[s] out a low animal wail," bits Marlowe's hand while fighting for a gun (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 4, 108, 67). On the other hand, the male characters, whose world has been invaded by these dangerous women, try to assert their dominance over them, but fail—Geiger is shot by Carmen's admirer Owen Taylor who dies when Joe Brody tries to acquire Carmen's nude picture, Brody is then killed by Geiger's lover Lundgren.

The murders in the novel that are a result of personal relationships, connected to sexual perversion, are considered a feminine realm—death of Regan, Geiger and Brody—all these deaths derive from emotional "breakdowns." On the contrary, crimes which stem from illegal means of making money and a misuse of power are a masculine realm—rational gangster Eddie Mars is responsible for blackmail and control over Canino, a gun for hire. This gendering of crime and death presents an opportunity to portray the detective as the "prototype" of masculinity—Marlowe asserts his masculinity through the protection of the weak, tough talk, inevitable aggression, wit but also compassion and forgiveness.

As in *The Big Sleep,* in the novel *Farewell, My Lovely*,[41] the character connected to the crimes is a woman—Velma Valento disguised as Mrs. Lewin Lockridge Grayle. Unlike Carmen from *The Big Sleep*, Mrs. Grayle's crimes are premeditated murders, she does not suffer from any psychological problems. She is a former nightclub singer involved in questionable relationships with men. After turning in her lover (the minor gangster Moose Malloy) to the police, she runs away with the reward and becomes Mrs. Grayle when she marries an elderly millionaire who is aware of her past. She believes in the American dream, but she is reaching for it with greed, cupidity, rancor, and corruption. Mrs. Grayle is determined to keep her new identity and she kills everyone who tries to take it away from her.

Mrs. Grayle "uses her apparent vulnerability by appealing to the private eye's chivalry and code of honor to get close to him and, in this way, when her true nature is revealed she is in a position to threaten him personally" (Scaggs 77). Marlowe is tempted by her open sexuality and a promise of romance, but he refuses to let himself have any feelings for her and, furthermore, he expresses a general contempt for romance; he implies that love is a waste of time. This is displayed in a scene when Marlowe rides in a water taxi in Bay City and remarks on young couples that they "began to chew each other's

[41] The novel has a very convoluted plot, therefore a short synopsis is essential for the thesis's development: Marlowe is hired by Moose Malloy to find his long lost girlfriend Velma Valento so they enter a club she used to work, however, it is a colored joint. Malloy, inadvertently, kills the black manager, Marlowe waits for the police. Marlowe is curious and thus proceeds to look for Velma. He finds out that the previous owner of the club, Florian, died, but his wife Jessie could provide some information. The old alcoholic claims that Velma is dead, Marlowe leaves. Upon his return to his office, Lindsay Marriott, an effeminate man seeks Marlowe's help with a blackmail, jade necklace was stolen from his lady friend. They drive together to the place of the exchange, Marlowe is knocked unconscious and Marriott is killed. Anne Riordan finds Marlowe and at the police station backs up Marlowe's story—she learns that the necklace belongs to Mrs. Lewin Lockridge Grayle. Based on evidence found on Marriott's body Marlowe meets Jules Amthor, a psychic consultant, and is beaten by corrupt policemen and locked and drugged in Dr. Sonderborg's sanatorium. Marlowe escapes and goes to Anne. Marlowe with the help of honest cop Pat Chambers uncover connection between Marriott and Jessie Florian, they go to her house and find her strangled and Malloy is responsible. Marlowe looks for Malloy who is hiding on a gambling ship owned by Burnett who also controls the corrupt police in Bay City. Marlowe and Mrs. Grayle agree on meeting and Malloy, unpredictably, appears. Marlowe confronts her about her true identity, Malloy appears and she shoots him and flees. She is later cornered by detective in Baltimore and turns a gun on herself.

faces" and "took their teeth out of each other's necks" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 332–3). Marlowe retains his celibacy, he keeps emotional distance and not falling for Mrs. Grayle is his moral victory over the world of corruption.

Mrs. Grayle, a woman with a "full set of curves which nobody had been able to improve on" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 250), is an archetypal hard-boiled femme fatale: all the men who get involved in her scheme die. Chandler, however, lets her get away and die by her own decision and not somebody else's. When she is cornered in a Baltimore nightclub and Mr. Grayle refuses to help the police to find her, her decision to kill herself also protects her husband from being involved in the trial or connected to her crimes. As Marlowe notes in the end, with her looks and money she would have walked away free but she did not want to hurt the only man who treated her right:

> I'm not saying she was a saint or even a halfway nice girl. Not ever. She wouldn't kill herself until she was cornered. But what she did and the way she did it, kept her from coming back here for trial. Think that over. And who would that trial hurt most? Who would be least able to bear it? And win, lose or draw, who would pay the biggest price for the show? An old man who had loved not wisely, but too well. (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 366)

Another woman, Mrs. Florian, is the wife of a former owner of a nightclub—probably a disguised brothel where Velma/Mrs. Grayle used to work. She is a widow and an alcoholic living in horrible conditions: "The place reeked" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 310). Her situation is predetermined by her widow status: driven by poverty and social pressures, without a man to provide for her, she is taken to crime in order to survive. She uncovers Mrs. Grayle's true identity and starts blackmailing her. Since blackmailing

is Mrs. Florian's only source of income, she desperately tries to secure her financial gain and refuses to cooperate with Marlowe. Thanks to her greed, she is later accidentally strangled by Moose Malloy, when he tries to obtain information on the whereabouts of his Velma/Mrs. Grayle. Mrs. Florian, like Mrs. Grayle, turns to the only means available to maintain her status—criminal activity—and pays it with her life.

The only woman who is helping Marlowe solve the crimes and who becomes a valuable asset to Marlowe's investigation, is Anne Riordan. She is a daughter of a City Bay's police officer who has been forced out of the precinct for being too honest (Bay City police department is run by a corrupt chief). She can handle a gun and when she finds Marlowe next to a corpse she is not afraid: "All right, you. Come out of there with your hands up and very damned empty. You're covered. . . . Listen, stranger. I'm holding a ten shot automatic. I can shoot straight. Both your feet are vulnerable. What do you bid? . . . Oh-a hardboiled gentleman. . . . The voice was crisp. It was not afraid. It meant what it said." (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 211–2). And Marlowe appreciates her coolness: "I liked the cool quiet of her voice. I liked her nerve" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 215). Anne becomes Marlowe's partner but their relationship is kept professional on the pages of the novel. She is not described as a particularly beautiful or sexually provocative woman but she is smart, strong, independent and intellectual. As such, she is an example of a woman that is an exception in the hard-boiled universe.

By employing a female character such as Anne, Chandler creates a balance that is absent in *The Big Sleep*—even though Mrs. Grayle and Mrs. Florian are female criminals fueled by greed, Anne is an image of an independent, strong and virtuous femininity. Marlowe is attracted to Anne but not because of her sexuality, her looks but because of her "straightforward, unpretentious demeanor" (Madden 5) and her investigative skills. Anne is Marlowe's female equal, tough, wisecracking, and capable. As Anne becomes

on the pages of *Farewell, My Lovely* an epitome of femininity, Philip Marlowe is a "modern knight errant, an exceptionally principled man who must make his way through a dangerous, sordid world" (Madden 7), an image of masculinity that should be strived to attain by other male characters that Marlowe encounters.

Marlowe did not choose to become a private detective to gain wealth or fame but because of his desire to be independent, a lonely knight. Marlowe tells us that being tough is his routine, but it does not mean that it is his only quality, "It's not that I like it the hard way. It's that I get it that way" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 299). He has to be tough, because it belongs to the world he lives in. Despite this he is not a man who seeks violence: violence is ubiquitous in his world. His masculinity is emphasized by his invulnerability, in a real world man could hardly live through such injuries that Marlowe survives—he never goes to see a doctor his only treatment is a bottle of Whisky. Marlowe is a man of secrets, does not show his true emotions and is detached from the world, he is "always moving through a lonely world with dignity and integrity, never deviating from his code in a febrile society that made unreasonable demands on any honest man" (Durham 32). His rough appearance and mysteriousness makes him very attractive for women, but when dames fall for him it is usually as a means of gaining advantage rather than true affection.

In spite of Marlowe's disgust in romance, and distancing from women, Chandler manages to expose Marlowe's vulnerability. A tool that Chandler uses is a character named Red Norgaard, who is not described to us as any other male character of the novel, his description resembles a woman: "He had the eyes you never see, that you only read about. Violet eyes. Almost purple. Eyes like a girl, a lovely girl. His skin was as soft as silk. Lightly reddened, but it would never tan. It was too delicate" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 335). Red Norgaard is also the only person to whom Marlowe confesses that

he is afraid, "afraid of death and despair, of dark water and drowned men's faces and skulls with empty eyesockets . . . afraid of dying, of being nothing" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 338). He removes his mask of toughness. Marlowe is a complex character, not only a tough detective who does his job; all his qualities have to contribute to an adventure of a search for a hidden truth.

2.2.3 Mickey Spillane's Hard-boiled Outcast and Seductive Babes

The above mentioned description of crucial characteristic features of the hard-boiled detective apply to Hammett's Spade, Chandler's Marlowe, Macdonald's Archer and also Spillane's Hammer—but Hammer somehow stands aside from all these detectives. Mike Hammer was not born on the pages of the pulp magazines and therefore he is "special."

Mickey Spillane started his career as a comic book writer and found himself working on characters like *Human Torch*, *Batman*, or *Captain America*. However, he soon realized that he wanted more (and he also needed money), he "wanted to get away from the flying heroes and [he] had the prototype cop" (Smith). He created a comic strip featuring private detective Mike Danger[42] in the 1940s but the World War II hindered its publication. Therefore, he changed the character's last name to Hammer and decided to turn it into a novel. Within three weeks *I, the Jury* (1947)[43] was written and Mike Hammer entered the hard-boiled world.

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[42] "He's rough . . . he's tough . . . he's terrific! 190 pounds of bone and muscle . . . and afraid of nothing! He backs up the law with his two fists and a .45 slung under his left armpit, ready to slug or shoot it out anyplace, anytime! Yes, meet Mike . . . but be smiling when you do!" (*Crime Detector #3* 1954 qtd. in Smith).

[43] The novel has a very convoluted plot, therefore a short synopsis is essential for the thesis's development: Jack, Hammer's war buddy is killed by a killer who enjoys watching human suffering. Hammer swears he will avenge his friend. He starts investigating everyone who was present at a party hosted by Jack on the night of his murder—Charlotte Manning, the psychiatrist; opulent Bellemy twins; Hal Kines and George Kalecki. During his investigation Hammer finds out that Kines "hunts" women for prostitution ring

In spite of being tamed by current standards in America (the late 1940s and early 1950s), Spillane created a new "sort" of a private detective—Mike Hammer was a shock for the critics as well as for the reading public; "he has been attacked by such pundits as Max Lerner as a menace to American civilization. He also gets blasted continually in the book columns for the quality of his writing, for the violence of his plots, and for what is taken to be his outlook" (Murphy 83). Hammer's main flaw in the eyes of the critics of the 1950s (and still in some of the contemporaries) was that he is nothing like Hammett's Spade, Chandler's Marlowe of Macdonald's Archer—many, like Sweney, see him only as brutal (in terms of violence and sexual instinct), culturally illiterate, self-confessed slob and a sadist (198–200).

Hammer is a man's man, a war veteran that became a private eye. He is not a chivalric knight in a shining armor like Philip Marlowe—"an idealized figure, a questing knight of romance transplanted into the mean streets of mid-twentieth-century Los Angeles" (Scaggs 62), cold and passionless like Sam Spade, or overly intellectual as Lew Archer is. Hammer takes the roughness and toughness of the hard-boiled detectives a considerable step further.[44] He is a tough, thirty-ish man whose physique is never completely described by Spillane, because "a hero should be a figment of your imagination" (Brunsdale 331), Spillane says. Therefore, you would never find his face on any of the book covers (the original paperbacks). What the readers can deduce from the novels' pages is a picture of a well-built, tall, very strong man in a trench coat and a fedora, who does not shy away from violence. He is direct and he never cracks wise. He possesses astounding endurance that almost makes him invulnerable, invincible—he

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pretending to be a college student. Kalecki supports him, they are lovers. The number of suspects starts to decrease since Charlotte is the one who killed Jack and is trying to cover all tracks that would link her to the crime—she shoots Kines and Myrna (Jack's fiancé). Kalecki is shot by Hammer, in self-defense. No suspects left, Hammer connects all the deaths to Charlotte and in a dramatic finale shoots her, as he has sworn. Charlotte is a psychiatrist motivated by greed, she allies with a drug syndicate to increase her profit and Jack has uncovered it so she had to get rid of him.

[44] His name, Hammer, denotes the detective's brute force he employs during his investigations.

survives extreme situations that place him outside the normal humanity. He has almost supernatural ability to survive injuries and escape death. These features may be attributed to his "origin"—he is like a superhero, a crime-fighter without a mask.

Hammer has looks of something dark and evil and yet he is on the side of justice. He is a symbol that scares criminals, criminals who "are able to scare the hell out of decent citizens, but they'll drop a load when [he] come[s] around" (Spillane *My Gun Is Quick* 212). Hammer resembles a comic book character that possesses great detective skills, is seeking and living for revenge, who vowed to clean up the world, a man with self-developed physique, but without any superpowers—Batman. Hammer, as well as Batman, is a character that is condemned by the society, chased and hated by the authorities, even though he is fighting for justice. They both live among criminals yet they are devoted to righting the wrong. They are solitary fighters against crime who are in alliance with moral and honorable members of the police force. These police officers are among the very few who know the heroes' real motives and character—they are their close friends. Even though Hammer sees law as an impediment to justice, he has respect for the majority of police, he knows that they have to act within the boundaries set by the law, "people are always running down the police, but they are all right guys that are tied down by a mess of red tape and they have to go through channels" (Spillane *My Gun Is Quick* 231), they "have to follow the book" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 8). Hammer admires Pat Chambers, a capable and honest Captain of Homicide, for his skills. They are very good friends when they are on or off the job, they stand by each other. This fact is in contrast with Marlowe, Spade or Archer's relationship to police. Police is in these novels depicted as completely corrupt and incompetent, and therefore frequently mocked. These detectives are superior to any member of police department.

Another feature that distinguishes Hammer from Spade, Marlowe or Archer is that he never takes the case for money, Cawelti (188) states that he "usually becomes involved in a case through a simple desire for revenge." But I do not agree with Cawelti's view—he gets involved because of his personal motivation—something happens to somebody he loves, likes or is somehow attached to the person. He dives into it on his own all the way, but he is not blindly seeking blood, he pursues what he thinks is a deserved punishment for the crime committed against people he is emotionally attached to.

Despite being the "half-brother of the law," Hammer does not believe in the legal system, therefore he almost never manages to bring the criminal in front of the jury for a fair trial. He is angry about the slow working of the law, and in his eyes it seems that the law protects the criminals. Therefore, he also hates politics and politicians. Hammer's thinking reflects the postwar America when many people also suffered from the same frantic feelings of insecurity.

Hammer is the avenger who is "cleansing" the society, or righting the wrong in his own way—"eye for an eye." He never doubts that his killing of the criminal represents the rightful punishment, but he kills only when he is sure it is deserved. Therefore, he is for some critics only an unscrupulous killing machine led by rage and blind to the law, they call him "dangerous, paranoiac, a sadist and a masochist" (Johnson 82). However, Hammer is never the aggressor; he is always fighting for his honor or being true, but in his own fashion. Any beating up that Hammer does is to keep him safe. Hammer does not go around just killing anybody, he kills only the killers: "I didn't shoot anything but killers. I loved to shoot killers. I couldn't think of anything I'd rather do than shoot a killer and watch his blood trace a slimy path across the floor. It was fun to kill those bastards who tried to get away with murder and did sometimes" (Spillane *Vengeance Is Mine!* 493).

Unlike Spade who does not want to kill anyone, barely lifts his fists and does not even carry a gun, or Marlowe who killed once in eight novels and in self-defense, Hammer is not afraid to use his fists or his beloved Betsy, a colt .45, without reservations—he would never walk away from a fight. While the confrontation between Hammer and the criminal is more physical and violent, described in great detail and intensity, in the case of Spade, Marlowe or Archer "the confrontation is more psychological" (Cawelti 143) and if physical conflict appears it is described rather neutrally.

Hammer knows that it is his duty, his mission to clean the world from the crooks, and he is conscious about the damage that it causes him. He doubts himself several times, but in the end he knows that he had done the right thing, that there was not any other way:

> I lived only to kill the scum and the lice that wanted to kill themselves. I lived to kill so that others could live. I lived to kill because my soul was a hardened thing that revelled in the thought of taking the blood of the bastards who made murder their business. I lived because I could laugh it off and others couldn't. I was the evil that opposed other evil, leaving the good and the meek in the middle to live and inherit the earth! (Spillane *One Lonely Night* 164)

But there are also those who see him as an avenger in the name of the 1950s American everyman. The primarily male readership of the late 1940s and 1950s, could identify with Hammer and they wished to be like him—to be tough, loyal, determined, frank and very popular among beautiful women.[45]

[45] Mickey Spillane knew who he was writing for, he knew what the public demanded: "I was in the military—I knew what they were thinking, I knew what they were eatin' and dreamin' . . . I wrote doe entertainment, I wasn't trying to educate anybody" (Spillane qtd. in Collins and Traylor 189–90).

Spillane's works have been condemned by critics mostly because of the blunt sex and eroticism that has been shocking the public ever since the first Hammer novel. They called his novels pornographic. What is interesting is that critics always seem to refer to the open depiction of sex scenes, but "there are almost no descriptions of sexual act itself" (Cawelti 185) in the novels. The eroticism is definitely there, and it is portrayed with great detail and passion—Spillane vividly describes sexy women who thirst for Hammer's physical attention, there are numerous women undressing and licking their lips just to have Hammer for themselves. In Hammett's, Chandler's or Macdonald's novels one must look very carefully to find only instances, hints of any sexual relationships of the detectives and if some appear they are described with irony and detachment. Marlowe is even considered a latent homosexual among few critics.[46]

But even if attracted to these sexually provocative women, Hammer keeps his distance. He is not romantic or chivalrous, as would Marlowe be, but when he has feelings for a particular woman (as he has for his secretary Velda), he wants to marry them before they get engaged in something physical. He refuses to have sex with Charlotte in *I, the Jury* (1947) until they get married, but at the end he figures out that she is the killer and shoots her in her stomach. This final scene is considered a proof of Hammer's bitter hostility towards women, which I find quite simplistic. At the end of the novel, Spillane creates a situation in which Hammer's killing of Charlotte is seen as the only possible scenario—if Hammer had not stayed true to his promise (to avenge his friend's death) and be loyal, he would have been dead himself, she would have killed him: "There on the table was the gun . . . Those loving arms would have reached it nicely. A face that was

[46] "a pair of critics in particular have argued that Marlowe is a woman-hating homosexual. The first of these salvos was fired by Gershon Legman in *Love & Death: A Study in Censorship* . . . The second charge, overstated like the first, may have some merit and has been framed far more carefully by another critic. In his essay 'Marlowe, Men, and Women,' Michael Mason develops more fully the implications of Legman's theory" (Madden 4).

waiting to be kissed was really waiting to be splattered with blood when she blew [Hammer's] head off" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 246).

On the other hand, in *The Maltese Falcon* (1930) by Hammett, Spade—the blond Satan with blue eyes—is not very fond of his partner and secretly sleeps with his wife and seems to be very indifferent when it comes to relationships with women. He knows that his secretary is attracted to him and he plays with her feelings. If that was not enough his partner is killed and he has to find the killer, because that is what he should do—he is not an avenger, he does it because his moral code dictates it. When Spade discovers that the killer is Brigid, with whom he has an affair and might have fallen in love with, he simply, without any emotions sends her to jail.

Hammer is not good looking[47] like Spade or charming like Marlowe so why he is more popular among women than they are? It is because he has "a brutish quality about [him] that makes men hate [him], but maybe a woman wants a brute. Perhaps she wants a man she knows can hate and kill yet still retain a sense of kindness" (Spillane *My Gun Is Quick* 311). Hammer is haunted by his decision to kill Charlotte for a long time, he was in love: "I shot her right in the gut and when she died I died too" (Spillane *Vengeance Is Mine!* 416). This shows that he is not a merciless, cold-blooded killer as some may assume. Hammer despite being a tough brute has feelings, emotions. Spade, Marlowe and Archer seem emotionless.

Mike Hammer should not be considered a hard-boiled outcast, he is just a different kind of a hard-boiled detective—he is not Spade, Marlowe or Archer, he is controversial, shocking, and new. He was born on the pages of comic books therefore he has some "special features" added when compared to the archetype of the "classic" hard-boiled detective. He entered the hard-boiled fiction to be condemned by critics for decades for

[47] Spillane created Hammer "with only the barest references to physical description—Hammer is 'big,' he's 'ugly'" (Collins vii).

his overt individuality. No major book reviewer, anywhere, has ever said a kind word about a Spillane's novel. Only in the last twenty years critics have been looking at Mickey Spillane and thus at Mike Hammer with a speck of recognition. Despite the indifference on the part of the critics, Spillane and his Mike Hammer were very well accepted and admired by the reading public ever since his first novel appeared—he is one of the most popular and best-selling mystery writers of the 20th century. Spillane claimed: "I'm not an author, I'm a writer, that's all I am" (interview by Michael Carlson) and "if a guy wants to sit down and read a book, I want to entertain him—not educate him" (qtd. in Murphy 83). He definitely managed to entertain and captivate readers with his novels and the character of Mike Hammer plays a great part in this success.

Mike Hammer is one of the first popular antiheroes—he is a hero who uses methods of the villains in pursuit of justice. He is definitely a tough hard-boiled detective with his own moral code, a lonely protector of justice, surrounded by beautiful sexy dames. But he also possesses traits of the comic book superheroes—he is willing to risk his own safety for a greater good without expecting any reward, he is strongly motivated because he is personally tied to the case/injustice and he is drawn forward by his personal vendetta. He works alone but he is not lonely—he has a confidant, Pat Chambers. But at the same time his personal relationships are very complicated, especially with women. Sweney claims that Hammer "fears long-term female relationships" (200), which does not support Spillane's development of Hammer's long-term personal and also professional relationship with his secretary Velda.

Even his name carries an underlying motif specific for superheroes—Mike Hammer; he will hammer down every injustice he comes across in New York City. He is a terrifying symbol of justice that strikes fear into the hearts of criminals. He is the superhero of the 1950s and 1960s America—committed to follow his instinct, help the

weak, even if the price is high. Every time he has to kill, he loses a part of his humanity. Mickey Spillane gave readers

> a hero for those troubled times when the law seemed unable to cope, one who did not act with frustrating slowness or sit around simply debating the problem: meet violence with violence, and when the bad guy is down, kick him in the teeth. If Hammett (in Chandler's words) gave murder back to the people who committed it, Spillane offered a sword of justice to people who dreamed of vengeance but felt powerless. Hammer was a fantasy. (Holland)

Mike Hammer defines masculinity of his era in terms of appearance, independence, interests in sexually open women, emotional toughness, ability to endure physical harm and determination to complete the quest he has been sent on. Since male attractiveness in terms of looks was, in Hammer's generation, indirectly connected to homosexuality, Hammer is powerfully built but he is ugly. In Hammer's view the "real men" must be capable of tough, physically demanding fight, if not they are considered homosexual-like: "Directly beneath me two underweight males were having a hair-pulling match while four others egged them on. . . . A couple of pansies trying to decide who would be Queen of the May. I drew a pitcher of water from the sink and let it go on their blonde heads. That ended the fight. They both let out a falsetto scream and got up running" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 205).

Hammer's independence and decision making is seen as an important manly trait: "So I'm just one man, but as long as I have a brain of my own to use and experience and knowledge to draw on to form a decision I'll keep on making them myself" (Spillane *Kiss Me, Deadly* 374). He refuses help and is unwilling to ask for it—he would rather die than

lose his independence. Hammer prefers solitude when he is on a dangerous mission since he is not confident that others are tough enough to handle it as he does, especially women. When Hammer meets a woman, he describes her appearance and what her attractiveness arouses in him—"she could have sued me if she knew what went on in my mind" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 40). Hammer resents weak, soft, emotional, willing women who use these feminine features against men and their desires—in *I, the Jury*, Charlotte Manning, the femme fatale, acts in a way to attract Hammer, she plays a role of a wife, a mistress and a mother striving to achieve an image of perfect femininity just to deceive Hammer. The only recurring female character is Hammer's secretary Velma—she is Hammer's female equal, she has a P.I. license, carries a gun and is also tough and fearless. Both femininities and masculinities in Spillane's novels are depicted as "larger than life" superhero imitations—all women are big and extremely beautiful and Hammer is their solitary, hyper-masculine savior and lover.

3 THE BAFFLING FILM NOIR

> In this noir world, a man walks to the outskirts of town, collar turned up against the rain, and hopes for a ride; a man wanders into the bleak city night alone—the glow of a cigarette dangling from his lips the only light to guide his way; a man curls against the side of a building, his white shirt stained black as a pool of blood leaks from him; a man runs desperately through the fog, nobody follows, yet still he runs.
>
> —Paula Rabinowitz 3–4

Such scenes can be found in many film noirs; but "[w]hat exactly is film noir? Is it a genre? Is it a film style constituted by the deep shadows and odd scene compositions? Is it perhaps a cycle of films lasting through a certain period? Is noir a certain mood and tone, that of alienation and pessimism?" (Conard "Nietzsche" 8) Answers to these questions will reveal the complexity of film noir as a phenomenon with frequently debated origin, social context, style, themes, motifs, form and a range of films comprised.

Film noir is not a primary focus of this thesis, but it is perceived rather as a connecting point between the hard-boiled fiction and the cinematic versions of the novels in question, highlighting consistent elements found in both. This chapter will present film noir's roots and its major influences with focus on its social context, identifying its canon and its depiction of masculinity and femininity. Clarification of the film noir's origin, its canon and also social context should support our realization and understanding of what exactly film noir is. This elucidation is essential when approaching the film analyses.

3.1 FILM NOIR'S ROOTS, ITS CANON AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

There is quite a lot of disagreement about whether film noir is a genre or not. In *Crime Films* Thomas Leitch labels film noir as a genre in itself or a subgenre of crime films. On the other hand, Raymond Durgnat, his view presented in this book, opposes Leitch's opinion by stating that "film noir is not a genre [and] only some crime films are noir" (9). Many other theorists agree with Durgnat's perception; and moreover, define film noir as a "mood, a tone, a play of shadows and light, and beyond all of these a visual consideration that in its narrative structures embodies a world-view" (Tuska xvi). The conclusion in terms of defining film noir as a genre is that film noir is "transgeneric" which means that "every film noir contains within it certain conventions and character types that derive from established genres . . . the detective film, the crime film, the melodrama, or the western" (Belton). Therefore, I view film noir rather as the style, mood, point-of-view, or tone of a film—"film noir belongs to the history of ideas as much as to the history of cinema; in other words, it has less to do with a group of artifacts than with a discourse—a loose, evolving system of arguments and readings that helps to shape commercial strategies and aesthetic ideologies" (Naremore 11).

Many film theorists and critics[48] agree upon film noir's emergence being the release of John Huston's *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), its termination being the film *Touch of Evil* (1958) directed by Orson Welles.[49] It should be emphasized that the term "film noir" was not used in the United States until many of the film noir classics had been already produced. American directors of these films were not intentionally creating film

[48] e.g. Alain Silver, Paul Schrader, Mark T. Conard, Leonard Quart, Albert Auster, Marc Vernet, James Naremore, Christopher Orr, et al., etc.

[49] Even though film noir is generally regarded a reflection of the various cultural and societal changes experienced by the United States in the 1940s, it does not mean that Hollywood was focusing, producing solely film noir thrillers. Along the "hard-boiled" thrillers, also musicals (e.g. *Blue Skies* 1946), westerns (e.g. *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* 1948), comedies (e.g. *To Be or Not to Be* 1942), dramas (e.g. *It's a Wonderful Life* 1946), "women's pictures"/melodramas (e.g. *Humoresque* 1946) and more, were produced.

noirs, film critics and theorists that were retrospectively discovering similarities among films labeled produced films as "noir."[50] The term "film noir" was coined by "French critic Nino Frank . . . in 1946, and the French authors Raymond Borde and Etienne Chaumenton . . . used 'noir' to describe the films in a particular sort of American cinema produced in the United States from just before and after World War II until the late 1950s" (Schwartz xi). These films were released in France after the World War II was over and Nino Frank "claimed to detect a new trend in the Hollywood crime film" (Neale 154). The film noir's departures from conventions of the 1930s and 1940s American films and creation of something "new" in film are its main significances. French critics:

> Spotted . . . that makers of these movies had exposed an inner core of darkness in American society which closely resembled that which engulfed Europe during the war and the immediate post-war years. Of course, there was no counterpart in America to the physical damage and wholesale death and destruction which had devastated Europe, but there was fear, alienation and both physical and psychological dislocation. A few years later, as red scares and witch-hunts damaged America, greatly affecting the nation's popular culture, disillusion set in and, more significantly for both American people and Hollywood film-makers, fear turned into paranoia. (Growther qtd. in Neale 157)

According to Growther's statement we may infer that the years immediately following the end of World War II in the United States were not just an era of prosperity,

[50] Paul Schrader in his 1972 article "Notes on Film Noir" divides film noir into three phases: 1. "the wartime period" (1941–1946)—"the phase of the private eye and the lone wolf," 2. "the post-War realistic period" (1945–1946)—"films tended more toward the problems of crime in the streets, political corruption and police routine," 3. "the period of psychotic action and suicidal impulse" (1949–1953)—"the noir hero . . . started to go bananas . . . films were painfully self-aware; they seemed to know they stood at the end of a long tradition based on despair and disintegration and did not shy away from the fact" (11–12).

baby-boom, celebration and hope for the future, but also an era full of melancholy, alienation, bleakness, pessimism, moral corruption, guilt, disenchantment and desperation, a Cold War related anxiety. This atmosphere contributed to the outset of film noir. However, not only the "post-war disillusionment" but also, according to Paul Schrader, the worldwide "resurgence of realism . . . the influx of German expatriates . . . filmmakers and technicians . . . [and] hard-boiled tradition" (9–10) were catalytic elements that contributed to the formation and flowering of film noir in the 1940s and 1950s. On top of these influences, Wes D. Gehring highlights the emergence of film noir from American gangster and horror films (68).

As mentioned above, and as represented in *American Film and Society Since 1945* (2002) by Leonard Quart and Albert Auster, the cinematic origin of film noir is deeply rooted in the decade (1940s) when the lives of American people were threatened by changes that emerged with the outbreak of the World War II. By the end of the decade, still during the intervening years, the mood in the United States was marked by uncertainty and anxiety, especially in the matter of gender roles which were redefined by women's entry into men's workplaces to substitute men who were at the front. Noir reflects fears of those who were wary of these changes, the newly gained independence of women, by presenting noir women as strong, sovereign and deadly femmes fatales who at the end have to be punished for their violation of deeply rooted gender conventions. In the post-war period women were lead back to the roles they played before the war and the most honorable things they could do were considered to be fostering a family at home and leave their jobs in the workforce so the veterans could get "their jobs" back (1–39).

Therefore, females frequently represented in film noir are either of three types; the femme fatale who is "fatal not only to the sap that falls for her, and whom she manipulates, but also to herself" (Holt 27), a dutiful, reliable, trustworthy and loving

woman who is dull for the man, and the "wife-to-be" woman who tries to bound the man within the conventional role of a husband. Moreover, Hollywood noir films were produced in an era of Production Code[51] and therefore, were constrained by its regulations—the Production Code established what should and should not be depicted in film. These rules resulted in femme fatale narrative that ensured the defeat of this independent woman. The inevitable defeat of these self-sufficient women may be attributed to the feelings of American men in the post-war era; their masculinity and their role at home was threatened by the changes to the social order that took place at that time.[52]

In addition to the interfusion of gender roles, Quart and Auster further observe, the fact that The United States were becoming a conformist and materialistic society with global influence and responsibilities, contributed to the feeling of unease of the American nation (63). Moreover a feeling of paranoia developed; people became tied up by an economic and political system out of their control, which resulted in film noir's mood of alienation and disillusionment.

Paul Schrader writes that the German influence on the American cinema at the time contributed to typical elements that form film noir. This means that "the German/Austrian immigration during and after the [second world] war, [gave] a number of important writers, directors, and other film technicians [that] were German or Austrian émigrés" (Conard "Introduction" 2). During the rise of Nazism in Europe these

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[51] "From 1934 to 1968, the regulation of the movies in the United States was a limited information bargaining game with four sets of participants: state and local government censors; the movie studios; the Production Code Administration (PCA), often referred to as the Hays Office after Motion Picture Producers and Dealers Association (MPPDA) administrator Will H. Hays; and the Legion of Decency. . . . It encouraged the studios to practice self-censorship of sexual displays and dialogue through the enforcement of the Production Code, a set of rules on movie content . . . Initially, the MPPDA enforced the Production Code Laxly. However, faced with severe criticism about the moral tone of movies, in 1934 the MPPDA created the PCA. Established as a semiautonomous agency, the PCA interpreted and enforced the Production Code for the MPPDA" (Brisbin 92).

[52] More detailed analysis of gender in film noir is presented in following sub-chapter "3.1.1. Gender in 'Classic' Film Noir."

personalities, like Fritz Lang (e.g. *The Woman in the Window* 1944), Robert Siodmak (e.g. *Cry of the City* 1948), Billy Wilder (e.g. *Double Indemnity* 1944), Edgar G. Ulmer (e.g. *Detour* 1945), or Otto Preminger (e.g. *Laura* 1944),[53] brought expressionistic filming styles and motifs, developed in Europe in the early 1930s, to their works in Hollywood. The aim of expressionists "was to distort physical reality to suggest a subjective, psychological state. To do this, props and acting styles were intentionally distorted, and lighting on films tended to be a striking chiaroscuro, dramatic contrasts of areas of light and dark" (Gehring 67). This artistic movement, found in film noir's style, emphasized the exaggerated, deformed nightmarish images which also characterized noir's "bleakly existential tone [and] cynical pessimistic mood" (Holt 24). In most noir films, the main characters find themselves hostages to an inescapable fate that forces them into a downward spiral from which they cannot emerge, trapped without a chance for escape—"That's life. Whichever way you turn, fate sticks out a foot to trip you. . . . Yes. Fate, or some mysterious force, can put the finger on you or me, for no good reason at all" (*Detour* 1945).[54]

In "Some Visual Motifs of Film Noir," Janey Place and Lowell Peterson determine the key expressionist visual techniques and motifs that dominate film noir and unquestionably contribute to the overall theme of film noir. These techniques include:

[53] Many other important German and East Europeans were working on film noir: e.g. Franz Waxman (composed soundtrack for *Sunset Boulevard* 1950), Anatole Litvak (directed *Sorry, Wrong Number* 1948), John Alton (cinematographer/director of photography, won an Academy Award for *An American in Paris* 1951), Max Steiner (music score for *The Big Sleep* 1946), Rudolp Maté (directed *D.O.A.* 1950), etc.

[54] "A major challenge to any attempt to interpret film noir along strict existentialist lines can be summarized in one word: fatalism. . . . film noir offers us a compelling look at the sources of *constraint* on human choice, with particular emphasis on the fatalistic reach of the past. . . . film noir exploits the voice-over, confessional flashback: the technique provides the kind of narrative closure that mirrors film noir's inherent fatalism. The viewer thus knows the ending to come in these films because the future is prefigured in the past" (Sanders 97–8).

> portraits and mirror reflection, choker close-ups, the use of wide-angle lenses and visual distortion, cutting from extreme close-up to high-angle long shot, and the extreme high-angle long shot, an oppressive and fatalistic angle that looks down on its helpless victim to make it look like a rat in a maze. (68)

Nevertheless, the film noir's lightning is the most frequently mentioned and commonly realized visual effect, which is "low-key." The low-key lightning's main principle is the extreme contrast of light and dark; the focus is on an object or an actor's face and thus they appear overwhelmed by the black shadows that surround them. These shadows and darkness denote the unknown, enigmatic and horrifying in the noir world and thus contribute to the general noir atmosphere (Vernet 7). Also some other technical factors, as Nerve depicts, had an impact on film noir's visual style. An example is the "night-for-night" shooting or location shooting which became very attractive for filmmakers because of its financially undemanding character and independence from studios space that directors regularly competed for. This contributed to the more realistic depiction of films' settings and scenes, like diners, bars, nightclubs, gambling dens, bleak motels, but also old country houses, tourist camps, small-town stores (149). Film noirs principally portray urban settings; cities like Los Angeles, San Francisco or New York are labyrinths full of crime and corruption which confuse the protagonist. On the other hand, the rural settings, the country-side with rustic mountains are pictured as a sunlight relief from the oppressive locales of the city. Familiarization with the visual style of film noir is crucial because it embodies the portrayal of noir milieu and thus manages to depict the heterogeneous American society.

The belief that film noir's existential themes originate exclusively from European existentialism that was brought to the United States by emigrant directors may be

questioned since film noir's themes of alienation and sardonic gloomy mood may be, moreover, attributed to its literary influence—American hard-boiled fiction which also offers a fatalistic interpretation of reality.

According to Scaggs, the "roman noir" is a term used by French film critics and theorists to characterize American hard-boiled fiction which had been translated and had an immense impact upon French writing; and moreover, the term "film noir" has its origin in it (69). Hard-boiled fiction has been realized as one of the sources of film noir since many film noirs' plots and themes were often taken from usually best-selling, hard-boiled novels and crime fiction by authors like Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, James M. Cain or Cornell Woolrich. As already mentioned in the second chapter of this thesis, the American hard-boiled fiction represents a completely different world and a different kind of detective than those that can be found in British and earlier detective fiction. In hard-boiled fiction, the content and style, as opposed to earlier detective works, were differentiated. Frank Krutnik's summarization explains some of the divergences:

> In the "hard-boiled" mode, ratiocination—the power of deductive reasoning—is replaced by action, and the mystery element is displaced in favour of suspense. Gunplay, illicit or exotic sexuality, the corruption of the social forces of law, and personal danger to the hero are placed to the fore . . . Whereas the classical detective is often at one remove from the milieu which gives rise to the socially disruptive act of murder, the "hard-boiled" investigator immerses himself in this milieu, and is tested by it in a more physical and life-threatening manner. Crucially, the private eye—the most archetypal "hard-boiled" hero—operates as a mediator between the criminal underworld and respectable society. He can move freely between these two worlds, without really being a part of either. (Neale 16)

The literature of the hard-boiled school comprises of, but is not limited to, stories about a private detective who is "excessively detached, moves in the shadows and at night, ducking into corners and alleyways [with] witty waxed deadpan innuendo about the evils of the human soul" (Abrams 76). The private detective's investigation takes him into an immoral, depraved world of psychotic killers and beautiful but deadly femmes fatales. This had a major impact on setting the tone and creating a hazy atmosphere in these films. Other elements employed by noir filmmakers from hardboiled fiction are:

> cinematic flashback techniques [that] are a visual, as well as narrative, device that recreates the relationship between the past and the present that structures hard-boiled fiction and which allows the private eye to solve the crime by uncovering the hidden relationship between past events and present circumstances. Finally, although not exhaustively, the voice-over technique that characterizes much film noir is a direct cinematic adaptation of the first-person narrative voice of the majority of hard-boiled texts, and both techniques emphasize the alienated individual and his or her position in a threatening urban environment. (Scaggs 69)

The voice-over narration and the use of flashback technique concur, for example, in *Murder, My Sweet* (1944) and *Out of the Past* (1947) and create a narrative justification of both leading male protagonists, Phillip Marlowe and Jeff Bailey. They can be seen as confessions: in the former, Marlowe's interrogation and, in the latter, Bailey's conversation with Ann in the car about his past sins. These flashback sequences reinforce feelings of hopelessness and lost time.

The incorporation of many elements of hard-boiled fiction into film noir and the claim that hard-boiled fiction directly influenced the origin of film noir is questioned by

Marc Vernet, who draws attention to the chronological gap between the appearances of hard-boiled fiction in the 1920s and film noir in the 1940s. He argues that this "break" represses films of the 1930s, e.g. the 1931 adaptation of *The Maltese Falcon*. The reason for such a gap to appear is the 1930s emergence of the Depression in the United States and that the American nation could not be exposed to reality of that era; film noir had to wait until the post-war economic stability.[55] But still, the influence of hard-boiled fiction upon film noir can be demonstrated by the fact that "almost 20 per cent of the noir thrillers produced between 1941 and 1948 were adaptations of 'hard-boiled' novels and short stories. And this figure does not include those films, like *The Dark Corner* (1946), which imitate or rework 'hard-boiled' sources, nor the many thrillers which were worked on by 'hard-boiled' writers who moved to Hollywood" (Bordwell qtd. in Krutnik 33–4). Many authors of hard-boiled fiction were employed as scenario and script writers. For example, Raymond Chandler worked on scripts of *Double Indemnity* (1944), *Strangers on a Train* (1951) and Daniel Mainwaring (pseudonym Geoffrey Homes) on adapting his own novel into a film noir *Out of the Past* (1947). On the other hand, Leonard Quart and Albert Auster see these hard-boiled adaptations as mere "potboilers which seemingly did no more than adopt a successful set of formal and narrative codes" (28).

Film noir's representation of realism may be compared to films made in the 1930s that were marked as commercial films that claimed being realistic, but in fact the reality of that period had been modified to be entertaining for the mass audience. This can be seen in gangster films which represented "realism in style, [but] never in substance" (Tuska 134). These Depression era films "neatly"' avoided the exposure of despair that was at that time omnipresent. Therefore, "[i]n the early thirties, one of the ways to assure

[55] An argument presented by Raymond Durgnat: "The usual retort to recalling the existence of such a large gap is that during the 1930s the public was too affected by the Depression to be able to bear seeing the hard realities of existence recalled too strongly, and that it was necessary to wait for the post-war economic recovery in order finally to be able to make sinister films" (Vernet 14).

and reassure everyone—or so filmmakers felt—was to concentrate on the romantic tragedy of the gangster" (Tuska 134). On the contrary, in film noir "[n]ot only the settings but also the scenes, the action, the depiction of violent crime, and the characters involved are all quite realistic by and large . . . [and give] the realistic appraisal of people's motives, actions, and outcomes" (Holt 24, 37). Unfortunately, the restrictions posed by the Production Code affected filmmakers of that era in a way that they were forced to modify some elements and this wrenched the realistic vision of film noir, e.g. in a real world the villains not always get the deserved punishment. Still, film noir deals with several subjects, as Elizabeth Cowie outlines, such as nudity, drug abuse, homosexuality, adultery or harlotry. The straightforward portrayal of these topics was prohibited by the Production Code in a way that these messages are disguised within a film (112–3).

As Wes D. Gehring, points out, film noir emerged from gangster and horror films of the 1930s and the 1940s. The essential difference between film noir and the gangster and the horror film is film noir's desire to depict more realistic stories, or at least stories that more precisely reflect and show something other than the fantastic and spectacular. The gangster film with its "dominant themes: the American dream of success through crime . . . suggested the noir theme of a fated doom" (Gehring 68). This observation and the low-key lighting, in which also the gangster films were lit, are components that make film noir, according to the visual style and theme, noir. Furthermore, the noir expressionistic visual style can be traced back to American horror films which "create[d] environments full of menace and dread" (Gehring 69).

However, nothing stands still and thus "technicolor, television, the collapse of the Studios and with them the Production Code, the Cold War, its spies and agents, and primarily the rise of a new audience, the Baby Boomers, which we call the 1960s, all put

an end to the [classic film noir] period" (Park 134). Nevertheless, the noir style persisted—in the late 1960s "in America, then, what critics have called 'neo-noir' emerged . . . as a result of global transfers of culture, as well as the flowering of an American culture of cinephilia fostered by film cults and the nascent institutionalization of academic film studies,[56] critics and filmmakers began to agree that film noir actually existed, and could now be made 'new'" (Fay and Nieland 133).

3.1.1 Gender in "Classic" Film Noir

> CORA. Listen to me, Frank. I'm not what you think I am. I want to keep this place and work hard and be something, that's all. But you can't do it without love, at least a woman can't. I've made a big mistake in my life and I've got to be this way just once to fix it.
>
> FRANK. But they'd hang you for a thing like that.
>
> CORA. Oh, but not if we do it right and you're smart Frank. You'll think of a way. Plenty of men have.
>
> —*Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946)

Film noir is distinguished not only by its dark, bleak, fatalistic visual style and urban setting of doomed noir world, but also by the interaction between two of its essential characters—the seedy male protagonist trying to unravel a kind of a sinister rebus or running away from something, and the femme fatale who entices the male towards his doom or redemption. This symbolic clash of the two characters is positioned

[56] "in 1968, the first English-language text to use term 'film noir' was published, Charles Higham's *Hollywood in the 1940s*; and a few years later two of the most influential attempts to define film noir were written, Raymond Durgnat's essay 'Paint It Black: The Family Tree of the Film Noir' (1970) and Paul Schrader's 'Notes on Film Noir' (1972)" (Fay and Nieland 131).

within the dramatic core of film noir and "the essential question is not to know who committed the crime, but what the protagonist does. What matters is the enigmatic psychological relationship between the detective and the criminal—at once enemy and friend" (Nino Frank qtd. in Tuska 150). The gender dynamics presented in film noir led theorists and critics to consider how these representations of gender are linked to historically changing social relations, while the rise of feminist film theory in the 1970s galvanized such studies.

The prevailing argument which strives to explain the noir's gender relations and thus the recurrent pattern of femme fatale's destructive sexuality, is that the noir films reflect the radical social changes in the United States during and following World War II. Even though the war was fought overseas, the American lives were greatly altered by it—the American economy boomed and great numbers of women, for the first time, entered the job market, which significantly changed their roles in domestic and also professional sphere.[57] Women achieved a new financial and social independence which distorted the traditional gender roles and also imperiled the structure of the American nuclear family. Therefore, film noir, some argue, offers narratives that present this "new" American woman—the fearless, independent, driven, but lethal femme fatale.

[57] United States' employment of women was inspired by the British who, after heavy bombing by Germans, were forced to make "drastic changes in their lives. Children were sent to the rural countryside or even to Canada, while their mothers went to work at manufacturing munitions and other war materiel. Men capable of military service already were in the armed forces, and women had to replace them in the factories that supplied the essentials for victory. This was no longer a matter of choice: led by Prime Minister Winston Churchill and King George VI, the government drafted women to fill labor needs in the most efficient way. As with men, exemptions were possible for personal health or family reasons, but unless they already were in some essential employment category or had joined the military, young British women could expect to be assigned to a compulsory job" (Weatherford 29). And American women were eager to cover the war jobs shortage—"an amazing 91 percent of the potential draftees agreed that the government should draft persons to fill war jobs" (Weatherford 30).

During the war, female roles had changed dramatically: women were called on to serve[58] as defense workers, soldiers, homemakers, hostesses, and entertainers for the United Service Organizations (USO), but also as sexually alluring morale builders. This was their patriotic duty—"Women moved into 'male' jobs, wore pants in public, frequented places of commercial entertainment unaccompanied by men, and challenged in a variety of ways both gender relations and standards of sexual morality" (Hegarty 112). Moreover, in veiled terms, the government urged women to become "sexually supportive" of the military in public and private entertainment. A wartime woman had to

> construct herself in the prescribed manner in order to provide servicemen with both motivation and morale. In a sense, her body would repay him for risking his life in her defense. Striving to do her "patriotic" duty, she became, instead, a "suspicious" individual, a potential enemy on the home front. (Hegarty 117)

These women were advised to be openly and sexually attractive, to capture the male gaze, but at the same time they were being punished for it.

After the war, American ex-servicemen afflicted by the atrocities of military action returned home to their girlfriends, wives, and families. Upon their return, they were frequently confronted with women whom they hardly recognized. These wives were no longer the dependent women of pre-war times, for they had proved to themselves that they could do a man's job, and do it well. Ironically, the same media that pushed them into the workforce during the war effort were the ones now stressing that a woman's

[58] "'Rosie the Riveter' became a national heroine, gracing magazine covers and ads that emphasized women's civic and patriotic duty to work in defense industry in no way undermined their traditional femininity. In Seattle, Washington, Boeing Aircraft placed large ads urging women to come to work. They displayed 'pretty girls in smart slack outfits showing how easy it is to work on a wiring board'" (Evans 222).

rightful place was at home or back in sex-type occupations like clerical and social service work. Women who strived to maintain their newly achieved independence, self-confidence, and control of their sexuality were being regarded as threats to the male psyche and masculinity. The 1940s film noir, into a degree, reflects this change and transforms these resisting women into scheming, deadly femmes fatales: "women who in real life were strengthened by their wartime experience . . . appear in films as malevolent temptresses, their power confined almost entirely to a sexual realm, their strength achieved only at the expense of men . . . woefully neurotic men and fire-breathing dragon ladies is thus a nightmarish distortion of contemporary realities" (Hirsch 20).

The noir stereotype of the femme fatale presents this female character, visually, in explicitly sexual "iconography"—she is exceptionally beautiful, frequently wearing revealing tight dresses, handy with guns, lurking from the cigarette smoke. The femme fatale visually dominates the noir screen, however, her free movement is ultimately halted. She is either imprisoned (e.g. *The Maltese Falcon* 1941), more often, killed (e.g. *Murder, My Sweet* 1944) or, rarely, "rectified" by a strong moral male lover (e.g. *The Big Sleep* 1946)—"the ideological operation of the myth (the absolute necessity of controlling the strong, sexual woman) is thus achieved by first demonstrating her dangerous power and its frightening results, then destroying it" (Place 56). Therefore, by punishing her nontraditional behavior, film noir provides an affirmation of the dominant social order and conventions, and a warning against disturbing this order. Despite the way film noir repeatedly emphasizes the ultimate punishment or subjugation of the noir fallen women, "it is not their inevitable demise we remember but rather their strong, dangerous, and above all exciting sexuality . . . [T]he final 'lesson' of the myth often fades into the

background and we retain the image of the erotic, strong, unrepressed (if destructive) woman" (Place 48).[59]

Femmes fatales use sex for pleasure or as a powerful weapon to manipulate men, not as a socially acceptable way of procreation within the bounds of matrimony; therefore, men are attracted to, but at the same time terrified by, women's open sexuality. The femme fatale stays true to herself; she would rather die than be captured or converted/tamed by any man. She is devoted to her cause until her last breath. Her destructive struggle to be independent is in reality a response to the restrictions that men placed on women. These noir fatal women are not ruthless perpetrators who relentlessly try to elevate themselves in social and financial terms, but rather persistent fighters against women's victimization by patriarchal society.

Moreover, the deadly and independent woman is in the noir films constructed not only as a threat to masculinity, but also, with her refusal to take the role of a wife and a mother, as a destructive threat to the American family. During the war, women, "the heart of home" (Oswald Garrison Villard qtd. in Weatherford 30), mothers, were by the government pushed to leave, temporarily, home and assume what had been at that time a male role in society—a working provider. The disagreement with mothers entering an industrial working sphere was widespread and many were convinced that it will destroy the structure of family and thus the dominant system of patriarchy. Therefore, "government and media propaganda consistently reassured Americans that while women would do their civic duty for the duration, they would certainly return to their traditional roles once the emergence was over" (Evans 225–6). However, women who were accustomed to independence and self-sufficiency when, once again, instructed to be

[59] For example, in *Out of the Past* (1947) even though Kathie Moffat, the femme fatale, is killed at the end of the film she is in control of her fate—her death seems suicidal, she shots Jeff while he is driving the car and then she is killed by the police when trying to escape, she decides to die rather than be imprisoned. Her independence, determination and defiance is much more memorable than her ultimate demise.

submissive, to adjust their own needs and desires to the returning men, protested. Women who tried to remain in the workplace became a threat. Agnes E. Meyer in her article "Women Aren't Men" from 1950 states that "women have many careers but only one vocation—motherhood. . . . It is for woman as mother, actual or vicarious, to restore emotional security in our insecure world. . . . Modern woman has to recapture the wisdom that just being a woman is her central task her greatest honor" (489). Moreover, Meyer addresses many damaging consequences to the American family if the female population decides to pursue a career outside the home. The article expresses the dominant ideology of the post-war America, the only duty for women was to be good wives and mothers, the moral center of the family—"God protect us all from the efficient, go-getter businesswoman whose feminine instincts have been completely sterilized" (490). Therefore, the noir femmes fatales, who dauntlessly pursue their personal goals, become the destroyers of the family life and thus are held accountable and ultimately punished for their transgression.

On the other hand, female characters presented within the confines of the home, devoted, caring and attending to domestic duties are in film noir constructed as the representatives of the ideal, normalcy, security and safety, but at the same time dullness and asexuality.[60] These female characters are positioned in a stark contrast to the femme fatale. This nurturing woman, the redeemer, as Janey Place titles her, "offers the possibility of integration for the alienated, lost man into the stable world of secure values, roles and identities. She gives love, understanding (or at least forgiveness), asks very little in return (just that he come back to her) and is generally visually passive and static" (60). Even though this woman, the redeemer, functions as a reminder of the traditional, the

[60] e.g. in *Murder, My Sweet* (1944) the devoted daughter, Ann Grayle, is at the film's finale rewarded for her traditional domestic femininity—relationship with the honorable detective. In *Out of the Past* (1947) Ann Miller is Jeff Bailey's girlfriend who is not aware of his shady past, she is a woman who represents the safe preferred relationship, a bright future for the noir man.

preferred role within a family, film noir portrays family as "strange, perverse, or altogether absent" (Fay and Nieland 150). Sylvia Harvey in her article "Woman's Place: The Absent Family of Film Noir" (first published in 1980) addresses the shortage of happy family appearances in noir films, the lack of presentation of American family values. To Harvey, film noir's illustration of the distortion of the family's safe structure, traditionally male-dominated, mirrors the complicated changes in traditional gender roles—"it is the strange and compelling absence of 'normal' family relations in these films that hints at important shifts in the position of women in American society." Moreover, she explains that "the kinds of tension characteristic of the portrayal of the family in these films suggest the beginnings of an attack on the dominant social values normally expressed through the representation of the family." The family in noir films becomes "an institution of loveless feminine oppression. Husbands are crippled, impotent, and angry. Wives are either the desexualized mothers or plotting adulterers"[61] (Fay and Nieland 150). The absence of normal family relations becomes one of the characteristic features of film noir.

The noir portrayal of a dysfunctional family and the fatality of a heterosexual intimate relationships, forces the male noir heroes to seek companionship elsewhere—"the men seem much more at ease in the company of other men: heterosexuality becomes overwhelmingly associated with threat" (Krutnik 63). Therefore, this frequently homoeroticised male–male relationship and also noir portrayal of queer characters contribute to the undermining of the traditional heterosexual family and relationship norms. As the femme fatale with her defiance of the domesticity, queers are in noir perceived as deviating from the prescribed roles and norms—"queer has something to do with not being properly masculine or feminine" (Dyer 97). Film noir codes queer

[61] Wives in noir films, e.g. *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946), *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), *Double Indemnity* (1944), etc. are murderous women who want to escape from loveless relationships.

characters as exotic (frequently foreigners), evil, tied to crime,[62] the coding is homophobic as in the case of the femme fatale. The explicit representation of homosexual characters was forbidden in Hollywood by the Production Code; therefore queer characters were identified by particular stereotypes: "The males are fastidiously and just a little over-elaborately dressed, coiffed, manicured and perfumed, their speech is over-refined and their wit bitchy, and they love art, antiques, jewellery and cuisine . . . females are large, big boned or fat, have cropped or tightly drawn back hair, wear shapeless or else highly tailored clothes and generally work for a living" (Dyer 96). The inclusion of homosexuality contributed to the overall atmosphere of noir uncertainty and confusion which is a response to gender politics of the postwar America. Moreover, noir queer characters also function as an enhancement of the noir hero's maleness and at the same time, as the femme fatale, a threat to his normative masculinity. The effeminate male homosexual is physically weak and an overly emotional coward—he is in terms of character and visual aspect an antithesis to the noir male hero.[63]

In the era of the classic film noir, homosexuality was either thoroughly hidden or severely persecuted, a positive public image of homosexuality did not exist. Yet homosexuality made it to several noir films, even if in veiled representations. The atmosphere of perversity, exoticism and unknown of noir films was magnified by the employment of queer characters. One of the pivotal themes of classic noir was transgression either sexual or moral, breaking the socially acceptable norms, boundaries—queer characters are neither feminine nor masculine, the femme fatale refuses the role prescribed for her by the society and the noir hero, frequently, becomes

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[62] "noir queers are accessories to crime (*Farewell My Lovely*, Cairo in *The Maltese Falcon*), bullies (*Brute Force*), henchmen (*The Big Combo*, *The Glass Key, Kiss of Death*), murderers (*The Dark Corner*, *Laura*, *Phantom Lady*, *Rope*, *Strangers on a Train*, *The Unsuspected*) or masterminds (*The Big Heat*, Ballin in *Gilda*, Nick Varna in *The Glass Key*, Gutman in *The Maltese Falcon*)" (Dyer 108–9).

[63] Noir films that employ this dynamics (queer vs. normative masculine) are predominantly those that feature a noir character of tough detective–e.g. *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), *Laura* (1944), etc.

morally transgressive, fighting off his sexual desire for the femme fatale. The "trespassing" against the traditional gender roles and norms associated with them are in noir films met with a destructive end for all involved.

Sexuality, the source of evil, the possessive desire and reversal of gender roles are the driving forces of the classic film noirs of the 1940s and 1950s America. Noir's portrayal of sexuality is a fantasy, "fantasy of the woman's dangerous sexuality [which] is a feminine as well as masculine fantasy, and its pleasures lie precisely in its forbiddenness . . . [and] it is the fantasy itself that demands the punishment" (Cowie 136). Therefore, film noir should not be viewed as an exclusively masculine genre, intended for men, with a misogynistic portrayal of gender other than heterosexual masculinity. Film noir presents a violent desire, a dark side of human nature that is not exclusive to one specific gender.

3.2 NEO-NOIR: HOMAGE OR EVOLUTION?

> 'I'm a bad girl,' says Laure (Rebecca Romijn) in *Femme Fatale* [2002], 'real bad—rotten to the heart.' Laure *knows* that she's a femme fatale. In fact, she just watched *Double Indemnity* on TV and is modelling her behavior after that of the lovely but lethal Barbara Stanwyck in that film.
>
> —Douglas Keesey

"Neo-noir," "post-noir" or the "new noir," are terms used for many films that are the direct outgrowth of the "classic" noir style and themes of the 1940s and 1950s. Neo-noirs are either remakes of classic film noirs, nostalgic for cinematic past, e.g. *Farewell My Lovely* (1975), *Detour* (1992), *Postman Always Rings Twice* (1981), or films "recycling" classic noir motifs and stylistics, e.g. *Chinatown* (1974), *Against All Odds* (1984), *Kiss of Death* (1995) and *Body Heat* (1981). Neo-noir films, "in addition to being highly self-conscious of their relation to past noirs, [they] are characterized by blurred boundaries and hybrid genres, and that what is new about neo-noirs can be traced to the influence of contemporary social changes and historical events as well as the latest trends and technological advances in filmmaking" (Keesey).

The intense social atmosphere in America of the 1960s and 1970s created a fertile climate for the emergence of neo-noir. The American nation of this era, as Leonard Quart and Albert Auster describe, again began to question values of American society; the Vietnam War[64] was a great source of disillusionment and the Watergate scandal created an attitude of cynicism. These events, among others, brought about a mood of hopelessness, pessimism and resignation that was so similar to the peak period of film

[64] e.g. *Taxi Driver* (1976) is about a disillusioned Vietnam veteran who is lost in the urban jungle of New York.

noir, the 1940s and 1950s (67–127).[65] Moreover, young French filmmakers overseas,[66] from 1960s, produced "a spate of stylistically experimental crime pictures and thrillers. These New Wave films were at once creative, cinephilic homages to Hollywood B films and genre pictures . . . the French showed the world how cinematic style might be renewed and made 'modern' through playful, highly self-reflexive reworking of 'low' cultural material imported from America" (Fay and Nieland 132).[67] Building on these experiments and renewals many American directors[68] created their own "self-reflexive" pictures—therefore,

> film noir tends to bridge a gap between Europe and America, between mainstream entertainment and the art cinema. Thus American film noir of the "historical" period was largely a product of ideas and talent appropriated from Europe, and neo-noir emerged during a renaissance of the European art film, when America was relatively open to imported culture. (Naremore 202–3)

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[65] "The sixties and early seventies proved to be one of the most turbulent periods in recent American history. The issue of civil rights . . . continued to command attention . . . both African-American and women's rights campaigners, both movements reflective of a more widespread social mobilization that saw the emergence of the New Left and the counterculture. There were profound economic problems, a legacy of the apparently affluent Eisenhower years during which the introduction of the credit card and the policy of hire purchase had seen consumer indebtedness rise to $196 billion by 1960. In foreign policy, the 1961 plot to overthrow Fidel Castro in Cuba resulted in the Bay of Pigs debacle, a source of acute embarrassment for the new president, John F. Kennedy. The threat of full-scale nuclear warfare with the Soviet Union was only narrowly avoided with the resolution of the Cuban missile crisis late in 1962. There were, however, three significant events that defined the era and made a lasting impression on America's self-image and popular culture: (1) the assassination of President Kennedy in Dallas on 22 November 1963; (2) the protracted U.S. involvement and ultimate defeat in the Vietnam War; and (3) the revelation of governmental corruption and the subsequent resignation of President Richard Nixon in the Watergate scandal" (Martin 44–5).
Films which employ reference to these sociopolitical events are: (a) assassination of J. F. Kennedy in, e.g. *The Parallax View* (1974), *In the Line of Fire* (1993); (b) U.S. military involvement in Vietnam in, e.g. *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), *Platoon* (1986), *The Deer Hunter* (1978); and (c) espionage, paranoia, e.g. *Klute* (1971), *Chinatown* (1974), *All the President's Men* (1974), *Blade Runner* (1982) (Martin 45–50).

[66] e.g. Jean-Luc Godard, Francois Truffaut, Claude Chabrol, Jacques Tourneur, Rainer Fassbinder, etc.

[67] Films like *Breathless* (1960), *Shoot the Piano Player* (1960), etc.

[68] e.g. Francis Ford Coppola, Peter Bogdanovich, Martin Scorsese, Brian De Palma, etc.

According to Ronald Schwartz the neo-noir starts with Alfred Hitchcock's seminal film *Psycho* (1960), others feel that "either *Harper* (1966) or *Chinatown* (1974) was the first signpost for the emergence of the new noir" (xii), and ever since modern filmmaking makes use of classic film noir models and moods. Neo-noir borrows what it can from classic film noir, from hard-boiled stories, protagonists, mood to themes; and it leaves behind screenwriting regulated by the Production Code.[69] Therefore "from the 1960s on, directors could tell their stories more openly. There was a greater use of salty language and more nudity on screen" (Schwartz 168).

Neo-noir is, when compared to classic film noir, more violent, sexually distinctive, and full of vulgar language and loud explosions. However, neo-noir manages to be more direct in depicting the realities of the modern times when compared to classic film noir where the viewer had to use imagination to find out for example what exactly was happening between a man and a woman on the screen—"sex what the new cycle was selling" (Leitch *Crime Films* 146), commonly revealing a female naked body, subsequently departing its antecedent towards an erotic thriller. This departure is visible in neo-noir films like *Body Heat* (1981), *Against All Odds* (1984), *I, the Jury* (1982) and also *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975) where nudity is quite pervasive.

The most visible difference between neo-noir and classic film noir, according to Jason Holt is the use of color—the color creates a more real relationship to the real world, the classic black-and-white noir world is visually more stylized, more abstract. Furthermore, the use of voice-over narration had been gradually eliminated and as already mentioned sex is more explicit, violence more expressive and extreme. The neo-noir films became more "slick" and more money is involved in the deceit. In addition to that, neo-

[69] "In 1966, Jack Valenti was appointed head of Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), and in November 1968 he instituted MPAA Rating System through which films were designated 'G' for general audiences, 'M' for mature audiences, 'R' for audiences over the age of 17 only, and 'X' for adults only" (Hanson 138).

noir is more realistic than classic film noir in its ending—in the neo-noir the guilty person often does escape justice (37–8). This can be seen for example in *Body Heat* (1981) or *Against All Odds* (1984)—when Jessie, the film's femme fatale, does not get a condign punishment for shooting Hank and Jake.

Neo-noir films since the late sixties tend to portray America, a noir world, "as a place of corporate crime, patriarchal corruption, masculine dysfunctionality, and urban violence; the central characters are embroiled in a crisis of identity that will never be resolved; and the sanctified institution of the nuclear family is distorted beyond recognition: mothers are either absent or totally corrupt, fathers are rendered impotent, and children have dropped out of society, seeking solace in counterculture" (Martin 52). The economically and militarily strong post-World War II America became by the end of the seventies only a nostalgic reflection.

Jerry C. Kurtner's statement that "[t]here is no 'neo-noir', there is no 'proto-noir,' there is only Noir," implies how film noir, in the essence, should be assessed. Film noir is a mood, a style, a movement linked to a specific atmosphere, feelings evoked in the audience. Despite its black-and-white visual style the world and characters that it represents are not black-and-white, they are people who are trapped in unwanted situations, striving against fate, full of moral ambiguity and uncertainty. Noir, classic or new, embodies this atmosphere of despair and dread because it is always a part of our world and it does not matter in which time period, the basic human problems are the same. Noir is used as an appropriate instrument for social critique, it exposes the violence, social injustice and greed that still corrode American society.

3.2.1 Gender in "Neo" Film Noir

NED. You can stand here with me, but you must agree not to speak of the heat.

MATTY. I'm a married woman.

NED. Meaning what?

MATTY. Meaning I'm not looking for company.

NED. Should've said, "a happily married woman."

MATTY. That's my business.

NED. What?

MATTY. How happy I am.

NED. And how happy is that?

MATTY. You're not too smart, are you? I like that in a man.

NED. What else do you like? Lazy? Ugly? Horny? I've got them all.

MATTY. You don't look lazy.

—*Body Heat* (1981)

Neo-noirs' gender dynamics is influenced, as in the case of classic film noirs, by great societal changes, the social realities of contemporary America. The Civil Rights and Women's Movement of the 1960s and 1970s had the main impact on gender representation in neo-noir films. The male opposition towards women's rights crusaders have strengthen the "disunity" of the audience towards female characters, predominantly towards the femme fatale.

As in the classical film noir the femme fatale challenges the patriarchal status quo and simultaneously threatens the male with her image of a castrating predator, openly exploiting her sexuality to her advantage, it is her weapon of choice. Neo-noir women are

more liberated in a workplace and also in terms of sexual openness than those portrayed in classic noirs and, moreover, "where the classic femme fatale suffers for her crimes, her revamped [neo-noir] counterpart prospers"[70] (Holt 27). The neo-femme fatale may escape the punishment and she refuses containment by a male.[71] They are strong, more individualistic, violent and corrupt women whose, in contrast to classic femmes fatales, "'evil' is really the result of the having been abused, that she is actually more victim than villain" (Keesey).[72] Labeling the femme fatale in neo-noirs as the victim reveals the systematic oppression of the females who are striving against it—her motives are openly vocalized on screen. Furthermore, the fatal femininity of neo-noirs becomes central, the femme fatale is the main protagonist—e.g. *Basic Instinct* (1992).

Neo-noir also introduces a completely new character of a female investigator, working within the legal and/or criminal system, navigating through a man's world. These films focus on "women, work and crime in diverse ways. They include women protagonists in the police procedural/cop film . . . the legal thriller . . . and occasionally women drawn into temporary investigative roles" (Hanson 142). This female figure was first developed on the pages of a crime fiction by female writers like Sue Grafton, Marcia Muller and Sara Paretsky—e.g. films *Impulse* (1984), *V.I. Warshawski* (1991) (based on character created by Sara Paretsky), *Blue Steel* (1990), or *Silence of the Lambs* (1991), etc. Female fighters against crime are smart, self-sufficient, tough but still retain their femininity. The neo-noir female characters operating in a criminal and legal system, a male centered world "must think actively, and act intellectually to survive both personally and professionally" (Hanson 155).

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[70] e.g. Catherine in *Basic Instinct* (1992), Violet in *Bound* (1996).
[71] e.g. *Body Heat* (1981), *The Last Seduction* (1994), *The Hot Spot* (1990).
[72] e.g. women in *Blade Runner* (1982) are all sexualized, used by men. In *Devil in a Blue Dress* (1995) Daphne Monet was molested by her father. Lynn Bracken in *L.A. Confidential* (1997) is a high class call girl.

On the other hand, the male investigator of the classis noir, underwent a transformation to become a morally compromised male who may die at the end of a neo-noir film. The neo-noirs develop a "motif of masculinity in crisis. They demonstrate how patriarchy is undermined by its own pervasive corruption (as in *Blood Simple* and *No Way Out*), its inadequacies and anxieties (as in *After Hours* and *Kill Me Again*), and its paranoia (as in *Raging Bull* and *Sea of Love*). In such films the fragmentation of masculinity, the dissolution of a male sense of identity, is shown to be a universal phenomenon" (Martin 96). The neo-detective, in contrast to classic noir detective, is "an ineffective hero worn out by his attempt to fight the injustices and corruption of society (Jake Gittes in *Chinatown*), or misguided in his desire to clean up the streets (Travis Bickle in *Taxi Driver*), or jaded and unsurprised to discover his friend had betrayed him (Philip Marlowe in *The Long Goodbye*)" (Gates *Detecting Men* 96). The women's empowerment, initiated by the second-wave feminism and the shifts in American social structures, are perceived as the main causes of the male crisis—the masculine dominance was challenged by women's advancement into higher corporate and professional positions. Also a redefinition of the ideal masculinity, demanded by feminism, contributed to the overall crisis of masculinity—"Traditional notions of masculinity such as aggression and independence came to be seen as outdated, and those previously regarded as effeminate came to be seen as more positive, such as romantic and emotional masculinity" (Gates *Detecting Men* 100).

The neo-noirs are marked by the presence of the female professional within criminal/legal system who are exceptional female characters, "in the sense of being (still) unusual in a male world and male space, and exceptional in the qualities, attributes and skills that permit them to be there" (Hanson 165). However, because of the changing gender dynamics rooted in Women's Movements and strengthening of the influence of

the second-wave feminism, independent and strong female characters are in neo-noirs frequently critiqued for their transgression, desire for equality in professional world, by being portrayed as castrators. Simultaneously, neo-noirs "offered a critique of the more sensitive kind of masculinity demanded by feminism at a time when the neo-noir hero represented an inability to reconcile this new softer image of masculinity with what were seen as 'real' men—the more traditional notions of heroic masculinity" (Gates *Detecting Men* 102). As in the classic noir film, neo-noirs portray the "danger" of transgression against the established gender roles for both, men and women.

4 WRITTEN WORDS INTO MOVING PICTURES

> If chess has any relationship to film-making, it would be in the way it helps you develop patience and discipline in choosing between alternatives at a time when an impulsive decision seems very attractive.
>
> —Stanley Kubrick

Cinema was born during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, at the peak of social and industrial revolutions and quickly became a means of entertainment for the masses; a kind of affordable and accessible leisure activity. But "by 1908 the cinema had risen from the status of a risky commercial venture to that of a permanent and full-scale, if not yet a major and respectable, industry" (Cook 32). In the United States, by the 1930s the motion picture industry saw its "boom" when "ninety million Americans were going to the movies at least once a week, and many families, especially in the larger cities, virtually lived at the movies, watching the same film over and over again . . . to avoid the cold or to escape the confines of their homes" (Dixon and Foster 90). Cinema, worldwide, quickly became significantly strong in the field of commerce and as a new craft also a very powerful medium that has affected and mirrored the social culture ever since.

"[C]inematic adaptation is as old as cinema itself" (Leitch *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents* 22)—the advent of cinema also led to the linkage between film and literature, based on the view that films are derived from scripts which most frequently take for the model literature. The symbiotic relationship between classical literature and its film adaptations made in Hollywood became especially significant during the early 1930s when studios produced a number of literary adaptations of canonical literature, i.e.

novels of Dickens or Tolstoy—the "prestige productions."[73] "The prestige picture was far and away the most popular production trend of the decade [1934–1939]" (Balio 179) and was a very astute marketing tool—these adaptations "had a distinct advantage in accessing popular taste disguised as high art" (DeBona 23). These early adaptations were produced for their "snob value," simply to attract a "better-quality" audience to movie theatres and at the same time assuring them that they are viewing the classics, the high-brow art. Adaptations brought together the "intellectual" literary classics and the form of mass culture, the cinema. Moreover, they managed to popularize the literary classics, the novels frequently got re-printed again—"since it has been shown that the sale of a book always increases after it has been adapted for screen. And the original work can only profit from such exposure" (Bazin 22). However, in the 1940s, with the outbreak of the World War II, Hollywood turned away from the already appraised canonical literature to extracanonical material with more realistic setting and became interested in American popular fiction—"the years that encompassed films noir and other films of the 1940s and 1950s were far from those that prized prestige texts" (DeBona 28).[74]

However, from 1930 to 1968 the Motion Picture Production Code was in force, as the moral censorship in the cinema industry, which markedly influenced and affected the cinematic adaptations of that era. The Production Code stipulated what should and what could not be shown on screen, therefore its force and regulations contributed to how the

[73] "literary adaptations like *Little Women* (George Cukor, 1933), *Of Human Bondage* (John Cromwell, 1934), and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (William Dieterle, 1938)" (Cook 32).

[74] "Hollywood stepped up its war related production in 1941, including features with clear interventionist and 'preparedness' themes. . . . The studios readily adapted to changing social conditions, developing two government-mandated genres, the combat film and home-front melodrama, and a new crop of wartime stars notably Bob Hope, Betty Grable, Greer Garson, Abbott and Costello, and Humphrey Bogart. Traditional genres (particularly the musical) were converted to the war effort, while Hollywood's long-standing bias for 'love stories' was adjusted to favour couples who separated at film's end to perform their respective patriotic duties. There were significant stylistic adjustments during the war as well. Hollywood's war-related features, particularly the combat film, employed quasi-documentary techniques which were altogether distinctive for American cinema. And in something of a stylistic and thematic counter to the realism and enforced optimism of the war films, Hollywood also cultivated a darker and more 'anti-social' vision in urban crime films and 'female Gothic' melodramas steeped in a style which post-war critics would term film noir" (Schatz 231–4).

adaptations of literary texts were viewed—they were simply limited, regulated and "thus, moral control has continually altered filmic content" (Bluestone 36). American audience from the 1930s to the late 1950s, when the force of the Production Code weakened, was "misinformed" about the social realities, creating myths that are questionable—the good always wins and is rewarded at the end, evil is always punished, no marital problems exist and everyone will live happily ever after. The realities of the books that the films were based on were not shown to the public.

Filmmakers have consistently looked for their inspiration in literature, especially novels of different degrees of cultural significance. Thus the relationship between film and literature/novels from this point of view can be called a dependent one. This reproducibility from page to screen has been widespread and very "natural." On the other hand, when we consider film to be a "dependent one" and a "younger" medium in comparison to literature, it has reached admirable success; as Brian McFarlane notes, "film has displaced the novel as the twentieth century's most popular narrative form" (vii).

Since the cinema is, predominantly, a visually based medium, does it mean that drama, also primarily a visual medium in terms of perception, could be called equal to film and fiction novel being only a mere inspiration for the adaptation? The answer to this question is given by Gene D. Phillips who "point[s] out that cinema has more in common with fiction than with any other form of literature. One might be tempted to suppose that film is closer to drama than to fiction, since a play—like a motion picture—is acted out before an audience. But the similarity really ends there" (Phillips *Conrad and Cinema* 3).

There are also many other features that film and literature have in common and the process of adaptation is the tool that bridges these two. Remakes can be also seen as

means of connection between film and literature but from a more "distant" perspective, as it will be demonstrated in the following subchapters.

4.1 FILM ADAPTATIONS

> the author of the work that is filmed is the "forgotten man" in the making of a movie, and pictures himself as a bewildered figure who materializes at the studio to watch the rough cut of a film drawn from his writings, clearing his throat nervously at hearing lines that are not his, but for which he will probably bear the critics' blame. The excitement of his original creation, he finds, has been lost in the many rewritings of the screenplay; and now he is the only one of the spectators who fondly remembers how it all began in his typewriter.
>
> —Graham Greene (qtd. in Phillips *Conrad and Cinema* 11)

A film adaptation of a literary text is fundamentally an interpretation of the original text using a different medium. The fact that the film adaptation may be based on everything from musicals, comic books, novels of classic literature to films, should not be omitted. Furthermore, one should notice that the process of adaptation is not as simple and perspicuous as it may appear. However, it seems that the art of adaptation is very popular and secure method of creating films for filmmakers, as it is demonstrated by numerous film adaptations that are filling up movie theatres and television even today.

As already mentioned above, when we consider the links between film and literature it is difficult to think beyond film adaptations, because they are the most visible bond between these two media. Notwithstanding the interrelationship of these two media, the process of adaptation of an original narrative into the newer media is filled with

tension and so the translation of the novel from page to screen has appeared to be a very complicated and intricate process. These complications are visible in contradictory points of view on the process of adaptation by involved theorists and critics. McFarlane bemoans this feebleness of the adaptation studies—"In view of the nearly sixty years of writing about the adaptation of novels into film . . . it is depressing to find at what a limited, tentative stage the discourse has remained" (194).

Even though some may consider film adaptations a cheap literary sellout and film, when compared to the literary work, a mass medium that lacks "depth," the inclination to transferring a book/novel into a film is quite frequent. Nevertheless, here I argue, the process of transferring is not a by-product of the original. Unfortunately, the view of the film adaptation "feeding" on novel and being only a replica of the original is still widespread. This statement is supported by Robert Stam who notes that:

> Much of the discussion of film adaptation quietly reinscribes the axiomatic superiority of literary art to film, an assumption derived from a number of superimposed prejudices: *seniority*, the assumption that older arts are necessarily better arts; *iconophobia*, the culturally rooted prejudice . . . that visual arts are necessarily inferior to the verbal arts; and *logophilia*, the converse valorization, characteristic of the "religion of the book," of the "sacred word" of holy texts. ("Beyond Fidelity" 58)

Therefore, based on Stam's observation, James Naremore concludes that film adaptations are traditionally regarded as "belated, middlebrow, or culturally inferior" (Hutcheon 2).

Why are directors then still taking literary works as their ground for films? Is the film adaptation, diminished to a secondary product of the original work, doomed to failure even before its release? There are several reasons, as comfort and security, but I would argue that also the filmmaker's appreciation of the material and their determination to convert their reading of the text to screen has a share in the decision to adapt a literary text. When the literary work is a best-seller and had already gained popularity, respectability and is lucrative, it is easier to transform it into a different medium, the film, and wait for probable success to which the pre-sold title also contributes. For the film industry it is likewise safer to buy rights from the author of the literary work than develop a new material which may or may not be successful. On the other hand, many directors choose respected literary classics to adapt but not for the reason of potential success but as a "challenge" because critics and also viewers tend to be more critical concerning the classics. Those who choose the "unknown," extracanonical, popular fiction as their base for a film adaptation are also trying to provide their own view of the source, telling the story from a different point of view, creating a subjective interpretation of the original text.

Why are film adaptations so popular regardless of the incessant criticism and comparison with the original? Because, as McFarlane points out, "the audiences, whatever their complaints about this or that violation of the original, have continued to want to see what the books 'look like.' Constantly creating their own mental images of the world of a novel and its people, they are interested in comparing their images with those created by the film-maker" (7).

Interesting is also that "more than three fourths of the awards for 'best picture' have gone to adaptations" (Beja qtd. in McFarlane 8) since the establishment of the Academy Awards in 1927–1928. From Beja's observation, it may be concluded that

adaptations tend to be generally popular and are mostly the biggest box-office successes.[75]

There are many critical analyses on the topic of film adaptations of literary works that were written in the second half of the 20th century and numerous theorists of cinematic adaptations have commented upon the possibilities and difficulties in the transference of the narrative of the book to a filmic system. These works differ in individual approaches to the theory of adaptation but what they have in common is a section of case-studies—analysis of particular film adaptations along the original.

George Bluestone is the pioneer and major commentator on the relationship between literature and film with his book *Novels into Film* (1957). He focuses on the difference between the literature and film rather than on the similarities; he highlights the different origins, different modes of production and censorship requirements of these two media. His view is quite simplistic; he states that these two media are completely distinct one from another, and thus the adaptations, "the end products of novel and film represent different aesthetic genera, as different from each other as ballet is from architecture" (5). Bluestone sees novels as socially more significant than films which were created only for profit; the filmmakers are surrendering that literary text to bankrupt, money-making machine—Hollywood. Bluestone's preference of the "classical medium," derogation of the "new medium" and his fixation on the "fidelity" of the adaptation to the adapted reflects the prevalent attitudes towards film in the United States when he wrote this book, in the 1950s.

Like Bluestone's, the first works on adaptation theory dealt with the evaluation of the film adaptation and the adapted literary work on the basis of "true fidelity" of the film

[75] Few examples: adaptations of novels—*Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit*, *Harry Potter*, *The Hunger Games*, etc., or comic books—*The Avengers*, *Batman, Superman*, *Ant-Man*, etc.

adaptation towards the source, that included the preservation of thr book's story line and its mood/essence. Bluestone's approach to adaptations is based on the fact that he believes that the adapters are simply trying to reproduce the literary text, transform it into a new medium. Therefore, the "fidelity approach" basically concludes that film adaptation cannot measure itself to the literary original, because "the very principle of cinematic adaptation . . . is to simplify and condense a work from which it basically wishes to retain only the main characters and situations" (Bazin 25). Hence, the audience is limited to what is presented to them on the screen while the book gives the reader a choice, a control over it. Bluestone declares that interpretation of mental states, imagination "cannot be as adequately represented by film as by language" (47). He suggests that films control our perception that the audience is already given an interpretation and has to accept it, while novels are encouraging imagination; the readers are directing their own film version of the novel in their minds.

On the other hand, James Monaco's perception is not black-and-white and negativistic towards films as is Bluestone's, he proposes a different perspective:

> Novels are told by the author. We see and hear only what he wants us to see and hear. Films are more or less told by their authors, too, but we see and hear a great deal more than a director necessarily intends. It would be an absurd task for a novelist to try to describe a scene in as much detail as it is conveyed in cinema. More important, whatever the novelist describes is filtered through his language, his prejudices, and his point of view. With film we have a certain amount of freedom to choose, to select one detail rather than another. (45)

These contrasting views, Bluestone's and Monaco's approaches, suggest that the "fidelity approach" is flawed. Therefore, in the last two decades many critics in the field of theory of adaptation[76] started to question the "fidelity approach" and came to the conclusion that it is insufficient and contentious. On the other hand, "some [writers on adaptation] have claimed not to embrace it, they still regard it as a viable choice for the film-maker and a criterion for the critic" (McFarlane 9). There will always be a comparison between the original and the adaptation in the terms of major plot points, the characters and the "spirit" of the original.

Furthermore, from a subjective point of view, some adaptations may fail to "realize" what was in the book most appreciated and also miss some salient features of their sources, therefore it should be pointed out that the film represents the filmmaker's subjective understanding of the literary source. Thus the image in the film and the verbal description of a particular image in the book should not be considered as self-explanatory because the vision of viewer and the image may collide.

Nonetheless, there will always be someone who will not be fully satisfied because films offer us images that were already constructed by someone else and viewers of a film adaptation who are familiar with the literary work that is being adapted have created their own images based on what they have already read. According to Brian McFarlane "fidelity approach" or the fidelity criticism of film adaptations

> depends on a notion of the text as having and rendering up to the (intelligent) reader a single, correct "meaning" which the filmmaker has either adhered to or in some sense violated or tampered with. There will often be a distinction between being faithful to the "letter," an approach which the more sophisticated writer may

[76] e.g. Thomas Leitch, Brian McFarlane, James Naremore, Robet Stam, Linda Hutcheon, Simone Murray, etc.

> suggest is no way to ensure a "successful" adaptation, and to the "spirit" or "essence" of the work. The latter is of course very much more difficult to determine since it involves not merely a parallelism between novel and film but between two or more readings of a novel, since any given film version is able only to aim at reproducing the film-maker's reading of the original and to hope that it will coincide with that of many other readers/viewers. Since such coincidence is unlikely, the fidelity approach seems a doomed enterprise and fidelity criticism unilluminating. That is, the critic who quibbles at failures of fidelity is really saying no more than: "This reading of the original does not tally with mine in these and these ways." (8–9)

The "fidelity approach," as above pointed out by McFarlane, is in its essence very narrow because it does not take into account the complex processes of adaptation. It says that the film cannot capture the "essence/spirit," or the complete meaning of the novel and it cannot provide a psychological depth of the characters from the novel. It comments on everything that had been "lost" during the process of adaptation, it never points out what has been "gained." None of the film adaptations were made in order to usurp or equal to the literary work that had inspired it. It should be realized that evaluation of a film adaptation only on the basis of the fidelity to the original is not sufficient, the film should be also judged on its own value, as for example its position in the total canon of films made by the same director or its cultural importance. However, many who have written about adaptation in the past, either implicitly or explicitly, believed that the literary text should be translated to the screen "perfectly." Geoffrey Wagner expresses this idea when he suggests three types of transition of fiction into film:

> (a) *transposition*, in which a novel is given directly on the screen with a minimum of apparent interference; (b) *commentary*, where an original is taken and either purposely or inadvertently altered in some respect . . . when there has been a different intention on the part of the film-maker, rather than infidelity or outright violation; and (c) *analogy*, which must represent a fairly considerable departure for the sake of making another work of art. (McFarlane 10)

Wagner's categories seem highly problematic—how can filmmakers "transpose" a novel onto screen? If we followed this model, the result would be that any "complex adaptation is more or less a deformation of the original work and a mutation of the possible perfect transposition" (Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins 16); and therefore, the adaptations viewed from this point of view are doomed to negative reception, treated as "deviations" and destroyers of the perfect literary original. The "fidelity approach" promotes and prefers the identicalness of the adaptation and the adapted and assumes that it is possible. I would suggest that this sameness is impossible because filmmakers who are adapting a novel have to interpret the original work. The "exact" adaptation, based on the notion of fidelity, could be called a "copy," but this is unattainable.

Saying that one medium (literature) is better than the other (film) is a very subjective claim and "the assumption that fiction is more 'complex' than film is another way of privileging 'art' in fiction and undermines the possibility of serious study of the verbal, visual and audio registers of the film, as well as suggesting that film is incapable of metaphor or symbolism" (Whelehan 6).

The "approach of fidelity" disregards the fact that all texts are essentially intertexts—"The text feeds on and is fed into an infinitely permutating intertext, which is seen through evershifting grids of interpretation (Stam "Beyond Fidelity" 57). Therefore,

the "fidelity criterion" served as a ground for other notions that emerged from disapproval with this outdated approach. Questions about the nature of authorship in adaptations had risen and a modern critical notion of "intertextuality" appeared—within which "the issue is not whether the adapted film is faithful to its source, but rather how the choice of a specific source and how the approach to that source serve the film's ideology" (Orr qtd. in McFarlane 10). Therefore, the film adaptation "should rather be perceived as an intertextual practice, contributing to a dynamic interpretive exchange between the literary and cinematic texts, an exchange in which each text can be enriched, modified or subverted" (Shiloh).

One of several fundamental questions in adaptation theory remained for a long time "untouched" or unasked—the question of authorship. Who is the author of the adaptation, the director, the screenwriter, the author of the adapted literary text, or even the interpreting viewer? Film authorship is when the director is "playing a leading role in creating a film," while film auteurship is when the director establishes "a claim to authorship that is widely recognized" (Leitch *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents* 237). It means that auteurs are filmmakers who managed to set their imprints on a work and also "permeate" the film with their unique style even if what they are creating are adaptations—one of the most recognizable auteurs is Alfred Hitchcock,[77] who used his name as a trademark and a selling-point that promised a particular kind of film, a Hitchcock film. In film adaptations the attention should not be fixed to the text, the original, but to the director too, being the "re-author" of the text, providing new perspective, different reading of the original. The question of authorship, as "a redefined

[77] "Audiences long accustomed to Hitchcock's signature traits—his close identification with a single genre, his cameo appearances, his cherubically corpulent figure tricked out in a series of outrageous costumes for the prologues and epilogues to *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*—may well have forgotten that most of Hitchcock's films were adaptations" (Leitch *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents* 237).

notion of auteurism has become a central focus in recent writing on adaptation" (Aragay 28). It is known that films are a collaborative medium—director, screenwriter, cast and crew have an "impact," major or minor, on the film.

The "screenplay stage" has been for a long time a forgotten point in the adaptation theory, not enough attention has been given to this stage of transition. I assume that this "omission" may be connected to the low interest in screenplays, even if they are the connecting points between the original text and the adapted film, being the cornerstone of the films in general. Screenplays get printed, bound and sold very rarely, and "other reasons for disregarding the screenplay in adaptation study include the multiple revisions a script undergoes during development (at times by different hands), Hollywood's traditional low regard for the screenwriter generally, and a resistance to any sort of transposition of esteemed canonic literature (the 'hallowed word') to another medium, especially one that has been associated with mass entertainment" (Boozer 2). When we look at case studies presented in works devoted to the theory of film adaptations, discussions of screenplays almost never appear, the subjects of analysis are only the original work and the film based on it. These studies have "often shown an indifference to the evolving intentions of producers, writers, and directors and their shifting levels of input and authority" (Boozer 3). Therefore, in this thesis cinematic adaptations are viewed as collaborations, not a production of one single person, that provide different "reading," interpretation of the source text they are based on while being affected by historical, societal, economic, and technical contexts and constraints of the period they were produced in—"adaptation studies must adopt richer notion of intertextuality in which interpretive roles of writers, directors, screenwriters, producers . . . play a more significant part" (Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins 19).

Moreover, the process of film adaptation can be compared to the translation of the original text into another language. Metaphorically, the novel is "translated" into a different, new "language"—visual and aural. Also the Translation Studies try to maintain the "fidelity" to the original and thus are trying to preserve the "essence" of the original text but cannot avoid some changes and elements being "lost in translation." The translator and a director of a film adaptation are a reader, interpreter and also a re-creator at the same time. Both translation and adaptation are the process of transposing a text, rearranging it in order for it to fit the new medium.

The novel-to-film adaptation is a very complex and intricate art. There were and still are problems in categorizing adaptations because of several approaches that accompany the theory of adaptation and also a limited and broad exploration of numerous connections between the adaptation and the adapted. It also may be caused by the still frequent "near fixation" with the "fidelity approach" and preoccupation of novel's supremacy over film.

People appraise the film adaptation according to their own merits, experience. Maurice Yacowar points out that a successful film adaptation "is not one that makes no changes, but one in which the changes serve the intention[78] and thrust of the original" (Phillips *Conrad and Cinema* 152). I lean towards Yacowar's understanding of a film adaptation, focusing on explaining why these changes appeared, looking into the historical and societal forces prevalent at the time of the shooting of the film adaptation.[79] "In sum, the problem of adaptation is a false problem. No recipe, no magical formula"

[78] The intention of the film maker is the same as of the author of a novel: "My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the powers of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make to see" (Conrad qtd. in McFarlane 3).

[79] Faithfulness/fidelity is not, in my opinion, an applicable criterion when assessing film adaptations. It is definitely useful to point out the differences in storyline or characters but the need is to explain, focus on the factors that forced or inspired these changes.

(Truffaut qtd. in Stam *François Truffaut and Friends* 13). To put it bluntly, those who expect a film adaptation to be the book will be always disappointed.

4.2 FILM REMAKES

> There's always a great hue and cry when you sign onto a "remake," and that's always been sort of annoying me and freaking me out. This profession that we're in is drama. What drama has been since the beginning is, you restage plays with new casts, or a writer will take a new run at an old story.
>
> —William Monahan

The basic concept of an adaptation being "a kind of reading or rereading of the original" (Eberwein qtd. in Horton and McDougal 15) is in its essence the same as that of the remake. Remaking is a well-known and recognizable practice and is commonly used in everyday language but its status is still hard to define.

What have film remakes in common with adaptations? Can they be told apart? Thomas Leitch states that "short stories and novels are often adapted for stage or screen; ballets are sometimes recreated or rechoreographed; comic strips are occasionally revived by new artists; plays are reinterpreted by each new set of performers; but only movies are remade" ("Twice-Told Tales" 138). Based on Leitch's "definition" adaptation is viewed as a transformation of an original into a new medium and a remake is a transformation within the same medium. Both an adaptation and its remake have a mutual source they are being derived from. They bring the enjoyment for viewers who probably already have the knowledge of the common literary source, and the previous film, with different

interpretations. Remakes, as well as adaptations, are based on already evaluated sources which were positively or negatively received by the public.

Entitling a film being a remake or an adaptation can be very peculiar; the filmmaker may claim that the film is an adaptation of a novel but theorists, critics on film remaking may classify it in their works as a remake. This is an example of the film *Farewell, My Lovely* (Dick Richards, 1975) which Robert Eberwein in *Play It Again, Sam: Retakes on Remakes* (29), Ronald Schwartz in *Noir, Now and Then* (9), Jim Hoberman and Constantine Verevis in *Film Remakes* (3, 106) define as a remake but the opening credits of the film clearly state "based on the novel by Raymond Chandler." This example of *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975) demonstrates what features an adaptation and a remake share but also points out the difficulties with defining film remakes. The explanation of these different views of film *Farewell, My Lovely* may be found in Lesley Stern's point that "a chain of remakings often makes the more recent film version by default a remake, and particularly in a case in which the source is not a classic [literary] text, the reference point will be the earlier film" (qtd. in Verevis 82). So how do film remakes differ from film adaptations?

A remake is generally thought of as a film based on an earlier film, usually with major of minor deviations from the original plot, characters, setting, sometimes language and also genre. In the case of a remake, but not an adaptation, these deviations are acceptable because if the remake is not much different from the original film then there is no need for it to be filmed. However, even a re-release of the original film after few decades would have a different effect on audiences, since the audience is different, people have changed, were influenced by societal changes. Nevertheless, the major point of the remake is to separate itself from the original film and provide a new view; it needs to have something else to offer beyond the original film which could, for example, involve

updating for modern times. The remake "by title and/or narrative [intensifies] its indebtedness to a previous film, the remake invites the viewer to enjoy the differences that have been worked, consciously and sometimes unconsciously, between the texts" (Horton & McDougal 6). In the instance of film adaptations these variations, mentioned above, are frequently not tolerable from the side of viewers and also critics, those who still assess adaptations on the basis of "fidelity" to the original. In remakes these shifts are predominantly welcomed. This prevailing view may be demonstrated on the example of the 1998 remake/"replica" (Gus Van Sant) of Hitchcock's film *Psycho* (1960)—the remake

> does not remake Hitchcock's film in the usual Hollywood sense, in which a few plot points are saved, but much else is transformed, updated, or quickened. Van Sant's *Psycho* remakes Hitchcock virtually shot for shot and word for word. Popular and critical response to this film was almost universally negative, since there seemed to be no plausible explanation for the exercise . . . the film makes almost no attempt to update otherwise. The script is almost exactly the same; there is no more blood, and only a few extra frames of nudity. (Dillon 182)

This case of *Psycho* (1998) shows that remakes, unlike adaptations, are expected to alter or supplement, otherwise they are predestined to be seen as "depreciators" of the original films.

Another principal distinction between an adaptation and a remake is the process of transformation. An adaptation interprets the work of a different medium while a remake interprets the work of the identical medium and "thus bares its own

secondariness" (Brashinsky 163). Thomas Leitch presents a divergence from this principal distinction by demonstrating that:

> remakes differ from other adaptations to a new medium because of the triangular relationship they establish among themselves, the original film they remake, and the property on which both films are based. The nature of this triangle is most clearly indicated by the fact that the producers of a remake typically pay no adaptation fees to the makers of the original film, but rather purchase adaptation rights from the authors of the property on which that film was based, even though the remake is competing much more directly with the original film . . . than with the story or play or novel on which it is based. Although we might describe any story as parasitic on its models, remakes are parasitic on their original films in a uniquely legalistic way. ("Twice-Told Tales" 139)

By this point Leitch proposes that the remake may credit the literary source or the previous film as its base and accordingly he describes a foursome of remakes: *readaptations*—the remake tries to readapt the literary source as closely as possible, or more closely than the earlier adaptation; *update*—remake "updates" the literary source, revising or transforming its features in evident ways; *homage*—remake pays a "homage" to the earlier adaptation and here is focus on an earlier film rather than on its source; *true remake*—here the remake's reference to the predecessor is in order to update, improve it, simply to highlight the precursor's insufficiencies and present it as needless and the remake being better ("Twice-Told Tales" 142–5).

Another theorist in the field of film remaking, Michael B. Druxman, propounds three major factors that contribute to the determination to remake a film. The first is the

decision to remake an existing film on the grounds of low-risk material, already evaluated, and creating a new film as inexpensively as possible. The second factor is that the film company who already purchased the rights of the literary property could produce numerous versions of this source without any extra payments to the holder of copyright as it is in the case of the film *Robin Hood* (Allan Dwan, 1922), remade as *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (Michael Curtiz, 1938). And the third being the desire to produce a new version in order to incorporate new techniques and technologies and also present new film stars who would be the guarantee of profit (qtd. in Verevis 4–6). These factors give Druxman the countenance to propose three general types of remakes:

> *Disguised remake*: a literary property is either updated with minimal change, or retitled and disguised by new settings and original characters, but in either case the new film does not seek to draw attention to its earlier version(s).
>
> *Direct remake*: a property may undergo some alternations or even adopt a new title, but the new film and its narrative image do not hide the fact that it is based upon an earlier production.
>
> *Non-remake*: the new film goes under the same title as a familiar property but there is an entirely new plot. (qtd. in Verevis 7)

It is evident that some elements in this taxonomy do not work without overlap or exclusion. Druxman's categorization is also applicable to the theory of adaptation and thus it enables us to draw a comparison between the types of remakes and "types" of adaptations. *Direct* remakes are "those that seek to reduce the difference between themselves and their originals by sharing syntactic elements (plot structure, narrative units, character relationships, etc.) and semantic elements (specific names, settings, time

frames, etc.)" and thus can be compared to what Verevis calls "faithful adaptations" (84). In comparison, *disguised* remakes "those that might only make minor alternations to the key syntactic elements, but more substantially transfigure the semantic elements, altering character names, gender and/or race, cultural setting, temporal setting and even a genre of the original" may be, when transferred to the theory of adaptation, titled by Verevis "free adaptations" (84). And *non-remakes* which have nothing in common with the original property except the title could be considered equal to some degree to, according to Verevis, "unfaithful adaptations" (85).

Another theorist in the field of film remaking, Harvey Roy Greenberg, describes also three categories of film remakes which are grounded in Druxman's categorization. These comprise of: *the acknowledged, close remake* which has a little or no change in narration; *the acknowledged, transformed remake* where the alterations in characters, time and settings are considerable but the original film is variably recognized, and *the unacknowledged, disguised remake* with major or minor variations and the viewers are not informed about the original film (Greenberg 126).

In addition to the above mentioned classification of remakes, also other types of remakes should not be omitted, the first are the "cross-cultural" remakes with a basic principle of transformation from a film of different culture in foreign language into a new version commonly preserving the story line of the original (e.g. *Someone Like It Hot* 1959 is a remake of French film *Fanfare d'Amour* 1935). The second type of remakes are those that alter the genre of the original film but, with slight deviations, still retain plot, characters and theme of the filmic precursor.

Film critics and viewers/readers discuss adaptations in relation to their literary sources and remakes in relation to their original/earlier films and sometimes overlooking

that adaptations often lead viewers back to the literary property for a first reading and that remakes encourage viewers to seek out the original film. This is a chain of symbiotic relationship between the literature, an adaptation and a remake. And the "confrontation" that emerges from these links evokes creative and critical thinking on the part of the audience.

5 ADAPTING THE HARD-BOILED MASCULINITY AND FEMININITY

> Films are full of good things which really ought to be invented all over again. Again and again. Invented—not repeated. The good things should be found—found—in that precious spirit of the first time out, and images discovered—not referred to. Sure, everything's been done, but it's much healthier not to know about it. Hell, everything had all been done when I started.
>
> —Orson Wells (qtd. in Naremore 219)

Adaptations and remakes of Dashiell Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon* (1930); Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* (1939) and *Farewell, My Lovely* (1940); and Mickey Spillane's *I, the Jury* (1947) will be analyzed in similar fashion as the literary works of these authors presented in the second chapter of this thesis—analyzed as independent narrations focusing on the author's portrayal of masculinities and femininities. These films—i.e. *The Maltese Falcon* a.k.a *Dangerous Female* (1931); *Satan Met a Lady* (1936); *The Maltese Falcon* (1941); *The Falcon Takes Over* (1942); *Murder, My Sweet* (1944); *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975); *The Big Sleep* (1946); *The Big Sleep* (1978); *I, the Jury* (1953); *I, the Jury* (1982)—and literary analyses are acts of interpretation from a subjective point of view. Therefore, by analyzing these films, case by case, we should see how individual directors, with their film crews, interpreted Hammett's, Chandler's and Spillane's works. Furthermore, the comparisons between films cannot be avoided since analyses should pinpoint the differences in interpretations that may have been rooted in the societal changes, studios' rules and many other factors that occurred in the era of the production of the individual films. The main aim is to ascertain whether films, and which films, managed to preserve, add new dimensions, develop or simplify and schematize the

depiction of masculinities and femininities portrayed in the source novels by the American hard-boiled authors.

5.1 ADAPTING DASHIELL HAMMETT'S *THE MALTESE FALCON*

> *The Maltese Falcon* may or may not be a work of genius, but an art which is capable of it is not "by hypothesis" incapable of anything. Once a detective story can be as good as this, only the pedants will deny that it could be even better. Hammett did something else, he made the detective story fun to write, not an exhausting concatenation of insignificant clues.
>
> —Raymond Chandler "The Simple Art of Murder"

Dashiell Hammett's third novel, but the only one that introduces Samuel Spade, *The Maltese Falcon* (published in 1930), was adapted for screen soon after its debut by Roy Del Ruth in 1931 and later in 1936 by William Dieterle. Both films are the products of Warner Bros., since they bought the rights for Hammett's novel soon after its publication.[80] However, only one filmic version of Hammett's novel, also by Warner Bros., is by scholars frequently referred to as the outset of film noir—the 1941 version directed by John Huston.[81] Moreover, only Huston adopts the novel's title for his film.[82] The first screen version is titled *Dangerous Female*[83] and its other "working" titles were

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[80] "In June 1930 Warner Brothers Pictures bought the film rights to *The Maltese Falcon*, for which Hammett received 80 percent of the $8,500 paid to Alfred A. Knopf, publisher of the novel" (Gale 169).

[81] "Among the first French critics to coin 'film noir,' Nino Frank announced the death of the European detective formula in 1946 after seeing *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), *Double Indemnity* (1944), *Laura* (1944), and *Murder, My Sweet* (1944)" (Fay and Nieland 31).

[82] ". . . although the film was shot using the title of Hammett's novel, the probable release title in the summer of 1941 was *The Gent from Frisco*; it was only returned to *The Maltese Falcon* on September 8, less than a month before general release. This indicates that the studio did not presume the film's relation to Hammett's novel to be a major selling point" (Luhr *The Maltese Falcon* 7).

[83] At first it was *The Maltese Falcon* but later it "was retitled *Dangerous Female* for television release" (Youngkin 523).

All Women and *Woman of the World*, thus foregrounding the prime role of the film being assigned to the female character. The title of the second screen adaptation, *Satan Met a Lady*,[84] seems utterly unrelated to what the film is about, however it does correspond to Hammett's description of Spade on the very first page of the novel—"He looked rather pleasantly like a blond satan" (Hammett 3). And here, the resemblance to the hard-boiled novel ends, the film transforms it into a grotesque attempt at a comedy—"incoherent, unruly, directionless mess" (Stageland 160). Probably due to its hasty production, the film was shot during the month of December, 1936, as well as to its poor reviews and Bogart's later immortal portrayal of Spade in the 1941 version, the film sank into oblivion. *The Maltese Falcon* was a crucial work of Hammett's career as a writer—the novel established him as one of the best American writers in the genre of crime fiction—but Houston's 1941 picturization of this novel helped to preserve Hammett's days of literary glory.

[84] The producer Hal Wallis "endured months of debate and uncertainty about the movie's title . . . An office boy named Howard Clausen got a $25 bonus when he submitted the utterly incomprehensible winning entry over a list of sixty others, including the producer's own suggestions *Beware of Imitations*, *Every Girl for Her-self*, and *Men on Her Mind*" (Stageland 160).

5.1.1 *The Maltese Falcon* a.k.a. *Dangerous Female* (1931)

> When Iva Archer rapped at the door of the swank flat, she sensed that she had not awakened Samuel Spade but had somehow interrupted him. . . . What was it? . . . He talked as he always talked: reserved, under control. But the reserve and control now seemed forced. Then Iva saw the woman in the bedroom, the woman dishabille. The woman who had thrown on a robe that Spade had perhaps tossed her. It looked bad for Spade. Iva turned to the private eye and asked one hard question: "Who is that dame wearin' my kimono?"
>
> —Leonard J. Leff and Jerold L. Simmons xiii

Even though the film *The Maltese Falcon* a.k.a. *Dangerous Female*[85] (1931) was the first of the three versions of Hammett's novel *The Maltese Falcon*, it was not the first literary work by Hammett that made it to the silver screen. The novel *Red Harvest* (1929) was loosely adapted for film *Roadhouse Nights* (1930) and a gangster film *City Streets* (1931) is based on a short story that Hammett was asked to write for Paramount.[86]

Dangerous Female was produced in the days between the outset of sound film and a strict enforcement of the Production Code[87] (from 1934)—the pre-Code era. The pre-Code Hollywood was a short period of time when the censorship was still remiss;

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[85] For the sake of clarity and to avoid confusion I shall henceforth refer to this film as *Dangerous Female*.

[86] *"City Streets* had a hybrid origin. Although originally conceived as a remake of the Clara Bow hit *Ladies of the Mob* (1928), it was based on an original story outline by hardboiled detective writer Dashiell Hammett, whose novels *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Glass Key* would be filmed several times in Hollywood and provide one of the wellsprings for film noir. Producer David O. Selznik had brought Hammett to Paramount, hoping the author would conceive something 'new and startlingly original.' . . . It was Hammett's sole screen credit for Paramount, but it marked the beginning of a long, successful career as a Hollywood screenwriter, including collaborating with Billy Wilder on the screenplay for *Double Indemnity"* (Luhrssen 53).

[87] "Between 1934 and 1968, the state and local censors, the Legion of Decency, the studios, and the PCA negotiated the sexual content of motion pictures to control audience exposure to sexual passion. Bargaining especially depended on the substantive rules of the Production Code" (Brisbin 93).

therefore, Hollywood could make the most of it. What was pushed off screen in the Production Code era was in the years between 1930 and 1934 exposed to the viewer—sexual affairs, political corruption, injustice, ignored racial barriers, vice went unpunished and the virtuous were not rewarded for their deeds. For those four years "the Code commandments were violated with impunity and inventiveness . . . Images, language, ideas, and implications are projected on screen with blunt force and unmistakable meaning. . . . The universe of pre-Code Hollywood operated under rules of its own" (Doherty 2–3). Therefore, Hammett's novel with its morally ambiguous characters, evident homosexuality, extramarital affairs, self-sufficient women and murders seems a perfectly suitable literary base for an unrestrained pre-Code film.

The novel in its opening chapter presents a portrait of Samuel Spade—tall, bulky with round shoulders, in his thirties, a tough, cynical and ironic man with a prevailing "blond Satan" image. His secretary, Effie Perine, is a young and attractive woman with an erotic spark created by a dress "clung to her with effect of dampness" (Hammett 3). Miss Wonderly (later Miss LeBlanc and Brigid O'Shaughnessy) is in the first instance described as helpless, shy and hesitant but at the same time her coldness, predatory nature and erotic power is revealed: "She advanced slowly, with tentative steps, looking at Spade with cobalt-blue eyes that were both shy and probing. . . . The hair curling from under her blue hat was darkly red, her full lips more brightly red. White teeth glistened in the crescent her timid smile made" (Hammett 4). Spade's partner Miles Archer is by Hammett described as boorish and dull, no match for Spade.

Even if the 1931 adaptation clearly states that it is based on Hammett's novel, the background for the opening credits is the book itself, it deviates from the novel's content and mood very early. The first scene, after the introductory panoramic shot of San Francisco, presents silhouettes of a couple embracing behind a closed door of Spade and

Archer's office. Then a close up of a door opening and female adjusting her stockings suggests a sexual intercourse. In the following shot the man is revealed kissing a woman's hand goodbye, but she is kept off screen. He then wipes his lips and with a grin talks to his secretary, Effie—he does not have any more "important engagements" for that afternoon—he kisses her neck and watches her leave. The viewer learns that the man is Samuel Spade when he enters the office with his name and a "busy" sign on it. The office is a mess, there ate pillows on the floor and the picture on the wall is crooked; he proceeds and fixes the couch. This scene further ensures the viewer of the detective's sexual activity at work. When Effie enters he plays seductive games with her, he is cheeky and flirtatious, kisses her hand and does not want to let her go. Effie knows about his affairs and frequent romantic escapades with the female clients. Moreover, another woman arrives, Miss Wonderly, who needs his help in search for her lost sister. Their conference is interrupted by Iva (Archer's wife) who calls Spade to tell him that she is lonesome and misses him terribly (see fig. 1)—Spade is irritated, rolls his eyes. The viewer is told from the very beginning that Iva is Spade's mistress.

Fig. 1. Iva on the phone with Spade, lying on a lounge in a revealing, intimate dress

The director manages to group four women involved with Spade, in one way or another, into the first five minutes of the film. The scene before Wonderly's arrival and the scene of Iva's call, which do not occur in the novel, define Spade as "Don Juan," a smirking lady-killer. Spade in *Dangerous Female* is different from Hammett's Spade since he portrays a different kind of a detective—a pre-Code private investigator who is "more suave, cultured, self-serving, and more like the villains" (Gates "The Three Sam Spades" 8). Moreover, this over the top persona of a womanizer may be also attributed to the film's cast—Samuel Spade is played by Ricardo Cortez. Cortez's real name is Jacob Krantz, an Austrian émigré who was, thanks to his dark looks, turned by Hollywood into Ricardo the "Latino lover," cast predominantly into romantic movies (Rodrigues 19–20). This Spade's image of an exotic lover is further emphasized by introducing Miles Archer—Spade's detective counterpart, in terms of skills, character and appearance. Archer is in this film version a much older man who is betrayed by a much younger wife—he knows about Spade and Iva's affair, he listens to the phone call in Effie's office and gets very angry, glowers.[88] Therefore, the spectator is expecting some kind of standoff between Spade and Archer when he barges into Spade's office. Instead, he excitedly accepts Wonderly's job offer and greedily grabs the $200 she leaves on the desk (see fig. 2). Spade watches Miss Wonderly leave and nods in appreciation. Spade tells Archer that his wife called, wanted to know when he should return and that she misses him, Archer does not act on this obvious lie. The 1931 film version builds up Samuel Spade into a man absolutely irresistible to beautiful women, exaggerating his sexuality, and Archer as rapacious detective who pays for his weakness, greed, with his life.

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[88] SPADE. . . . don't do anything rash.
IVA. You sound so cold. Don't you love me anymore? . . . Is somebody there that you can't talk to me like you use to?
SPADE. Yes, yes.
IVA. Oh, goodbye honey. Call me soon. I will be waiting. (*Dangerous Female*)

Fig. 2. Archer and Spade accepting the job

Spade visits Miss Wonderly (in this film she keeps the initial identity), she begs him to protect her from the police: "I am depending on you to save me. . . . oh, be generous Mr. Spade" (*Dangerous Female*). He sees through her "act" of a frightened fragile lady and mocks her—she is forced to tell him the truth about Thursby (a man that Miles was supposed to follow). The only other way to keep Spade on her side is money—Spade takes it. Miss Wonderly's sexual allure is central to the narrative of the novel and also of the film. Therefore, when she later learns that Spade was offered more money ($5,000) to acquire a gemmed statue of a falcon, a sum she does not have, she needs to top the offer differently. Wonderly needs to secure his loyalty towards her so she offers herself. Since the film was made free from the Production Code, the sexual tension and Wonderly's advances are more straightforward; she moves closer to Spade, becomes coquettish and wraps her arm around him: "I love your apartment Sam. Don't you ever get lonesome?" (*Dangerous Female*). In the novel she taunts Spade with a line: "Can I buy you with my body?" (Hammett 57). Their sexual encounter is on the pages of the novel suggested by Spade's waking up next to her. In the film the sexual act itself is mimicked by a jumping needle of the gramophone and Miss Wonderly, as in the novel, wakes up in Spade's bed content with the way she managed to secure his allegiance. Miss

Wonderly's sexual appeal, her body being the source of her power, is in this film accentuated much more than in the novel—on many occasions Wonderly wears dresses with plunging neckline (see fig. 3), posing for Spade in a nightgown revealing her shoulders, appears in a scene where she scrubs herself with a brush in a bath (see fig. 4), and disrobes off screen when she is accused of stealing money. Her ability to manipulate men is also supported by Gutman's observation: "Miss Wonderly's admirers have been many, sir, and she has used them all to her great advantage" (*Dangerous Female*). Furthermore, body and good looks being her weapons of choice are both in the novel and the film emphasized by the manner she killed Archer; Spade describes her technique: "And then you could have stood with your body close up against his, and he would have grinned from ear to ear, and you could've shot a hole right through him" (*Dangerous Female*).

Fig. 3. Wonderly's revealing clothes

Fig. 4. Wonderly in bath

Miss Wonderly, as the title of the film suggests, becomes the character around which the film's narrative revolves. Wonderly is fearless and her ability to take care of herself is clearly stated when she is startled by Cairo in Spade's apartment, she overpowers Cairo and bashes him on the head with his own gun. Even though Spade

sends this strong woman to jail for Archer's murder, as in the novel, she keeps her cool, holds her head high, does not cry, and leaves with a scornful comment: "What a pity the detective agencies haven't more men with your strength of character, Mr. Spade" (*Dangerous Female*). Moreover, the viewers learn that Wilmer managed to kill Gutman and in this film version his accomplice is Cairo, they tried to run together when they were captured by the police. *Dangerous Female*, without the Production Code restrictions, could have portrayed homosexuality more openly—Dr. Cairo is by Effie introduced as "gorgeous new customer. A knockout" (*Dangerous Female*)—however, this effeminate man, along with constantly sweating Gutman and Wilmer, the gun for hire, in this film become mere shadows of the characters from Hammett's novel. Since the film focuses on the femme fatale's open sexuality and her sexual relationship with Spade, the assumed homosexuality of the other male characters becomes insignificant. In the novel their sexual otherness highlights Spade's masculinity, in the film it is substituted by Spade's frequent referring to Lieutenant Dundy as to a "sweetheart."

Nonetheless, the film reintroduces Miss Wonderly in its final scene which does not appear in the novel—Spade visits Wonderly in jail, she is broken and he stands strong as a new chief investigator for the District Attorney's office, [89] which emphasizes his opportunistic nature since he despises the legal institution throughout the whole film. This scene may be seen as a kind of additional "gesture of recognition"[90] to the Hays office—the "dangerous female" is punished (see fig. 5), the detective is promoted and the law

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[89] WONDERLY. You just couldn't keep away from me, could you?
SPADE. Well, not when I've good news for you.
WONDERLY. Good news?
SPADE. They just made Chief Investigator for the District Attorney's office.
WONDERLY. Well, they couldn't find a better man for the job.
SPADE. Thanks, baby. I thought you'd like to know. You helped me get it. (*Dangerous Female*)

[90] This gesture did not help with the re-release of the film in 1934 since "the film proved so shocking to Joseph Breen, the newly-appointed head of the Hays office, it was *the* final deciding factor in his forming, in April of that year, the Production Code Administration—an effective means of self-censorship for the industry [emphasis in the original]" (Kiszely 70).

triumphs (see fig. 6)—since the inevitable punishment of independent and sexually provocative women was not a rule in the pre-Code Hollywood.[91] The years from 1930 to 1934 was a short period when social and political issues were discussed and sex "existed." Films of this short era of liberation openly portrayed women rejecting Victorian taboos and experiencing their sexual power—"women on screen took lovers, had babies out of wedlock, got rid of cheating husbands, enjoyed their sexuality, held down professional positions without apologizing for their self-sufficiency, and in general acted the way many of us think women acted only after 1968" (LaSalle 1). Female performers were in control of their roles, of their images on screen. However, when the Motion Picture Production Code was finally enforced from 1934 on, this period of freedom was brought to a sudden halt and women were once again relegated to submissive positions. The Production Code regulated what should and should not be shown in a film—no nudity, drugs, sex perversion, racism, or sympathy for criminals were allowed. It was "a stringently enforced censoring mechanism that shaped narratives according to perceived mainstream moral values" (Athanasourelis "Adaptation and the Censors" 325). Therefore, filmmakers were limited and could only hint at these issues when they decided to include them in the films. So, when we look at the films made in the Pre-Code Hollywood, the Code's prohibitions seemed more as instructions for the filmmakers of that era.

[91] For example, Ricardo Cortez's pre-Code career is nicely summed up by Mick LaSalle in his book on pre-Code females on screen: "Actresses got away with murder. Literally. Loretta Young shot Ricardo Cortez in *Midnight Mary* (1933). Kay Francis shot Cortez in *The House on 56th Street* (1933). Kay Francis poisoned Cortez in *Mandalay* (1934). Dolores Del Rio stabbed Cortez in *Wonder Bar* (1934). But wait. From that list it sounds as if the pre-Codes were merely open season on Ricardo Cortez, an oily character actor whose smoothness with the ladies often led to his downfall (on-screen). To be sure, Helen Twelvetrees had shot Cortez as early as 1931 in *Bad Company*, and in late 1934 he would mark the end of the pre-Code era by getting shot by Anita Louise in *The Firebird* (1934)" (142–3). In *Dangerous Female* Cortez as Spade survives the woman's wrath.

Fig. 5. The femme fatale captured

Fig. 6. Spade the new investigator for the District attorney tells Wonderly: "you helped me get it" (*Dangerous Female*)

The relationship between Spade and Wonderly is in *Dangerous Female* made more opportunistic from Spade's side than it is presented by Hammett in the novel. Spade is in the adaptation a man who lives in the moment, gets involved with women that cross his path, he is an opportunist fixated on money, without a moral code or a code of honor. Spade needs and uses Wonderly more than she needs him. Moreover, Spade is in this film turned into a mere detective fraud—the added scene, after Archer's body is found, shows Spade talking to a Chinese bystander in Chinese and then at the end of the film three different shots of newspaper clippings are also added. One of the clippings reads: "Samuel Spade, private detective, caused a sensation at the trial when he produced Lee Fu Gow, Chinese merchant, the only eye-witness to the Archer killing, who positively identified miss Wonderly as the murderess" (*Dangerous Female*). If the star eye-witness and the Chinese man Spade was talking to are one and the same person, Spade knew that Wonderly killed Archer from the very beginning. Therefore, Spade in this film exploits Wonderly financially, emotionally and also sexually, he double crossed her. She thought that she is manipulating him but he is the conman from the outset.

On the other hand, Hammett's Spade is a detective that resists being tricked by lies, regardless of the kind of temptation. At the end of the novel Spade is accompanied by Effie who is angry with him for sending Brigid O'Shaughnessy (a.k.a. Miss Wonderly) into prison and Iva Archer still covets his attention. Spade is in the same situation as he was at the beginning of the novel, he does not manage to escape the cycle.[92] The 1931 pre-Code adaptation of the novel creates a world where women are indulgent towards men's sexual morality—Wonderly does not care much about wearing Iva's kimono at Spade's apartment, Iva seems completely untroubled by her faithless marriage and her husband's death, and Effie knows all about Spade's romances and still lets him flirt with her. *Dangerous Female* portrays Spade as an animalistic sexual predator who feels at home in such a milieu.

5.1.2 *Satan Met a Lady* (1936)

> THE TUMPET CALLS—AND ONLY UNTO DEATH!
>
> A Fabulous Gem-Filled Horn Carrying A Strange Lethal Curse, Which Roland, Glorious Hero of French Myth, Last Blew with His Dying Gasps. Filled with Jewels, It Has Brought Only Eternal Silence of the Grave to All Who Covet it!
>
> —*Satan Met a Lady* (1936)

Film *Satan Met a Lady* (1936) may be called a mere spin-off of the novel *The Maltese Falcon*, despite the credits at the beginning stating that the film is based on this

[92] Spade in the novel tells a story about a man Flitcraft who abandons his life and family after near-death experience (falling beam), he decides to live his life "at random," but after some time he settles back into the same routine but in a different city. As Flitcraft, Spade also circles back to the beginning after Brigid is sent to jail—Effie is in the office with him and Iva returns.

hard-boiled novel.[93] William Dieterle's film keeps most of the storyline from Dangerous *Female* (1931), however, this second version of the novel, seemingly tries to "hide" any connections to its literary source—along the title, also the characters' names are changed, Gutman becomes a woman Madame Barabbas, and the statue of falcon is turned into a Horn of Roland that is allegedly full of jewels.[94] The alteration of characters' names may be attributed to the fact that while "Warner Bros owned motion picture rights to the book; Hammett had also used Spade in three short stories,[95] and retained the rights to the character. [Therefore,] in 1936, Warner and Hal B. Wallis, Zanuck's successor,[96] decreed that a new version of the Falcon story would be made without Spade or any other Hammett characters" (Turner 101). Nevertheless, the most evident detachment from the first filmi version is a complete elimination of the femme fatale's, here called Valerie Purvis (played by Bette Davis), sexual appeal. Therefore, this tough-talking, smart blonde, the lady, battles the "roughish and satanic flirt," (Kiszely 71) the detective, Ted Shane (played by Warren Williams) in the search for the priceless horn.

Satan Met a Lady mixes many generic conventions, mystery story, farce, and turns Hammett's novel, into a near-parody, an abortive screwball comedy with "a breakneck speed a lunatic film that makes little sense"[97] (Schwartz 178). The film opens up at a train

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[93] The trailer to the film entitles *Satan Met a Lady* as "a new mystery sensation by the author of 'The Thin Man' Dashiell Hammett" starring Bette Davis. The film is thus tied to the screwball mystery comedy *The Thin Man* (1934) rather than a film adaptation of Hammett's novel *The Maltese Falcon*. *The Thin Man* also turned Hammett's hard-boiled novel into a light comedy using murder only as a backdrop.

[94] The film may be categorized as a *disguised remake*—"a literary property is either updated with minimal change, or retitled and disguised by new settings and original characters, but in either case the new film does not seek to draw attention to its earlier version(s)" (Verevis 7).

[95] The three Sam Spade stories ("A Man Called Spade," "Too Many Have Lived," and "They Can Only Hang You Once") along with other long-unavailable seventeen may be found in Hammett's collection of stories *Nightmare Town* (1999). The reader will not learn anything new about Spade form these stories, as in *The Maltese Falcon* "Spade has no wish to solve any erudite riddles; he is hard and shifty fellow quite capable of looking after himself, thank you; his preoccupation is to do his job and to get the better of the criminals some client has him to tangle with" (Dexter).

[96] Both Hal B. Wallis (1898–1986) and Darryl Francis Zanuck (1902–1979) were successful American film producers.

[97] The film "fared so poorly at the box office that a Warners executive later insisted that they had to give out dishes wherever *Satan Met a Lady* was playing" (Stageland 160).

station with a man who is cast out from a nameless city for causing a public scandal. The man is Ted Shane, "a satanic private detective, [who] experiences considerable difficulty keeping his sometimes questionable professional activities segregated from his *affairs d'amour*, a failing that is constantly getting him into trouble with various individuals [emphasis in the original]" (Kiszely 71). Shane travels to a small town where he used to live, San Morego, and goes directly to Ames detective agency (Archer character is called Ames here) looking for his incompetent former partner. Shane immediately takes things into his own hands—brings a new case (flirts with a wealthy older lady on a train and persuades her that she needs a bodyguard) and manages to convince the secretary, Murgatroyd,[98] to stay (see fig. 7): "I would like to have you around" (*Satan Met a Lady*). The secretary lacks the sex appeal of Effie from the novel or the previous version, she is more of a representative of youthful innocence and silliness. Furthermore, we learn that Ames' wife is Shane's ex-girlfriend, Astrid married Ames after Shane left. Therefore, an extramarital affair between the detective and his partner's wife is excluded. As in the novel and the previous film version, Shane is superior to Ames in regard to work, looks and also success with women. Shane, physically, does not resemble Spade from Hammett's novel at all—his head is covered by a broad-brimmed black hat, wears a thin moustache, carries a cane and is covered in a long dark overcoat. However, he has that satanic aura hovering over him, the satanic image that Spade is labelled with by Hammett (see fig. 8).

[98] Her name is a reference to Amy Murgatroyd, a character from Agatha Christie's novel *A Murder Is Announced* (1950).

Fig. 7. Shane flirting with Murgatroyd

Fig. 8. Ted Shane

The opening scene from the novel is delayed in this film and Valerie is not looking for her sister but a man that ran out on her—Ames is the one who gets to tail her and a man called Farrow. In *Satan Mat a Lady* Ames is the one who does the foot work for the detective agency and Shane is the one arranging everything. However, a feture that they both share is their immense interest in women—Ames is killed at a graveyard where he used to take his dates, for some "privacy." Shane's thirst for women's attention and his seductive prowess is emphasized in a nightclub scene where he is on a date with the secretary but still manages to flirt and eventually set a date with a dancer. Shane's nickname for each woman is "kitten"—in his eyes, these young and attractive women are nothing but helpless kittens that he may play with. However, one of these female kittens, Valerie Purvis, is a lot less innocent.

As in the first film version, *Dangerous Female*, in *Satan Met a Lady* "the studio repeated its strategy of building an adaptation of this particularly masculine novel around a female star—in this instance, Bette Davis"[99] (Kiszely 69). However, in 1936 studio's production had to comply with the requirements of the Production Code and thus the

[99] Bette Davis was nominated for Oscar for Best Actress in the film *Of Human Bondage* (1934) and subsequently won Oscar for Best Actress in the film *Dangerous* (1936). Therefore, *Satan Met a Lady* was ready to exploit her newly-gained publicity.

femme fatale, Miss Purvis, could not appear on screen taking a bath or waking up in the detective's bed, since these were mainly the scenes that hindered the re-release of the first film adaptation, *Dangerous Female*. Without the sexual tension between the two main characters, a clash of the wits had to be introduced. This battle of genders became the sole focus of the film—Shane battling two women who are trying to get to the valuable artefact before him. Therefore, the scenes where Shane interacts with Purvis or Madame Barabbas—criminal kingpin with a "face that haunts every detective and copper in the world" (*Satan Met a Lady*)—center on their verbal sparring and double-crossing skills of adept thieves. At Barabbas' place, Shane does not accept a drink from her and she does not finish the cigarette he offered because they are drugged—she recognizes that they are alike and they merrily embrace like old friends. When Shane visits Purvis in her apartment, he goes through her purse and takes $500. She then triumphantly declares her pick-pocket abilities and takes her money back. Furthermore, when he thinks he has conned Purvis and tries to ransack her apartment, looking for the jeweled horn of Roland's, she is there and holds him at gunpoint (see fig. 9)—she did not fall for his trick. She mocks his masculinity and his ability to protect her by calling him "King Kong"—a giant ape who tries to save a vulnerable beautiful blonde, and thus is killed.[100] Even though, Miss Purvis falls short to persuade Shane to help her just by employing her charm (see fig. 10), flirting,[101] or offering him money, it is only after beating him in his own game that he agrees to play along, she is in control of the situation. In this film, the femme fatale has to prove that she is more cunning, witty and determined than the detective to

[100] Shane hangs on the door frame and shrieks, this ridiculous, and obviously a scene irrelevant to the story's development, is one of many that turn a movie into a "cynical farce. . . So disconnected and lunatic are the picture's incidents, so irrelevant and monstrous its people, that one lives through it in constant expectation of seeing a group of uniformed individuals appear suddenly from behind the furniture and take the entire cast into protective custody. There is no story, merely a farrago of nonsense representing a series of practical studio compromises with an unworkable script" (B.R.C.).

[101] Miss Purvis to Shane: "You and I could have a lot of fun . . . isn't that a lot surer than looking for some silly French horn?" (*Satan Met a Lady*).

win him over. In *Dangerous Female*, the femme fatale just bat her eyelashes, showed a little skin and the detective just could not resist her sexual lure and thus implicate himself.

Fig. 9. Purvis does not let Shane cross her

Fig. 10. Purvis tries to manipulate Shane

Satan Met a Lady alters also other characters—the triad of gangsters that are looking for the priceless artefact. Cairo, an effeminate man that appeared in the previous film version is turned into a flamboyant Englishman who aggressively destroys Shane's office and apartment and subsequently apologizes for it, Anthony Travers (see fig. 11). Thus the second film, under the Code's limitations, avoids any suggestions of homosexuality. Moreover, by transforming Gutman into an older female criminal, Madame Barabbas, the film implies a heterosexual relationship with Wilmer (here Kenneth) and not homosexual (see fig. 12). Even though homosexuality is eliminated, the sexual perversion is preserved—she has an inappropriate relationship with Kenneth, her much younger nephew, "he's been more than a son to [her]" (*Satan Met a Lady*). Moreover, Kenneth seems less dangerous than Wilmer depicted in the novel or the first film version—he is turned into a disturbed, hefty, child-like man who wears a beanie and is dressed as a pupil from a British private boarding school. The scenes where Kenneth and Shane interact indicate Shane's superior position, he overpowers Kenneth easily, and

thus Shane's masculinity is highlighted. Shane does not seem threatened by these villains as Spade is in the novel—he is drugged by Gutman and Wilmer kicks him in the face—villains are more scared of him in *Satan Met a Lady*, except for Miss Purvis.

Fig. 11. Anthony Traverse

Fig. 12. Madame Barabbas and "Kenny boy"

The film nears its finale when an organization called the City Fathers visit Shane—"dedicated to the preservation of the good name of [their] city" (*Satan Met a Lady*)—and is blamed for causing trouble in their peaceful city, they demand Ames's killer. Therefore, the scene where everyone is gathered, the artefact is presented and Ames's killer is exposed follows. However, this scene is very remote from the novel, or the previous film version—it is set in a rainy harbor, after a chaotic shoot-out the three gangsters are arrested by the police and Shane hides Miss Purvis in his car. The film's finale depicts Shane as a greedy detective who tries to hand Purvis over to the police so he would get the $10,000 reward. Nevertheless, Purvis proves again to be more cunning and not willing to be double-crossed by him, the man, and lets a black female employee capture her and, content with herself, is escorted by the City Fathers. Her last words are provocative and do not resemble the beaten image of Brigid from the novel or Brigid crying in the cell from the first film version:

> for me, you'll go through something that'll be worse than death. Because you'll always remember me, the one woman you couldn't take for both love and money. The one woman who handed you double-cross for double-cross right up to the end. 'Cause now you found a woman can be as smart as you are. Someday you'll find one who'll be smarter. She'll marry you! (*Satan Met a Lady*).

While *Dangerous Female* focuses on open female sexuality and masculinity that is irresistible to women, *Satan Met a Lady* portrays women as either innocent "kittens" smitten by the detective's charm or dangerous criminal masterminds that beat the detective at his own game—Miss Purvis and Madame Barabbas. The second film version of Hammett's novel succeeds in distancing itself from the literary base and portrays Hammett's world as black-and-white, a traditional good-guy versus, in this case, bad-woman rivalry. *Satan Met a Lady* may be labelled a fast moving entertainment, a mockery of a detective genre which bears almost no resemblance to the Hammett's novel or the previous film—the only link between the two film versions is a reference to a "lost dog case."[102]

[102] In *Dangerous Female* when Iva calls Spade to his office, he explains to Miss Wonderly: "Very strange case. Woman lost a dog last night and wants us to find it for her" (*Dangerous Female*). In *Satan Met a Lady* the secretary complains that "the only case we've had in weeks was a woman who lost he pet poodle" (*Satan Met a Lady*).

5.1.3 *The Maltese Falcon* (1941)

> Johnny Houston did such a good script for me[103] that I suggested to [Jack] Warner that they make him a director. Johnny came back and said, 'what should I write?' And I said, 'Don't write anything. It's hard enough to direct your first picture. There's a story that Warners owns that I've always been going to do called *The Maltese Falcon*.' He came back again and said, 'It's been made twice,' and I said, 'It's never been made. Always some idiot thought he could write better than Dashiell Hammett. You go and make *Maltese Falcon* exactly the way Hammett wrote it, use the dialogue, don't change a goddam thing, and you'll have a hell of a picture.'
>
> —McBride (qtd. in Kiszely 83)

So Houston went and made *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), labelled a classic, the third attempt to capture Dashiell Hammett's novel on screen and in this case third time *was* the charm.[104] The film's initial reception was very positive—"the best mystery thriller of the year . . . [Huston] has worked out his own style, which is brisk and supremely hardboiled . . . a combination of American ruggedness with the suavity of the English crime school . . . It's the slickest exercise in cerebration that has hit the screen in many months" (Crowther "The Maltese Falcon"). Moreover, many critics and scholars praise Huston's film version for its closeness to the textual source, the film follows the text quite rigorously. This "affinity" is explained by the director/screenwriter himself—

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[103] Director Howard Hawks about John Huston.

[104] Houston did not only direct the film but he was also nominated for an Academy Award for Best Screenplay in 1941 for *The Maltese Falcon*—"all of Huston's talents as writer, actor and director were finally disciplined and came brilliantly together. He wrote the script, chose the actors and guided them through picture" (Meyers *John Huston: Courage and Art* 63).

Huston stated that the screenplay "was done in a very short time, because it was based on a very fine book and there was very little for [him] to invent. It was a matter of sticking to the ideas of the book, of making a film out of a book . . . [he] tried to transpose Dashiell Hammett's highly individual prose style into camera terms—i.e. sharp photography, geographically exact camera movements, striking, if not shocking, setups" (qtd. in Meyers *John Huston: Courage and Art* 66).

However, because of a strict enforcement of the Production Code regulations, Huston had to exclude scenes that appear in the novel and in the more daring version, in terms of nudity and sexuality, of the novel, the 1931 *Dangerous Female*. In the novel Spade forces Brigid to undress because he suspects her of stealing money: "She drew herself up tall and began to undress . . . When she was naked she stepped back from her clothing and stood looking at him. In her mien was pride without defiance or embarrassment" (Hammett 196). *Dangerous Female* includes this scene but the striptease happens off screen, only clothes that are thrown at Spade are shown. Moreover, Hammett's explicit portrayal of homosexual characters had to be "encoded" in the film—Huston does not include information about Cairo's interest in young boys and also a scene where Wilmer angrily hits Cairo refusing his advances does not make it to the screen.

The film, as well as the novel, is about basic human values, greed, love and lust. The novel employs the omniscient point of view and the film takes up this strategy and Samuel Spade becomes the film's lead. The main protagonist is the private detective Spade and I dare to say that the statuette of the Maltese falcon as well, since the whole film, and also the novel, develops around the search for this valuable gemmed statue which is an object of desire and subsequent doom for many characters involved. [105] Spade

[105] Huston decided to include the history of the statuette at the very beginning of the film, before the establishing shots of San Francisco. The viewer knows what the Maltese falcon is from the outset and therefore I claim that the statuette is also the "main character" of the film.

is “a hard and shifty fellow, able to take care of himself in any situation, able to get the best of anybody he comes in contact with, whether criminal, innocent bystander, or client” (Hammett qtd. in Phillips *Out of the Shadows* 5). He investigates the murder of his partner Miles Archer who accepted a surveillance job from a suspicious female client.[106] The plot, as in the novel, thickens and gets very convoluted when Spade faces other murders, his importunate mistress and three “questionably” elegant and sophisticated characters who are after the gemmed statuette. Spade is forced to take part in a frantic search for the Falcon, full or double-crosses and killings. The charming female, Brigid O’Shaughnessy, the femme fatale, with whom Spade has an affair, is a criminal who killed his partner.

The film portrays Spade as an anti-hero. He is an ambiguous character, a detective with a strong code of honor, a hard-boiled code, which creates a barrier between the detective and the rest of the world, he is unable of emotional attachments. Spade is a determined and intelligent detective who is more resourceful and honorable than the police and does not need to carry a gun to enforce what is in his eyes right.[107] His masculinity is enhanced by incorporating effeminate characters that Spade does not have a problem to overpower—he disarms both Cairo and Wilmer with ease and verbally spars with the police.

[106] The scene in which Archer is killed is the only one in which Spade does not appear and the only where the viewer has important information before Spade.
[107] Spade studies *Duke’s Celebrated Criminal Cases of America* (Hammett 11).

Cairo's "deviant" sexuality is hinted at even before the viewer sees him—Effie gives Spade a card that has a gardenia scent and when he enters Spade raises his eyebrows in silent surprise (see fig. 13).[108]

Fig. 13. Spade's face when he sees Cairo

Cairo wears a large bowtie and carries a cane which he keeps close to his mouth when talking to Spade—imitating fellatio. He is overtly polite and speaks with an accent (see fig. 14). When Cairo tries to frisk Spade, Spade disarms him and with a grin punches him unconscious. Cairo's lack of masculinity is further emphasized when slapped by Brigid and subsequently disarmed by Spade, again: "When you're slapped you'll take it and like it" (*The Maltese Falcon*). These two men are clearly contrasted.

[108] In the novel Effie just states "This guy is queer" even before Cairo enters Spade's office. The film could only hint at Cairo's sexuality through visual support which was taken directly from Hammett: "Mr. Joel Cairo was a small-boned dark man of medium height. His hair was black and smooth and very glossy. His features were Levantine. A square cut-ruby, its sides paralleled by four baguette diamonds, gleamed against the deep green of his cravat. His black coat, cut tight to narrow shoulders, flared a little over slightly plump hips. His trousers fitted his round legs more snugly than was the current fashion. The uppers of his patent-leather shoes were hidden by fawn spats. He held a black derby hat in a chamois-gloved hand and came toward Spade with short, mincing, bobbing steps. The fragrance of *chypre* came with him [emphasis in the original]" (Hammett 42).

Fig. 14. Joel Cairo

Another man that appears and tries to probe Spade's masculinity is Wilmer Cook, a young male of ambiguous sexuality. Wilmer is a man who is by Hammett described as quite small but acts tough, he carries two large guns and tries to assert his masculinity in encounters with Spade. However, the only time he manages to overpower Spade is when already drugged by Gutman, he kicks him in his face while lying on the floor. Wilmer always accompanies Casper Gutman, as his gun for hire. Wilmer's homosexual relationship with Cairo is also indicated by Hammett/Spade on several occasions—calling Wilmer Cairo's boyfriend, Cairo's affectionately tending to Wilmer,[109] and after Wilmer hits Cairo in rage Spade calls it "The course of true love" (Hammett 199). Moreover, Hammett describes him as Gutman's loyal gunsel,[110] which is also adopted by Huston in

[109] Cairo's affection for Wilmer: "The boy lay on his back on the sofa, a small figure that was—except for its breathing—altogether corpselike to the eye. Joel Cairo sat beside the boy, bending over him, rubbing his cheeks and wrists, smoothing his hair back from his forehead, whispering to him, and peering anxiously down at his white still face" (Hammett 187).

[110] "1914, American English underworld slang, from hobo slang, 'a catamite;' specifically 'a young male kept as a sexual companion, especially by an older tramp,' from Yiddish *genzel*, from German *Gänslein* 'gosling, young goose.' The secondary, non-sexual meaning 'young hoodlum' seems to be entirely traceable to Dashiell Hammett, who sneaked it into 'The Maltese Falcon' (1929) while warring with his editor over the book's racy language: 'Another thing, Spade repeated, glaring at the boy: 'Keep that gunsel away from me while you're making up your mind. I'll kill him.' The context implies some connection with *gun* and a sense of 'gunman,' and evidently that is what the editor believed it to mean. The word was retained in the script of the 1941 movie made from the book, so evidently the Motion Picture Production Code censors didn't know it either [emphasis in the original]" (Harper).

the film. Therefore, Gutman is pushed into a role of an older man who "keeps" this young boy, making the reader and also the viewer question his sexuality.

Gutman is a fat man with a purring voice who prefers to use drugs and distances himself from physical violence, he uses Wilmer for that. He is no match for Spade, he has to drug the detective to subdue him. Gutman cares about Wilmer, he does not want to give him to the police as the fall guy but, at last, he betrays him because "if you lose a son it's possible to get another—and there's only one Maltese falcon" (Hammett 194). Gutman does not hide that his only desire is to get his hands on the bird, unlike Brigid who tries to play innocent and to conceal her criminal nature. However, at the end Gutman is punished for his desire—Wilmer escapes, while the others are frantically unpacking the fake statuette, and later finds and shoots Gutman, even though he is subsequently captured by the police, he symbolically frees himself from a father figure.

The 1941 film had to be more subtle in portraying these characters as homosexual but it managed to get the "message" through to the viewers—e.g. Spade's reaction to Cairo, Spade's referring to Wilmer as gunsel several times during the film. The sexual deviance "is hinted at in a number of ways but never overtly shown or stated. The excess of the hints combined with the avoidance of explicit declaration gives the style its overdetermined and unsettling atmosphere; the viewer often feels poised at the borders of the forbidden without verification" (Luhr *The Maltese Falcon* 9).

In addition to Spade's emphasized masculinity, "boosted" by the three effeminate characters who are incorporated to work as Spade's contrasts, his heterosexuality is highlighted by the relationships he has with female characters. Spade is popular among women, even though he has a nonsexual relationship with his secretary Effie. Effie Perine in Huston's version loses her sexual appeal from the novel, and previous film versions, here she is his helpmate and treats him almost maternally. Hammett's Effie is the only

person who accepts Spade for who he really is and thus she is the only woman Spade has and authentic relationship with. Another female in Spade's life is Iva, the scorned woman. He has an ongoing affair with her, his partner's wife, and this kind of relationships suits him because of the impossibility of marriage, of no emotional attachment. Nevertheless, she causes Spade only problems and turns him into a person of interest in Archer's murder when she admits their affair to the police. After Archer's death Spade loses interest in Iva—he looks at her with disgust (see fig. 15) and tries to get rid of her every time she calls or visits him.[111]

Fig. 15. Spade disgusted by and angry with Iva

The true conniving woman is Brigid O'Shaughnessy,[112] she is the femme fatale who, like Spade, possesses manipulative prowess and thus is the detective's female counterpart—"Where Brigid's many-layered performances would seem to be province of a scheming femme fatale, she merely does more obviously what Spade manages

[111] Iva thinks that Spade killed Archer because he wanted her for himself, which is not true: "Sam, did you kill him? . . . Well, I thought you said if it wasn't for Miles, you'd…Be kind to me, Sam" (*The Maltese Falcon*). She feels betrayed when he sees him with Brigid entering his apartment building—she has been waiting for him is a car in front of the building, spying on him.

[112] The part of Brigid is played by Mary Astor who was a perfect choice for this role, since her lifestyle mirrored that of Brigid, the sexually open femme fatale—"she had a colorful past and notorious public image . . . her diary (written in pink ink) . . . [was leaked] to the tabloid press and created a spectacular scandal. The diary revealed Astor's voracious sexual appetite and assessed the erotic capacity of her numerous lovers" (Meyers *John Huston: Courage and Art* 71).

throughout the film: namely to cause us to question the difference between being and appearing to be, between acting and authentically emoting" (Fay and Nieland 33). She plays innocent at first but Spade does not believe her—in the film, when she lies she never looks into Spade's eyes. Their mutual attraction is on the pages presented as a mere lust, lacking affection—in the film their sexually charged encounters are toned down, as lust was unacceptable for the silver screen. However, a scene where Spade grabs Brigid quite roughly (see fig. 16) radiates a kind of animalistic aura that is felt from the novel as well: "Spade took her face between his hands and he kissed her mouth roughly and contemptuously" (Hammett 57). Moreover, Brigid and Spade's sexual activity is not shown in the film—a scene from the *Dangerous Female* when Brigid wakes up in Spade's bed could not appear on screen regulated by the Production Code.[113]

Fig. 16. Rough, almost animalistic attraction

These two characters do not trust each other, in the novel Spade searches Brigid's apartment while she sleeps at his place, in the film, because of the pretermission of the "morning after" scene, he searches Gutman's place when he comes to after being drugged.

[113] Their night together may be only assumed from a scene next day when she comes to Spade's apartment and says that her place has been searched, she probably spent the night at Spade's. Moreover, they become more affectionate to each other—"darling" and "angel"—and hold their hands.

In the novel their relationship is devoid of any feelings and Spade's attraction to Brigid is exclusively sexual, even at the very end—"'It's easy enough to be nuts about you.' He looked hungrily from her hair to her feet and up to her eyes again" (Hammett 214). Therefore, in the novel's and also film's final scene, Spade sends Brigid off to jail for Archer's murder, even if she tries hard to convince him not to, he rejects a role of a "sap" for her and says: "I won't walk in Thursby's and I don't know how many other footsteps" (*The Maltese Falcon*). The film shows a man that is desperately trying to do the right thing and seems unsure what it is—during the final monologue Spade is watching the floor and his eyes flicker from side to side enumerating the pros and cons, sorrowful (see fig. 17). Spade looks after Brigid when she is escorted by the police, her imprisonment is substituted by a shot of her going down in an elevator that has prison-like bars (see fig. 18), and while caressing the Falcon he entitles it "the stuff that dreams are made of" (*The Maltese Falcon*).[114] Huston's Spade is an image of masculinity that is authentic and honest, he sacrifices his feelings to achieve justice. Moreover, Wilmer does not get a chance to kill Gutman, as in the novel, and all three are captured by the police. On the other hand, the female criminal is punished for her misdeeds and an attempt on luring the detective to the wrong path with her open sexuality. The novel presents a detective who with a cold determination sends Brigid to jail, unwilling to play "the sap" for her, he sacrifices Brigid as Gutman sacrificed Wilmer. Spade never attaches himself to any woman, only when he can gain something from the relationship; therefore, Spade is as "evil" as Brigid, who pays dearly for her involvement with him. Moreover, Hammett's closing scene in Spade's office after the long night with the crooks, depicts a self-

[114] "Bogart may have supplied the line, but Shakespeare wrote it [in The Tempest] . . . The line is indeed a wonderfully appropriate conclusion. Spade's reference to the famous Shakespearean epilogue rounds out the film, parallels the formal prologue at the beginning, and emphasizes the illusory quest for a falcon that has melted into thin air" (Meyers *John Huston: Courage and Art* 76).

contemptuous detective who circles back to his old ways when his mistress Iva appears and demands his attention.

Fig. 17. Confused Spade

Fig. 18. Brigid "behind bars"

Hammett's novel in which intelligent but crooked people search for an object that becomes their demise is a detective hard-boiled drama that presents timeless topics of love, desire, honor and sacrifice. Therefore, it is no surprise that it was turned into three original films that carry characteristics of the era they were created in. The decade from 1931 to 1941 marks an era of the Production Code enforcement and its influence is visible in these films—from a mild impact on the *Dangerous Female* to omission of sexually suggestive scenes in *The Maltese Falcon*.

The first film version *Dangerous Female* (1931) revolves around the femme fatale and her sexual allure and turns a hard-boiled detective into a playboy. *Satan Met a Lady* (1936), an attempt at a comedy, is a long forgotten second film version of Hammett's novel that created a character of a goofy detective in a battle of wits with a beautiful, smart and independent female criminal. In 1941, Huston created a noir film that is termed "the definitive version of Hammett's detective yarn, effectively capturing the novel's hard-bitten milieu" (Biesen 43). All three versions keep the antipathy towards women,

the femininity, thus also towards the sexual "otherness," already present in the novel—they portray the masculine private detective as victorious and the effeminate men are punished along with the strong and determined femme fatale—"we mere men [Gutman, Wilmer, Cairo] should have known better to suppose ourselves capable of coping with her" (Hammett 192).

5.2 ADAPTING RAYMOND CHANDLER'S *FAREWELL, MY LOVELY*

> Mr. Raymond Chandler has written that he intends to take the body out of the vicarage garden and give murder back to those who are good at it. . . . Actually, whatever he may say, I think Mr. Chandler is interested in writing, not detective stories, but serious studies of a criminal milieu, the Great Wrong Place, and his powerful but extremely depressing hooks should be read and judged, not as escape literature, but as works of art.
>
> —Wystan Hugh Auden 408

Raymond Chandler is one of the few authors that managed to make a great impact with such a limited number of works of literature. His contribution consists of eight novels, one of them is based on his unproduced screenplay and one was completed by Robert B. Parker; short stories gathered into collections and a few film scripts.[115] His hard-boiled novels and his work on film scripts in 1940s Hollywood, just at the right time, paved the way for an emerging film noir style—*Murder, My Sweet* (1944) and *Double Indemnity* (1944) are rated as prototypical noir films; and *The Big Sleep* (1946), *The Blue*

[115] Chandler started his Hollywood involvement when director Billy Wilder invited him to work on the script for *Double Indemnity* (1944) based upon a novella by James M. Cain—the script was in 1945 nominated for an Academy Award. Chandler also worked on film scripts for films: *And Now Tomorrow* (1944), *The Unseen* (1945), *The Blue Dahlia* (1946)—he wrote the original screenplay, and *Strangers on a Train* (1951). His work with Alfred Hitchcock on *Strangers on a Train* was anything but pleasant—"Chandler hated Hitchcock's method of working closely with writers—what he called the [god-awful jabber sessions] in which ideas were freely exchanged and adopted or discarded. This practice, Chandler felt, cramped his style, although later he complained of the opposite problem, that Hitchcock was ignoring him. Moody and mercurial, Chandler would describe Hitchcock at one point as [as nice as can be]; at other times, he could barely disguise his contempt for the director. It all became too much for Hitchcock. He disliked Chandler's drafts of the script and could not abide the writer's temperamental manner. Finally, he dismissed Chandler and hired Czenzi Ormonde, an assistant to Ben Hecht, who completely rewrote the script. . . . Little of what Chandler had written remained in the finished film, although he still received a screen credit" (Adair 92–3). Chandler then described Hitchcock's film, financial and critical success, as: "no guts, no characters, no plausibility, and no dialogue…but of course it's Hitchcock, and a Hitchcock's film always does have something. . . . I don't know why it's a success, perhaps because Hitchcock succeeded in removing almost every trace of my writing from it" (qtd. in Day).

Dahlia (1946) and *Lady in the Lake* (1947) belong to the body of the film noir classics. However financially fruitful were his ties with Hollywood and film industry, Chandler decided to return to writing novels—he "gradually came to realize that the Hollywood process was fundamentally incompatible with his notion of authorship. As a novelist, he had almost complete artistic control over the effects of his fictions . . . As a screenwriter, he was only one of many hands in a collaborative effort" (Luhr *Raymond Chandler and Film* 6).

However, Chandler's involvement with the big screen did not end with his departure from Hollywood studios around 1950, after his screenwriting fiasco for Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train*. In the late 1960s Chandler's writing, again, found its way to screen when his 1949 novel *The Little Sister* was adapted into film *Marlowe* (1969), with updated setting—the 1960s Los Angeles. The same update logic was applied to films *The Long Goodbye* (1973) and *The Big Sleep* (1978)—which also relocated Chandler's Los Angeles to 1970s London. The only film based on Chandler's 1940s novel that returns to the past is *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975), set in 1940s seedy streets of Los Angeles. For the moment, it seems that the big screen is finished with adaptations of Chandler's novels. However, supplementing Hollywood films, few television adaptations appeared in the 1980s—the most notable would seem the series called *Philip Marlowe, Private Eye* (1983–1986) based on Chandler's short stories. Chandler's literary work inspired writers like Robert B. Parker or Ross MacDonald, whose hard-boiled heroes resemble Marlowe, they managed to inspire several filmmakers as well. These directors, with their own characteristic style and subjective reading of the novels, created distinctive films reflecting different film traditions and cultural codes of a particular era embedded in them.

Chandler nicely sums up his relationship with Hollywood: "If my books had been any worse, I should not have been invited to Hollywood, and if they had been any better, I should not have come. . . . That's one thing I like about Hollywood. The writer is there revealed in his ultimate corruption. He asks no praise, because the praise comes to him in the form of a salary check. In Hollywood, the average writer is not young, not brave, and a bit over-dressed" (qtd. in Day). Even though Chandler openly despised Hollywood, ironically, there is a campaign underway to give Chandler a star on the famous Hollywood Walk of Fame—"the overall picture . . . is of a degraded community whose idealism even is largely fake" (Chandler qtd. in Day).

5.2.1 *The Falcon Takes Over* (1942)

> With his usual incredible aplomb, George Sanders continues to meet danger more than half-way in "The Falcon Takes Over," now at the Rialto. Ferreting for a black-mail ring in night clubs, fortune tellers' haunts and lonely houses in Brooklyn, our kiss-and-run hero still dovetails crime with passing romantic fancies, still ducks bullets with a sense of timing that is positively psychic, still looks upon the earthly remains of the sundry deceased with a calm approaching boredom, and still displays an uncanny knack for clearing up a plot that the authors must have pasted together in their odd hours. For a man of Mr. Sanders's cool talents, "The Falcon Takes Over" is a distinct waste of time.
>
> —T.S.

Even though *The Big Sleep* (1939) is Chandler's first published novel introducing the character of hard-boiled detective Philip Marlowe; *Farewell, My Lovely* (1940) is the

first Chandler's work that was adapted for screen. *Farewell, My Lovely* became an inspiration for the film *The Falcon Takes Over* (1942),[116] it is "the third film in the 'Falcon' series which (ostensibly based upon a Michael Arlen character[117]) had begun in 1941 with *The Gay Falcon*" (Stam and Raengo 281). As in the case of the "Thin Man" series (1936–1947) or "Sherlock Holmes" series (1939–1946) the "Falcon" series present crime as a mere "context in which the brash, intelligent, elegant or two-fisted (sometimes both), and witty central character proved himself a hero" (Luhr *Raymond Chandler and Film* 101). These films, before the dark noir films, frequently employed comical elements and violence were only a necessary tool for the story's development—as in the case of *Satan Met a Lady* (1936), based on Hammett's hard-boiled novel *The Maltese Falcon*.

The Falcon Takes Over turned Chandler's hard-boiled novel into another Falcon story with Marlowe transformed into "debonair Falcon [Gay Lawrence], an amateur sleuth, [who] nonchalantly solves a complex mystery which the plodding police fail to unravel" (Phillips *Out of the Shadows* 30). The film, surprisingly, adheres quite closely to Chandler's storyline of Lawrence's, the self-assured amateur detective, search for Moose Malloy's ex-girlfriend Velma. Gay Lawrence is a complete opposite of Chandler's hard-boiled detective—Lawrence belongs to the rich high society; wears a tuxedo, a top hat and carries a walking stick; has a side kick; Lawrence is engaged but still becomes involved with numerous women; and solving crimes is more of a hobby for him (see fig.

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[116] Chandler sold the rights to his novel *Farewell, My Lovely* in 1941 for $2,000 to the RKO studio (Luhr *Raymond Chandler and Film* 101). The "Falcon" series (1941–1949) produced sixteen films and the working title of the *Falcon Takes Over* film was also *The Falcon Steps Out*.

[117] "The character of the Falcon was created by Michael Arlen in a 1940 story, Gay Falcon, which, almost immediately, became an RKO film and, subsequently, a movie series. The early Falcon films followed the Arlen story to this extent: the hero, played by George Sanders, was then named Gay Lawrence, using his Falcon identity in his dealings with the underworld. Sanders tired of the film role and, in The Falcon's Brother (RKO, 1942), the character was killed onscreen, leaving the Falcon's brother, thereafter played by Sanders's brother, Tom Conway, to carry on" (Dunning 239). Arlen's original character is named Gay Stanhope Falcon, thus his nickname, which was by the first film in the series changed to Gay Lawrence. Moreover, Arlen's character was more like Sam Spade or Philip Marlowe kind of man—"a hard-boiled, sardonic detective, not like the charming and romantic rogue of the movie series" (Ellery Queen qtd. in Backer 171).

19). Chandler's philosophy of what a private detective should be is a contrast to what Lawrence represents—the detective should be a loner,[118] he

> never really has any private life . . . His moral and intellectual force is that he gets nothing but fee, for which he will if he can protect the innocent, guard the helpless, and destroy the wicked, and the fact that he must do this while earning a meager living in a corrupt world is what makes him stand out. A rich idler has nothing to lose but his dignity; the professional is subject to all the pressure of an urban civilization and must rise above them to do his job. Because he represents justice and not the law, he will sometimes defy or break the law. Because he is human he can be hurt or beguiled or fooled; in extreme necessity he may even kill. But he does nothing solely for himself. (Chandler qtd. in Day).

Fig. 19. Gay Lawrence "The Falcon"

Lawrence's supremacy over other male characters in the film is, primarily, given by his high societal ranking and, secondarily, due to his intellectual dominance. His

[118] This private dick "premise," not being married, is in Chandler's final novel *Poodle Springs* (1989) abandoned when Marlowe marries Linda. However, that may be attributed to the fact that Robert B. Parker is the one who completed the novel—unlike Marlowe, his detective Spenser is in a committed relationship with a woman named Susan Silverman (they meet in the second novel *God Save the Child*).

partner Jonathan "Goldy" Locke "provides direct comic contrast to the elegant Gay Lawrence. . . . his trademarks are his Brooklyn accent and continual malapropisms such as 'corpus delicious' and 'miscarriage of justice'" (Luhr *Raymond Chandler and Film* 102). Goldy is Lawrence's loyal friend/chauffeur (see fig. 20) who, along with the butler Jerry, tries to keep Lawrence out of trouble, especially away from women—he is trying to discourage Ann Riordan by telling her that Lawrence "is a pushover for a pretty face, he will spring you along and then drop you like an old shoe" (*The Falcon Takes Over*). Goldy is scared of Malloy throughout the entire film, he is nervous and jumpy—Lawrence takes Goldy by his hand when they are approaching Florian's house. These two characters are contrasted in a way they complement each other, Lawrence the smart, classy and fearless, and Goldy the funny, luckless and scared. Unlike Goldy, Lawrence uses his wit when he faces the enraged Malloy—he plays drunk in front of Florian's house, thus Malloy ignores him.

Fig. 20. Jonathan "Goldy" Locke

Another male character that is in constant competition with Lawrence is the Chief of police, Mike O'Hara, always accompanied by his dull-witted assistant. Unlike the

novel, where Marlowe and Randall respect each other and exchange information,[119] the film provides a picture of incompetent police in opposition to an extremely intelligent amateur investigator. O'Hara and Lawrence constantly spare verbally, they make use of a lot of wisecracks. Moreover, from a visual point of view, Lawrence is the dominant one—he towers over O'Hara. Lawrence is an affluent, slick, elegant, smooth talking womanizer[120] who seems unaffected by tense situations, he keeps his cool. When shot at at a graveyard or when held at gunpoint in a car, Lawrence does not show his fear, or any emotions at all. Even though he is not the tough hard-boiled private detective, using his fists, he manages to avoid violence, to be physically harmed, by being witty—he loads a gun with blanks and when he is seemingly controlled by the femme fatale with a gun the police is in pursuit since he had already alarmed them. Moreover, Lawrence is sure of his intellectual superiority over police, especially Chief O'Hara: "this seems pretty much routine, I think I'll do better in a movie" (*The Falcon Takes Over*). Since Lawrence has a sidekick, Goldy is the one who is sent on the dangerous meetings that in the novel caused Marlowe most physical and also emotional harm—encounters with Malloy, his visit at Amthor's and the subsequent drugging and beating in Dr. Sonderborg's sanatorium.

[119] Randall is a homicide lieutenant who is professional and in time finds respect for Marlowe, he becomes aware of his detective skills. They visit Mrs. Florian together and find her body, their joint investigation strengthens their professional relationship and comradery may have developed: "We got friendly this morning. Let's stay that way" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 313). At the end they talk about the fate of Mrs. Grayle/Velma. Marlowe considers Randall a "slim, smart and deadly . . . who for all [his] smartness and deadliness [was] not free to do a clean job in a clean way" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 329).

[120] Lawrence has a habit of kissing and then running—he kisses Diana, Ann and an unknown woman in a club. After each "kissing" encounter he flees. Moreover, his frequent escapades with women are further emphasized when he is approached by a woman in a club who calls him by a fake name he gave her. His fondness of women is also supported by Goldy's remark: "dames and trouble, they go together with you;" and when Lawrence admits to Diana that he frequently gets into difficult situations because he is "always a sucker for beautiful women" (*The Falcon Takes Over*).

However, the film excludes Dr. Sonderborg and turns Jules Amthor[121] into an Oriental fortune teller, a swami, with a turban and a crystal ball, who is eventually strangled by Malloy (see fig. 21). Moreover, Lindsay Marriott, the feminized blackmailer that Mrs. Grayle killed with a blackjack in the novel, in the film becomes a blackmailing playboy (see fig. 22). Hints at Marriott's homosexuality are erased by stating that Lawrence was doing a "bodyguard for a playboy" and that Diana Kenyon (novel's Mrs. Grayle/Velma), who "plays the field" (*The Falcon Takes Over*), had a relationship with Marriott. Lawrence is hired by Marriott to retrieve stolen jewels for his lady friend, as is Marlowe in the novel. However, in the film Marriott does not seem scared or in need of protection as in the novel—he drives his car and seems calm. It is due to his task, to kill Lawrence. However, Marriott is double crossed, Lawrence loads the gun with blanks and then Marriott is killed by an unknown shooter.[122] Marriott becomes a liability in a blackmail ring run by Burnett and Diana Kenyon. For his weakness he is, therefore, being disposed of.

[121] Chandler made Amthor a loathsome character who blackmailed gullible rich people: "Jules Amthor, Psychic Consultant. Consultations by Appointment Only. Give him enough time and pay him enough money and he'll cure anything from a jaded husband to a grasshopper plague. He would be an expert in frustrated love affairs, women who slept alone and didn't like it, wandering boys and girls who didn't write home, sell the property now or hold it for another year, will this part hurt me with my public or make me seem more versatile? Men would sneak in on him too, big strong guys that roared like lions around their offices and were all cold mush under their vests. But mostly it would be women, fat women that panted and thin women that burned, old women that dreamed and young women that thought they might have Electra complexes, women of all sizes, shapes and ages, but with one thing in common-money; No Thursdays at the County Hospital for Mr. Jules Amthor. Cash on the line for him. Rich bitches who had to be dunned for their milk bills would pay him right now" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 236).

[122] Interestingly, no one in the film admits shooting Marriott—Diana at the end only confesses that it was Burnett's idea to get rid of Marriott. The film does not reveal the identity of the shooter. In the novel it is Mrs. Grayle/Velma who is responsible for Marriott's coldblooded, pre-mediated murder.

Fig. 21. Jules Amthor—the swami

Fig. 22. Lindsay Marriott

Since Lawrence belongs to the New York's riches, the novel's opening scene when Malloy looks for Velma in a colored neighborhood—"one of the mixed blocks . . . that are not yet all negro" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 167)—is in the film moved to a posh club. Here Malloy stands out, even if he is not in a colored neighborhood—he is made gigantic, the actor's coat is evidently stuffed to make him even larger. Moreover, Malloy is not dressed properly for the high society of the Club 13 (see fig. 23). Chandler's lively description of Malloy's clothes and thus his awkward presence is adopted by the film in an agreeable way—"He was a big man but not more than six feet five inches tall and not wider than a beer truck. . . . His arms hung loose at his aides and a forgotten cigar smoked behind his enormous fingers. . . . He wore a shaggy borsalino hat, a rough gray sports coat with white golf balls on it for buttons, a brown shirt, a yellow tie, pleated gray flannel slacks and alligator shoes with white explosions on the toes. From his outer breast pocket cascaded a show handkerchief of the same brilliant yellow as his tie. There were a couple of colored feathers tucked into the band of his hat, but he didn't really need them" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 167). In the film Malloy is an ex-wrestler, a fugitive who broke out of a jail, he was charged with manslaughter. Since Malloy has almost no contact with the leading character, Lawrence, Malloy's intentions behind his

search for Velma are not revealed to the audience. In the novel, Velma is the love of his life whom he has lost and wants to reunite with. In *The Falcon Takes Over* Malloy, by the end of the film, realizes that she allied with Burnette, the man Malloy went to prison for. At the end of the film it is not the lovesick Malloy who is happy to see his Velma—"I listened to that voice for eight years – all I could remember of it" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 359). However, in the film he is portrayed as an angry deceived lover ready to kill the source of his miseries (see fig. 24)—"Hello baby. It hurt you couldn't come . . . so it's you and Burnett, ha? That's my payoff for taking his rap? . . . Why did you do it baby?" (*The Falcon Takes Over*).

Fig. 23. Malloy at the club

Fig. 24. Deceived and angry Malloy

Even though this film altered many characters taken from Chandler's novel to its needs, it kept two female characters, Jessie Florian and Ann Riordan very close to Chandler's depiction. Jessie Florian (see fig. 25) is an old shadowy woman with "gray and puffy [face] . . . weedy hair of that vague color which is neither brown nor blond, that hasn't enough life in it to be ginger, and isn't clean enough to be gray. . . . thick [body] in a shapeless outing flannel bathrobe many moons past color and design. It was just something around her body. Her toes were large and obvious in a pair of man's slippers

of scuffed brown leather" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 183). As in the novel, Lawrence's investigation leads him to Florian's house—she is not pleased to see him. In the film her alcoholism is toned down, Lawrence does not try to bribe her with alcohol but money. She is not afraid of Lawrence and is ready to hit him with an empty bottle, Lawrence seems completely unaffected by the imminent threat; he calmly and assertively orders het to sit down—"you are not dealing with a simple minded lug like Moose Malloy" (*The Falcon Takes Over*). However, Mrs. Florian does not give up that easily, she yells at Lawrence and upon his exit throws a bottle at him,[123] with eyes of "peculiar . . . murderous glassiness" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 187). Even though she is a woman that can take care of herself, she is no match for Malloy who strangles her when trying to get information about the whereabouts of his long lost Velma.

Fig. 25. Jessie Florian

[123] In the novel she is also an angry old woman who tries to keep her blackmailing scheme intact: "The tawny mangled brows worked up and down. Her hand opened and the whiskey bottle slid to the carpet and began to gurgle. I bent to pick it up. She tried to kick me in the face. I stepped away from her. . . . After a long time she moved one lip over the other and spoke to the floor, a meaningless jumble of words from which nothing emerged. Then she laughed and threw her head back and drooled. Then her right hand reached for the bottle and it rattled against her teeth as she drained it. When it was empty she held it up and shook it and threw it at me. It went off in the corner somewhere, skidding along the carpet and bringing up with a thud against the baseboard" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 189).

In contrast to Mrs. Florian, who does not want to cooperate with Lawrence, there is Ann Riordan, an energetic female character ready to aid the self-appointed detective. Ann is in the film introduced while shadowing Lawrence, what leads her to the scene of Marriott's murder. As in the novel, Ann is not afraid and bravely holds Lawrence at gunpoint:[124] "I am holding a ten shot automatic and I can shoot . . . stay where you are and reach for the sky or I let you have it!" (*The Falcon Takes Over*). Ann claims that she has a degree in journalism and is in pursuit of an article that should secure her a job in a newspaper, she wants to crack the Malloy case (see fig. 26). Lawrence is, obviously, more interested in her appearance than in the possibility of a partnership and support in his investigation. She is determined to find out to whom the stolen necklace belongs, Lawrence thinks it is a dead end and tells her that she should forget about it, that he can find a job for her instead; but she refuses, she gets her own jobs. Ann declares her independence and determination. As in the novel, she is a valuable source for the investigation, she finds out who the owner of the stolen jewels is and sets up an interview. Moreover, when sent to the police station to acquire more information, she is able to provide Lawrence with an important clue—Malloy went to prison for Burnett's crime. Ann is a rare appearance in mystery crime films, a strong female character that is equally capable of investigation as the male detective. Jerry, Lawrence's butler, warns her about her unconventional determination: "I warn you madam, female bull fighters are a particularly dangerous species of femininity" (*The Falcon Takes Over*). Even though she is obviously attracted to Lawrence she holds on to her goal—to become a legitimate newspaper reporter. At the end, when Lawrence thinks that her jealousy made her follow him she states: "I followed you only because of my interest in the journalistic aspects of this case, Mr. Lawrence" (*The Falcon Takes Over*).

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[124] Anne Riordan in the novel: "Listen, stranger. I'm holding a ten shot automatic. I can shoot straight. Both your feet are vulnerable. What do you bid?" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 211).

Fig. 26. Brave Ann Riordan

However, when Ann is in the presence of Diana Kenyon, the femme fatale, she becomes a mere "innocent little girl" (*The Falcon Takes Over*). Lawrence completely loses interest in her when the blond Diana in a night gown appears (see fig. 27).[125] Diana entices Lawrence, he cannot help himself and instead of shaking her hand goodbye, they kiss. Later on they meet in Burnett's club where he confirms his suspicion that Diana is in fact Malloy's Velma. She tries to deceive Lawrence and is ready to kill him. But as it turns out Malloy was eavesdropping at the club and learned that she and Burnett deceived him, therefore he poses as Diana's chauffer. Malloy is ready to kill her when she shoots him, than she tries to get rid of Lawrence as well but he manages to overpower her and she is ultimately sent to prison (see fig. 28). A strong and deadly femme fatale from the novel is in the film turned into a woman who cooperates with other men to keep their blackmailing scam running.

[125] DIANA. Are you interested in the necklace too?
LAWRENCE. I am much more interested in its owner.
DIANA. It's strange that we haven't met before.
LAWRENCE. It's stranger still if we don't meet again.
DIANA. Can probably be arranged. (*The Falcon Takes Over*)

Fig. 27. Ann is "invisible" in Diana's presence

Fig. 28. Imprisoned femme fatale

At the end everyone is punished for their crimes, Lawrence is celebrated for his, yet another, investigative success and Ann gets her article published. The film version creates a predictable black-and-white dichotomy that ensures that the crime has been disciplined and the amateur sleuth ends up the one capable of delivering the justice. Chandler in the novel lets the femme fatale decide about her fate—she escapes after shooting Malloy and only after three months, when she is found in a bar, and is cornered by a cop she shoots "herself clean through the heart – twice" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 366). Unlike Diana who is captured and will be prosecuted, along with Burnett, for manslaughter, Chandler's Velma could have walked free: "We'd never have convicted her, not with her looks and money and the persecution story these high-priced guys would build up. Poor little girl from a dive climbs to be wife of rich man and the vultures that used to know her won't let her alone. . . . She did a smart thing to run off on her own and leave Grayle out of it, but it would have been smarter to have come home when she was caught" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 366).

None of the male characters presented in *The Falcon Takes Over* are able to measure up to the leading male, Gay Lawrence. Lawrence serves as an epitome of pre-

noir masculinity—he is witty, sophisticated, ready to help any woman in need, and does not shy away from romantic involvement with these women. At the end of the film, even though he declares his devotion to his fiancée—"My fiancée is waiting, I have pledged my life to her alone"—he is ready to aid a group of desperate beautiful dancers. Ann remarks: "back to his old game" (*The Falcon Takes Over*).

5.2.2 *Murder, My Sweet* (1944)

> Now this is beginning to make sense in a screwy sort of a way. I get dragged in, get money shoved at me. I get pushed out, get money shoved at me. Everybody pushes me in, everybody pushes me out. Nobody wants me to do anything. Okay. Put a check in the mail. I cost a lot not to do anything. I get restless. Throw in a trip to Mexico.
>
> —*Murder, My Sweet* (1944)

For the producer, Adrian Scott, *Murder, My Sweet* (1944) "was a labor of love," he was looking for "a project that would launch his producing career with a bang, he found Raymond Chandler's pulp novel *Farewell, My Lovely*" which "for Scott and his progressive cohort who wanted to 'tell it like it is,' . . . held enormous appeal: the frank sexuality, lust, and passion; the colliding worlds of the mean streets and the mansions of Los Angeles, a collision that exposed a gritty underbelly of greed, corruption, and class politics" (Krutnik et al. 154).

Murder, My Sweet (1944) is the second attempt to adapt Chandler's novel *Farewell, My Lovely* for the screen.[126] Nonetheless, the film is the first in which Chandler's private detective appears under the name Philip Marlowe. However, "the film is noteworthy . . . for the fact that Chandler—unusually—was impressed by the way in which Paxton [the screenwriter] translated his novel for the screen"[127] (Widdicombe 173). The film is narrated in a voice-over by Marlowe, which tends to emulate the spirit of the novel's first person narration—Chandler's use of "the lowly private eye formula to map entire society" (Naremore 234).

The director of the film, Edward Dmytryk, retains the main storyline of the novel—Marlowe's search for Velma and her subsequent deadly response to maintain her newly gained identity. The opening scene of the film introduces Marlowe who is blindfolded. He is interrogated at the police station after he was found with two dead bodies. Marlowe seems defenseless, as police detective Nulty tells him "I remember you as a pretty noisy little fellow, son. All of a sudden you get quiet" (*Murder, My Sweet*).

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[126] The original intention by the RKO studio was to keep the novel's title for the film but "the name was changed because the film was a vehicle for Dick Powel, a lead player in musicals, who was attempting to broaden his serious acting capacity; the studio feared that audiences would think the original title would be interpreted as another Dock Powel musical" (Kolker).

[127] Chandler made a lot of money in Hollywood but he always loathed the way Hollywood system worked because "Hollywood is poison to any writer, the graveyard to talent" (Chandler qtd. in Day). Therefore, he believed that "Hollywood is a showman's paradise. But showmen make nothing; they exploit what someone else has made. The publisher and the play producer are showmen too; but they exploit what is already made. The showmen of Hollywood control the making—and thereby degrade it. For the basic art of motion pictures is the screenplay; it is fundamental, without it there is nothing. Everything derives from the screenplay, and most of that which derives is an applied skill which, however adept, is artistically not in the same class with the creation of a screenplay. But in Hollywood the screenplay in written by a salaried writer under the supervision of a producer—that is to say, by an employee without power or decision over the uses of his own craft, without ownership of it, and, however extravagantly paid, almost without honor for it. . . . I am not interested in why the Hollywood system exists or persists, nor in learning out of what bitter struggles for prestige it arose, nor in how much money it succeeds in making out of bad pictures. I am interested only in the fact that as a result of it there is no such thing as an art of the screenplay, and there never will be as long as the system lasts, for it is the essence of this system that it seeks to exploit a talent without permitting it the right to be a talent. It cannot be done; you can only destroy the talent, which is exactly what happens—when there is any to destroy" (Chandler "Writers in Hollywood").

After this scene the story is further narrated by Marlowe, in an extended flashback which is his confession, defense and explanation of his actions.[128]

This film, like many noir films of the 1940s era that were marked by the Production Code, was not permitted to frankly depict any racial issues that, on the contrary, prevailed in the United States at that time. The multi-ethnic cast of characters found in the novel is reduced into more homogeneous whiteness, the film creates a picture of all-white American society. Chandler's original opening scene, where Marlowe appears in the black neighborhood searching for a runaway barber named Dimitrios Aleidis and meets Moose Malloy who kills an African-American man is markedly altered—Marlowe is "looking for a barber named Dominic" (*Murder, My Sweet*). Therefore, Chandler's allusions to racial issues are completely erased. Marlowe's narration continues, he encounters Moose Malloy, who hires Marlowe to find his lost love Velma Valento. They visit a "joint" named *Florian's* where Velma used to sing, but it is not "jes' fo' the colored people" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 170), as it is in the novel, in the film it is an ordinary bar with only white customers (see fig. 29). Here Malloy does not kill anyone, thus the audience is "deprived" of the portrayal of detective Nulty's negative attitude towards African-Americans. Furthermore, in the novel, Marlowe's search for Jessie Florian would not be accomplished without help from a "peaceful brown man" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 179), a clerk at the hotel across the street. In the film, however, Marlowe is self-sufficient. It is the racial climate of that era that this film is trying to avoid but this "race absence in original film noir . . . contradicts the prodigious growth of the black presence in the cities themselves" (Murphet 28).

[128] The flashback is a frequently used technique in numerous noir films, e.g. *Laura* (1944), *The Killers* (1946), *Double Indemnity* (1944), *Out of the Past* (1947), and many others.

Fig. 29. A bar with all white customers

Chandler's Moose Malloy is a grotesque character, a simple-minded huge man, with unusually large hands, who on the streets of Los Angeles looks "about as inconspicuous as a tarantula on a slice of angel food" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 167). Even though this character is a crude murderer who lives a simple life, he is motivated by the innocence of his love for Velma. Marlowe is the only one who tries to sympathize with this not-so-gentle brute, he understands and believes Malloy's motivations, his romantic illusions. However, Malloy's passion for Velma becomes his doom, when she betrays and kills him in cold blood:

> It didn't matter to him that she hadn't written to him in six years or ever gone to see him while he was in jail. It didn't matter to him that she had turned him in for a reward. He just bought some fine clothes and started to look for her the first thing when he got out. So she pumped five bullets into him, by way of saying hello. He had killed two people himself, but he was in love with her. What a world. (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 363)

The film made Malloy a threatening man who towers over every male he encounters—he is given a more prominent role in the film than he is given by Chandler in his novel (see fig. 30). Paxton, the screenwriter, "made him more simple-minded that Chandler did, less articulate, more monosyllabic—and consequently . . . more menacing" (Paxton qtd. in Robson 50). The film turns him into a gullible giant who is looking for the love of his life and does not want to give up. Marlowe feels a sort of compassion towards him, even though he sides with Amthor who keeps Marlowe drugged in Sonderborg's sanatorium, and at the end finds his Velma—Mrs. Grayle—for him. Marlowe is the only man who is able to control him and the only one who survives an encounter with Moose Malloy.

Fig. 30. Moose Malloy (left)

Philip Marlowe is a different kind of a hard-boiled detective than Hammett's Spade. Spade's code of honor helps him keep his distance from people, he emotionally detaches himself from them. Marlowe, unlike Spade does not even have a secretary. Marlowe is a chivalrous, solitary, tough guy who is plagued by many moral dilemmas caused by different individuals that he encounters rummaging the seedy streets of Los Angeles. Marlowe's sentiment and his delving into the complexity of human nature

makes him one of a kind among the hard-boiled hard-bitten detectives. Characters of Moose Malloy and Red Norgaard[129] are a tool that Chandler uses to expose Marlowe's sentimentality and vulnerability.

On the other hand, the character of Lindsay Marriott, the gigolo of deviant sexuality, functions as an enhancement of Marlowe's masculinity.[130] This contrast of the two characters is also adopted by the film when Marlowe finds Marriott rummaging through things in his office upon his return from Mrs. Florian—Marriott is, at the first sight, Marlowe's opposite. From the visual point of view: Marriott is dressed in white and with elegance,[131] his less masculine body type is stressed by wearing a coat that is too large for him, while Marlowe has a close-fitting dark coat on (see fig. 31).

Fig. 31. Marlowe vs. Marriott (right)

[129] He is an ex-cop who transports Marlowe on a ferry to Burnett's gambling ship. A very likeable character whom Marlowe admires and trusts—the only one in the whole novel. Marlowe, by clearing up all the murders and uncovering the corruption within the Bay City police force, helps Red get his job back.

[130] His "not-straight" sexuality is by Chandler also marked by this character's first name, Lindsay, a typical female name.

[131] Marlowe's description of Marriott was also adopted by the film into a visual style: "a tall blond man in a white flannel suit with a violet satin scarf around his neck. There was a cornflower in the lapel of his white coat and his pale blue eyes looked faded out by comparison. The violet scarf was loose enough to show that he wore no tie and that he had a thick, soft brown neck, like the neck of a strong woman. His features were a little on the heavy side, but handsome, he had an inch more of height than I had, which made him six feet one. His blond hair was arranged, by art or nature, in three precise blond ledges which reminded me of steps, so that I didn't like them. I wouldn't have liked them anyway. Apart from all this he had the general appearance of a lad who would wear a white flannel suit with a violet scarf around his neck and a cornflower in his lapel" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 197–8).

Marlowe questions Marriott's masculinity when he replies with a disdain to Marriott's threats: "I tremble at the thought of such violence" (*Murder, My Sweet*). The film makes a great effort to code Marriott as homosexual and focuses on his importunately feminine behavior. Another allusion to Marriott's sexual orientation, in the film portrayed as deviant, from the physical perspective, is provided when a lift-boy observes that "he smells real nice" (*Murder, My Sweet*). In the novel Marriott's homosexuality is hinted at via description of his house, with "peach-colored velvet . . . nice soft furniture, a great many floor cushions" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 198). And also by Marlowe's sensations during his short visit in Marriott's house—"It was a nice room, if you didn't get rough . . . the kind of room where people sit with their feet in their laps and sip absinthe through lumps of sugar and talk with high affected voices and sometimes just squeak. It was a room where anything could happen except work" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 198).

As in the novel, Marlowe is hired by Marriott to guard him on a secret "rendezvous" with thieves that stole a jade necklace from a friend of his and he is buying it back. Again, Marlowe's physical dominance and maleness over Marriott, is expressed here—Marlowe is the one who is protecting an apparently weak and frightened Marriott (see fig. 32). In this scene Marlowe is knocked unconscious: "I caught the blackjack right behind my ear. A black pool opened up at my feet. I dived in. It had no bottom. I felt pretty good. Like an amputated leg" (*Murder, My Sweet*). When he wakes up, he finds Marriott dead, his head is bashed: Marriott "was doubled up on his face in that bag-of-old-clothes position that always means the same thing: He had been killed by an amateur...or by somebody who wanted it to look like an amateur job. Nobody else would hit a man that many times with a sap" (*Murder, My Sweet*).

Fig. 32. Marlowe—the protector (left)

In the film adaptation, Marlowe meets Ann Grayle (in the novel, Anne Riordan) for the first time. Ann finds Marlowe lying on the ground, thinks that he has killed Marriott, and runs away (see fig. 33). In the novel, Anne Riordan "bravely holds him at bay with her automatic and demonstrates her grid by verbally sparring with the detective in his own hard-boiled jargon" (Athanasourelis *Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe* 164) "Move and I will drill you!" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 213). Anne in the novel, demonstrates her fearlessness and thus appears as a self-assured, bold and independent woman, she is depicted as a female equal to Marlowe.[132] Anne, a policeman's daughter, admires Marlowe and she wants to help him investigate the murder of Marriott. Ann Riordan is a rare female character in Chandler's fiction, Marlowe seems to like her and enjoys her company:

> She was about twenty-eight years old. She had a rather narrow forehead of more height than is considered elegant. Her nose was small and inquisitive, her upper

[132] The novel's Anne Riordan upon discovering Marlowe next to a corpse: "my name is Riordan . . . Anne. And don't call me Annie. . . . Sometimes at night I go riding. Just restless. I live alone. I'm an orphan. I know all this neighborhood like a book. I just happened to be riding along and noticed a light flickering down in the hollow. It seemed a little cold for love. . . . I had a gun. I wasn't afraid. There's no law against going down there. . . . Strange how curious people can be, isn't it? I write a little. Feature articles" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 215–6).

lip a shade too long and her mouth more than a shade too wide. Her eyes were gray-blue with flecks of gold in them. She had a nice smile. She looked as if she had slept well. It was a nice face, a face you get to like. Pretty, but not so pretty that you would have to wear brass knuckles every time you took it out. (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 225)

Fig. 33. Scared Ann upon discovering Marlowe

Even though they are attracted to each other, their relationship is kept professional, no romance develops between them. Chandler creates an equal, balanced relationship between a man and a woman, while the film always places the man as dominant over the woman. Ann Grayle is in the film projected more as an ideal woman to marry, from a patriarchal point of view—she is from a financially secure family, she is caring and devoted to her father. Her character, independence and boldness are reduced to obedience and jealousy which is emphasized by Marlowe when he tells her: "I like you but I'm too old to play games. If you're jealous of your stepmother, we can talk about that tomorrow. I don't want you two tangling in public" (*Murder, My Sweet*). She is doing everything for the sake of her father and his happiness. She is not equal to Marlowe; she needs him to

be able to fight her stepmother.[133] Moreover, their relationship is depicted as romantic and it also portrays Marlowe as a predator, the dominant figure, while Ann is the one who resists and plays a role of a virtuous woman. This is apparent in the scene when Marlowe comes to her apartment after being drugged and beaten in Dr. Sonderborg's sanatorium. In the novel Marlowe comes to her house for safety, he calls it a "sanctuary" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 291), she hurriedly opens the door and upon the sight of Marlowe "her eyes went wide and scared. The face under the glare of the porchlight was suddenly pale . . . she looked worried" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 291–2). In the film, Ann tries to throw him out but Marlowe forces himself into her place and replies: "that's no way to talk to your loved one when he comes to you from the bunk of the grave" (*Murder, My Sweet*). Ann is, evidently, an independent woman who owns an apartment but, on the other hand, with Marlowe present, she is playing a role of a submissive housewife, she submits to his requests—she gives him a jar to open and when Nulty and Randall arrive Marlowe acts as if he owned the place (see fig. 34): "Come in Nulty, make yourself at home" (*Murder, My Sweet*).

Marlowe and Ann, together, are presented as a married couple and Ann's character of a modern, independent woman is lost. Her complex character, of fearless Marlowe's female partner, described in the novel, was simplified in the film producing an image of an American housewife of the 1940s.

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[133] MARLOWE. You don't like anybody that has anything to do with Helen. Are you trying to reform her?
ANNE. I hate her!
MARLOWE. That doesn't make sense.
ANNE. I hate her, but she's marries to my father and she means a great deal to him. I'm fond of my father. It's more than being fond . . . I just don't want anything to hurt him. (*Murder, My Sweet*)

Fig. 34. The perfect couple

Ann's young and beautiful step-mother, Mrs. Helen Grayle/Velma Valento, is the film's femme fatale.[134] Mrs. Grayle is a wealthy, exceptionally attractive, manipulative, deadly and double-dealing wife of an old affluent man. She is also the one who was, allegedly, mugged and dispossessed of a jade necklace. Mrs. Gayle lives in colonial mansion, her newly gained wealth is thus emphasized. Marlowe often ridicules and disdains the luxury of the Grayles and the high society as such. His contempt for the rich is coded in comical scenes: when he is hop scotching on the checkered floor in Grayles' "mausoleum" and when he lights his match on the backside of a baby-angel statue.

When Marlowe meets Mrs. Grayle he does not hide his appreciation of her beauty, which is made spectacular by the camera's focus on her sitting in an armchair with an exposed belly and thigh (see fig. 35).

[134] Noir women like Ann, the "good wife" type, hate noir femmes fatales, "especially the big-league blondes. Beautiful, expensive babes who know what they've got. All bubble bath and dewy morning and moonlight…and inside, blue-steel cold! Cold like that, only not that clean" (*Murder, My Sweet*).

Fig. 35. First look at Helen Grayle

Many other shots of Mrs. Grayle picture her alone, e.g. when she comes to Marlowe's apartment,[135] or when she is in the beach house putting an overcoat on, she stands on a dais elevating herself over Marlowe (see fig. 36). These shots attribute to her features of exceptionality but also individuality, and they represent her as an object of fascination. She is a female character that is much more feminized in the film than the rest of the female cast, Ann and Mrs. Florian. Mrs. Grayle is a true femme fatale who tries to manipulate Marlowe by seducing him, he is resisting. In the novel, her seductive techniques are more explicit than in the film.[136] Nevertheless, the inexplicitness of her sexual manipulation, which may be attributed to the Production Code restrictions, does not weaken her allure by which she manages to entice Marlowe.

[135] The scene in Marlowe's apartment matches Marlowe's sexual desire for Mrs. Grayle with hers for him when she lustfully checks him out while he is changing his clothes—"You've got a nice build for a private detective . . . You don't mind my sizing you up a little?" (*Murder, My Sweet*).

[136] "She fell softly across my lap and I bent down over her face and began to browse on it. She worked her eyelashes and made butterfly kisses on my cheeks. When I got to her mouth it was half open and burning and her tongue was a darting snake between her teeth. The door opened and Mr. Grayle stepped quietly into the room. I was holding her and didn't have a chance to let go. I lifted my face and looked at him. I felt as cold as Finnegan's feet, the day they buried him" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 258). Chandler in the novel also, ironically, alludes to the force of the Production Code in the matter of displaying sexuality—when he is in Mrs. Florian's house he looks through photographs on which are women that "had good legs and displayed their inside curves more than Will Hays would have liked" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 187). Will Hays was the President of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA) and the initiator of the reorganization of the film industry by posing restrictions upon the filmmakers.

Fig. 36. Mrs. Grayle at the beach house

Nevertheless, *Murder, My Sweet*, presents Mrs. Grayle as an "evil, all evil" (*Murder, My Sweet*) woman with no morals, who is also very good at manipulating men. In the adaptation, Mrs. Grayle plays the "damsel in distress" role, attempting to justify her wrongdoing as the only possibility left to her. She tries to bribe Marlowe to win his trust to help her kill a man, Malloy. In the novel, she is a self-confident cold-blooded killer conscious of what she has done—she kills Marriot with a blackjack and shoots Molloy five times before escaping. The film's final scene does not resemble the end of the novel: when everyone is gathered in the beach house, Mrs. Grayle is killed by her husband (see fig. 37)—she ends up being punished for her moral failures; not for being greedy and murderous but for her open sexuality and unfaithfulness. In the novel, as stated earlier, she escapes and turns a gun on herself to spare the old Mr. Grayle of being tortured by the media, proving she has a set of ethics and showing some sensitivity to other people's feelings. Unlike the film adaptation, Chandler avoids the implication that Mrs. Grayle is no more than a manipulative and egotistical female predator: "maybe she saw a chance—not to get away . . . but to give a break to the only man who had ever really given her one" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 366).

Fig. 37. Mr. Grayle shoots his wife

The modification of Mrs. Grayle's character in the film may be attributed to the post-war social malaise that altered gender relations more sharply. As described in the third chapter, the gender roles, and therefore, home and domestic relationships were threatened by the mayhem of the Second World War. The accustomed role of women as housewives and mothers was changed with the outbreak of the war, women had to substitute men, and thus, their role in domestic sphere gained another dimension, they became breadwinners. Some men who returned from the front felt unnecessary and betrayed because of the altered social order. Therefore, when noir films portray women as dominant, predatory and independent they have to be punished at the end for their digression from the stereotypical organization of male and female relationship so that the "proper" social order may be reestablished.

The next female figure that Marlowe encounters on his quest is Jessie Florian, a difficult and shadowy woman, an alcoholic, a widow dressed in her husband's bathrobe, who represents the miseries of the Los Angeles' indigent citizens (see fig. 38). Her house represents "spaces of poverty of marginalized people and things" (Copjec 51) that are constituents of Chandler's picture of society. However, Mrs. Florian, is not given enough space in this adaptation. Dressed in her deceased husband's bathrobe, she is depicted as

a desperate and deceptive woman, who is trying to mislead Marlowe to make sure her blackmailing scheme is not jeopardized. In the novel, and also in the first film adaptation, she is more aggressive—she tries to kick and throw an empty bottle at Marlowe—and she is definitely under the influence of alcohol. The adaptation turns an ugly but sadly realistic picture of a drunken woman into a simple masquerade: she pretends to be drunk to deceive Marlowe.[137] Unlike the novel, and the first filmic adaptation, *Murder, My Sweet* fails to portray her fictional destiny—to be killed by Molloy: "Mrs. Jessie Pierce Florian lay diagonally across the bed, in a rumpled cotton house dress, with her head close to one end of the footboard. . . . 'Brains on her face' . . . this was done with just a pair of hands. But Jesus, what a pair of hands. Look at the neck bruises, the spacing of the finger marks" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 310). She does not appear on screen again.

Fig. 38. Jessie Florian

Murder, My Sweet is usually described as one of the ultimate representatives of film noir. It contains all the essential elements that are recognized as noir: curt but tough detective, gorgeous femme fatale, murders incorporated into a twisty mystery,

[137] When she thinks that Marlowe left "suddenly, she wasn't drunk anymore. Her hand was steady, and she was cool…like somebody making funeral arrangements for a murder not yet committed" (*Murder, My Sweet*).

blackmailing and corrupted villains. However, Dmytryk's objective in *Murder, My Sweet* seems to have been to capture, "to deal with the cluster of things that constitute Chandler's style" (Luhr *Raymond Chandler and Film* 12)—mood and rhythm of his writing—rather than concentrate on Chandler's reference to morally ambiguous realities of American society which form major themes found in his novel. [138] Chandler created a miscellaneous world where the distinction between the good and the bad is not clear-cut. The majority of characters in *Murder, My Sweet*, which function as projections of Chandler's themes, appear as bounded, they are either positive, without the shades of grey: Ann Grayle, Mr. Grayle, Lt. Randall, or thoroughly negative: Amthor, Dr. Sonderborg, Jessie Florian and Mrs. Grayle.[139] Therefore, the film by adding the character of a true virtuous woman, Ann Grayle—the redeemer—created a balance between good and bad/evil, a simplistic black-and-white noir dichotomy. Moreover, by turning Ann into a woman worthy of Marlowe's affection, making Malloy an illiterate lovelorn goon, Amthor an old quack,[140] and Mr. Grayle a lovesick elderly man, the film emphasizes Marlowe's masculinity. In this lonesome noir world of *Murder, My Sweet*, Marlowe does not have an equal, male or female, no one he could look up to—Ltd. Randall, Anne Riordan or Red Norgaard.

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[138] *Murder, My Sweet* keeps its promise from the theatrical trailer and forces Marlowe "on the trail that leads to *Dangerous* romantic adventures!"

[139] Archetypal characters of corrupt police from hard-boiled fiction are omitted in this film. In the novel, Chandler critically pictures the corruption of the law. The Bay City is the place where Marlowe is beaten by Blaine and Galbraith, police officers working under a venal Chief Wax, and drugged by Dr. Sonderborg. The film presents corruption only through villains as Jules Amthor and Dr. Sonderborg. Marlowe demonstrates his antipathy and contempt towards the "inaccessible" Amthor and his profession when he tells Amthor: "they told me not to get too close to you, said you'd bite. You look harmless to me. Don't go to any special trouble. I bring my own crystal ball" (*Murder, My Sweet*). Jules Amthor is a charlatan psychic consultant who takes an advantage of his unhappy and rich clients' secrets and he makes a business blackmailing them. Chandler's delineation of the law not merely as hostile and vicious but, more aptly, as corrupt, is missing in the film whatsoever; therefore the film presents a simplistic world with a black-and-white moral nature.

[140] In the novel Amthor is described as an ageless and enigmatic man with deep dark eyes "without expression, without soul, eyes that could watch lions tear a man to pieces and never change, that could watch a man impaled and screaming in the hot sun with his eyelids cut off" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 268). Novel's Amthor is a ruthless man "an international con man" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 363), however, the adaptation made Amthor an old man (Marlowe calls him "grandpa"), who is later killed by enraged Malloy. Amthor's transformation in the adaptation gives Marlowe space to show his superiority over him—"you look harmless to me" (*Murder, My Sweet*).

All these assumptions—that Chandler's view of the world is simplified in *Murder, My Sweet*—are condensed into the film's final scene. The film's conclusion is more a melodrama than a film noir. Marlowe, as the only man who ultimately fought off his desire for the femme fatale, survives. Mr. Grayle shoots his wife when she is aiming a gun at Marlowe thinking that she is free at last (see fig. 39), free to live her life without blackmailers, Amthor and Marriott. Moose Malloy and Mr. Grayle pay for their lust and the need to possess this dangerously independent and determined femme fatale—they kill each other.

Fig. 39. Mrs. Grayle just before gunned down

Mr. Grayle's reason for shooting his young wife was his blind possessive desire that he was mistaking for love towards her: "It was the only thing I could do. You must try and understand. I couldn't let her go. I loved her too much" (*Murder, My Sweet*). Moreover, by presenting Ann as an icon of daughterly love and devotion the adaptation reflects the historical period when the film was shot, the 1940s, its view of young women and also the conventions of many female depictions in film noir genre. Ann is rewarded for her behavior of a "good wife" by winning Marlowe's love—Marlowe and Ann leave together and are kissing in the back seat of a cab Ann has completely forgotten her dead

father (see fig. 40).[141] The good triumphed over the evil and order has been reinstalled. This film's conclusion seems forced and completely out of context. It also leads audience to believe that love will heal and redeem the world, and as Athanasourelis emphasizes, in this film adaptation "love not only conquers all, but erases memory" (*Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe* 165).

Fig. 40. Hollywood's forced happy ending

5.2.3 *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975)

> This past spring was the first that I felt tired and realized I was growing old. . . . The only real pleasure I'd had at all was following Joe DiMaggio belting the apple at an incredible clip for the New York Yankees. Well, it's the middle of July now and things are worse than they were in spring. In the spring, I wasn't a holed up in a dingy hotel ducking the police.
>
> —*Farewell, My Lovely* (1975)

[141] Interestingly, Anne Riordan and Marlowe meet again in Chandler's last short story "The Pencil" in which Anne expresses her feelings towards Marlowe but his code of honor prevents him to get involved with a woman he thinks of so highly: "I like to think that I know at least one pretty and charming female who doesn't have round heels. . . . I'm honest . . . That's something. But I'm too shop-soiled for a girl like you. I've thought of you, I've wanted you, but that sweet clear look in your eyes tells me to lay off. . . . I've had too many women to deserve one like you" (Chandler "The Pencil").

Farewell, My Lovely (1975)[142] is a remake of Dmytryk's *Murder, My Sweet* (1944) directed by Dick Richards. This remake is a third attempt to create "a reasonably faithful reproduction of what Chandler had written, but even then [1975], Hollywood seemed nervous about the tone of Chandler's work" (Naremore 235). It is due to Chandler's timeless themes of ambiguous and fallen morality that may cause controversy at any time period.

The very beginning of the film presents a down-to-earth look at the modern city of Los Angeles which is presented by bird's-eye shots. Despite the fact that the film is shot in color, it still preserves the dark mood of classic film noir when utilizing a limited color palette where the dominant color is red. Scenes are lit very dimly and light is focused on things rather than people, as it was in *Murder, My Sweet*. The remake "demonstrates an intense nostalgia for the films noirs of the 1940s as well as for the long gone, classical Hollywood era"[143] (Stam and Raengo 292)—the film is set in Los Angeles in the summer of 1941, and events in the film are framed with references to real history of that era. Newspaper headlines indicate the historical facts: "Reds Concede German Gains, Hitler Invaded Russia" and Marlowe watches Joe DiMaggio trying to beat baseball records. However, the remake presents several plot developments in comparison to the novel and the previous two film versions: it adds scenes of nudity, excludes several characters e.g. Ann Riordan/Grayle, Dr. Sonderborg; and Jules Amthor is transformed into a female brothel keeper. Furthermore, the remake adds to the plot scenes of Marlowe's relationship with an interracial couple and also makes room for numerous gunfights.

The film relieved of the Production Code restrictions and "certainly does not avoid the sleazier parts of the original novel, as its predecessor[s] did" (Schwartz 10). Therefore,

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[142] For the sake of clarity and to avoid confusion I shall henceforth refer to this film as "the remake."
[143] Films made after the 1960s "display intense nostalgia for classical Hollywood filmmaking practices of the studio era and for American culture in the postwar era. This nostalgia perhaps marks the most significant change in mood from canonical *films noirs* to neo*noir* [emphasis in the original]" (Stam and Raengo 292).

this remake could show police as corrupt and racial issues as existing, which are the ugly realities of the time, the 1940s, that had been usually ignored by Hollywood. The remake is also narrated in voice-over, the core of the film forms Marlowe's flashback when he explains his actions to Lieutenant Nulty in a shabby motel room while he is "ducking" the police. The flashback sequence does not form the entire film, as in the case of *Murder, My Sweet*, the final scene and the denouement is in a linear narrative.

Marlowe starts his narration with a search for a runaway girl in a dancing nightclub emphasizing his financial tightness; he is forced to take all kinds of humiliating tasks in order to fill his bank account. Marlowe meets Moose Malloy, "a guy of a size of a Statue of Liberty . . . a half-crazy hooligan build like a beer truck" (*Farewell, My Lovely*). Someone shoots at them from a car, but Malloy seems uninterested, not afraid at all,[144] he just wants Marlowe to find his Velma—his sole focus. They go to the bar where Velma used to work, it is in a colored neighborhood and Marlowe is feeling very uncomfortable in this alien environment. They enter a bar with only African-American customers (see fig. 41). Chandler's bar scene in which "heads [of participants] turned slowly and the eyes in them glistened and stared in the dead alien silence of another race" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 170), had been visually adapted in this film. Therefore, it exposes, as Chandler does, an issue of racial segregation that dominated that particular era. Malloy kills an African-American manager of that "colored joint." Marlowe protects Malloy when he sends him away before he calls the police. When Nulty finally arrives, after "thirty-five minutes, [which] is not bad for a killing, lucky it wasn't something serious" (*Farewell, My Lovely*), Marlowe assures him that it was not a cold-blooded murder but self-defense. However, Nulty is not horrified by such a killing; it is "only" a dead African-American man. The film manages to capture the racial climate of

[144] "Fear wasn't built into his giant frame" (*Murder, My Sweet*).

Chandler's novel—depicting the racist nature of the police. Marlowe seems benevolent towards the treatment of African-Americans as well, until he becomes the only one who defends an interracial couple with a small boy in the racially antagonistic world of the 1940s urban America (see fig. 42).

Fig. 41. Florian's in black neighborhood

Fig. 42. Tommy Ray's family

Tommy Ray, a band member at Florian's questionable establishment, by marrying an African-American woman had to step out of business, and now they live in poverty—the anti-miscegenation laws were still enforced in the 1940s even though it was also a period when an opposition to these laws was slowly rising.[145] The incorporation of this couple and Marlowe's relationship with them gives room for presenting a courageous white male battling racial discrimination, Tommy Ray, and a man, Marlowe, who supports his decision without contempt, "an overt liberal" (Naremore 235). Moreover, the film made in the early 1970s, era of civil rights awareness, makes Marlowe the representative, model, of racial equality consciousness. In an episode that occurs at the

[145] "Throughout the 1920s and 1930s and into the 1940s, 30 states maintained laws against interracial marriage, and individuals' liberty or property hinged in those laws were enforced. Despite great changes in American politics and in the scientific understanding of race, as well as the emergence of new constitutional protections to individual privacy and against racial discrimination, racial identity remained central to the law of marriage. Into the 1940s, neither state courts nor federal courts seemed in any way interested in reconsidering the constitutionality of miscegenation laws" (Wallenstein 173). However, it was not until 1967 "after the Supreme Court ruled in the Lovings' case, couples no longer had to worry about the law of interracial marriage, the law had vanished" (Wallenstein 6).

end of the film, but does not appear in the novel or *Murder, My Sweet*, Marlowe gives money he earned to the boy's mother, because he feels responsible for her husband's death—it is Marlowe's expiation—"I had two grand in my pocket that needed a home and I knew just the place" (*Farewell, My Lovely*). Marlowe's relationship with this interracial couple is an allusion to Chandler's vision of the world, the world is not black-and-white. Furthermore, the film by this plot development presents Marlowe as a man of integrity who in other characters inspires a turn to moral values—Jessie Florian tries to help him, Nulty risks his career to aid him at the gambling ship and his friend Georgie stands strong when beaten in order to reveal Marlowe's whereabouts.

Marlowe is in this remake portrayed by Robert Mitchum, an important Hollywood star of the 1940s,[146] who was almost sixty when the film was made. Therefore, Marlowe is in the remake more world-weary, more disillusioned and lonesome—he needs "another drink . . . a lotta life insurance, a home in the country . . . a vacation," he is tired and everything he touches "turns to shit . . . [he's] got a hat, a coat and a gun, that's it" (*Farewell, My Lovely*)—nevertheless, he is the moral hero of the film. He is a private investigator, "not with the City, the State, the County or the Feds" (*Farewell, My Lovely*). Marlowe's humanity and loyalty to a client is represented by his relationship with Moose Malloy—he protects Malloy from the police and saves his life. Nulty asks him why he is so protective of Malloy and Marlowe replies: "Since I saw that movie King Kong I've been a sucker for any gorilla who falls in love with a girl" (*Farewell, My Lovely*). Therefore, Marlowe is in the remake depicted more like a father figure to Malloy—Marlowe tries to help and navigate his dull "adopted" son Malloy. Moreover, Malloy is a more sympathetic character and he also receives more space in this remake than in the two previous film versions.

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[146] He is well known for his appearances in many war films, westerns and noir films–e.g. *Nevada* (1944), *The Story of G. I. Joe* (1945), *Crossfire* (1947), *Out of the Past* (1947), *The Night of the Hunter* (1955), etc.

Marlowe's only delight in the dark world that is at the brink of the Second World War, is watching baseball. Marlowe seems interested in baseball because it is a game with rules; the world he is surrounded by has no rules. DiMaggio, the baseball player who was hitting strikes in 1941 whom Marlowe admires, represents successes that evade Marlowe while working on the case—DiMaggio "heard little boys' cheers not cry" (*Farewell, My Lovely*). As soon as Marlowe solves the case, DiMaggio's winning streak is over.

Even though Marlowe is quite old in the remake, he does not loose charisma and sex appeal when women are concerned. As in the novel, the first film version and *Murder, My Sweet*, all Marlowe's miseries start with his search for Velma Valento. The major difference in character of Velma is that "in the 1944 version, Velma worked in a dance hall/nightclub; in the 1975 one, she is apparently a prostitute who work[ed] for Frances Amthor" (Schwartz 10). This change is made due to altering the character of Frances Amthor and adding scenes in brothel. Mrs. Grayle, disguised Velma, is a powerful femme fatale, and her status is clearly established when the audience, and also Marlowe, first see her—she is on the top of the stairway and Marlowe is down, blissfully looking at her (see fig. 43). Her elevation indicates that she is the one in control of everything from the very beginning, she is cool and self-confident, and Marlowe is stunned, as in the novel: "she gave me a smile I could feel in my hip pocket" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 250). The sexual tension, attraction, between Mrs. Grayle and Marlowe is more explicit than in *Murder, My Sweet*, and Mrs. Grayle is more seductive—she invites Marlowe to sit beside her and he does so without hesitation, as in the novel: "I've been thinking that for some time. Ever since you first crossed your legs, to be exact" (*Farewell, My Lovely*). The remake also captures Marlowe and Mrs. Grayle kissing in her house (see fig. 44):

> The door opened and Mr. Grayle stepped quietly into the room. I was holding her and didn't have a chance to let go. I lifted my face and looked at him . . . The blonde in my arms didn't move, didn't even close her lips. She had a half-dreamy, half-sarcastic expression on her face. Mr. Grayle cleared his throat slightly and said: "I beg your pardon, I'm sure," and went quietly out of the room. There was an infinite sadness in his eyes. (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 258)

Fig. 43. Mrs. Grayle elevated

Fig. 44. Marlowe and Helen kissing

In the novel, Marlowe tries to leave hastily because he "felt nasty, as if [he] had picked a poor man's pocket" (Chandler *Farewell, My Lovely* 259), in the remake he replies to Mrs. Grayle that he is old fashioned only "from the waist up" (*Farewell, My Lovely*), she giggles contentedly. However, the remake adds more scenes with these two characters and thus builds up Mrs. Grayle's sexuality—Marlowe and Mrs. Grayle embrace and kiss in a car and Marlowe in voice-over comments on his enchantment by her attractiveness. Their sexual encounter is implied by her response whether they should head for Marlowe's place from her husband's party: "What for? We've got everything we need with you" (*Farewell, My Lovely*). Even though her sexuality is enticing, excessive and she successfully utilizes it to control men, the character of Helen Grayle is

quite weakened in the remake. She is depicted as a powerful wife of a judge,[147] but to maintain her status and hide her past she does not operate alone, as in *Murder, My Sweet* or the novel. She employs villains, gangsters. Frances Amthor's henchmen try to shoot Molloy, they kill Marriott and knock out and capture Marlowe. She is acting from the position of a wealthy person who can buy criminals and therefore persuade them to do everything for her, or for her money.

Along with Mrs. Grayle, all the other female characters that appear in the remake represent American womanhood as either evil and greedy, Frances Amthor and Mrs. Grayle, or destitute and depressed, Mrs. Florian and Tommy Ray's wife. The remake excludes the character of Marlowe's female equivalent, Anne Riordan from the novel, and Ann Grayle as Marlowe's potential wife from the adaptation. By leaving out the character of Anne, the film overlooks the picture of an independent, self-sufficient, strong, working woman. It may be attributed to the growing impact of Woman's Liberation Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, which the male population was not reconciled with and did not respect. Therefore, the film concentrates only on presenting women as a threat to the male position in the American society. The remake incorporates the character of Georgie, Marlowe's friend, confidant and an ex-boxer. Georgie is a substitute for Anne Riordan from the novel—Marlowe goes to Georgie after being drugged and beaten at Amthor's brothel. Georgie takes care of him, buys him a new shirt and brings his gun, Marlowe feels good in Georgie's company. Georgie is loyal to and respectful of Marlowe, he calls him "Mr. Marlowe" (see fig. 45).

[147] Baxter Wilson Grayle, her husband, is the judge—"the most powerful political figure in L.A. for a quarter of a century" (*Farewell, My Lovely*)—but he does not know about his wife's history as a prostitute.

Fig. 45. Georgie (left) and Marlowe

Moreover, lieutenant Nulty is in the remake turned into Marlowe's friend, as opposed to the lieutenant in *Murder, My Sweet* or the previous version. Nulty, in the remake, has features of Randall from the novel, he is honest, slightly arrogant towards African-Americans, but a hard-working policeman who has known Marlowe for a long time (see fig. 46). In comparison, the remake hints at Nulty's superiority over Marlowe, when he says that he has a right to take Marlowe's license. Still, Nulty seems dependent on Marlowe, because wherever a criminal act appears, Marlowe is there. On the other hand, Billy Rolfe, Nulty's assistant, is a "crooked son-of-a-bitch" (*Farewell, My Lovely*). He is a thief and Marlowe is familiar with his personality and therefore he despises Billy.[148] Marlowe and Nulty's relationship is mutually beneficial—Marlowe reminds Nulty of moral values. Despite being conscious of a potential future arrest, he is determined to solve the case of seven dead bodies, Nulty decides to help Marlowe on Burnett's gambling ship. He is rewarded for it by being the lead investigator on a high profile case—"You're a hero, Nulty. Headlines. This is no misdemeanor like the colored killing. You probably wind up being Commissioner" (*Farewell, My Lovely*).

[148] Billy's true nature is explicitly pictured when he pockets a silver cigarette case when they go to Mrs. Florian's house and find her dead. Besides being a larcener, he is also a corrupt policeman.

By excluding the character of a strong female equal to Marlowe, but incorporating more forms of strong male bond and comradery, the remake alludes to the superiority of male friendship over the one between a man and a woman.

Fig. 46. Nulty (middle) and Marlowe (right)

The only woman, except Mrs. Grayle, that appears accompanying Marlowe is Mrs. Florian whose presence on the screen is more frequent than in the first version, *Murder, My Sweet* or even the novel. The film transforms her into an innocent, forlorn performer—"a former nightclub singer and dancer, who represents the slatternly, slovenly, broken down tramp, female drunk" (Raymond 190). She is also pictured as a comical figure; she is not a vicious and calculating blackmailer anymore. The scenes in which Mrs. Florian appears are comical—she dances, sings and tries to make a good impression on Marlowe (see fig. 47). But despite her ludicrousness, she gives Marlowe valuable information that helps him with the investigation. Marlowe's humanity, his care for other people, is expressed when encountering Mrs. Florian; he is compassionate and courteous with her. This behavior of Marlowe's is in a contrast with both previous film versions and the novel, where Mrs. Florian is a shadowy woman with valuable information, however, she is not willing to help Marlowe because it would threaten her profit from blackmailing Mrs. Grayle. In the novel and both previous adaptations, Marlowe is superordinate when encountering Mrs. Florian. In *Murder, My Sweet* he does

not even have a problem to harm her, he pushes her on the bed. Mrs. Florian in the remake represents an archetypal aging widow who is dressed quite promiscuously. She is aware that she has lost her own self-respect and therefore the respect of others. Nevertheless, she strives to retrieve her past way of life. This is demonstrated by her attraction to Marlowe, she wears a revealing dress to seduce him (see fig. 48). If Marlowe became her mate, he would restore her position in society—she would become a wife.

Fig. 47. Mrs. Florian sings and dances for Marlowe

Fig. 48. Mrs. Florian dressed up for Marlowe

This film, moreover, in comparison to the previous film versions, gives a detailed look at Mrs. Florian's house, depicting the life of those at the bottom of Los Angeles' society. Notwithstanding the awful conditions that Mr. Florian has to live in, the house is dirty and smelly, Marlowe does not show contempt for her miserable situation, as in the novel, rather he understands and feels sorry for her. In the remake, Mrs. Florian abandons her criminal activity and actually helps Marlowe, but her past catches up with her and she is killed, this time not by Molloy, as in the novel, but by Mrs. Grayle's "minions."

Another female that finds death during Marlowe's search for the lost Velma is Frances Amthor. The remake transforms the character of Amthor, a male charlatan psychic from the previous film versions and the novel, into an angry, brutal, androgenic, giant lesbian who runs a brothel (see fig. 49)—the inclusion of female Amthor and the

brothel gives the remake a possibility to expose nudity, sex and savage violence.[149] Amthor is depicted as a woman with masculine features, her femininity is suppressed, she is "L.A.'s most famous madam" (*Farewell, My Lovely*). She is obese, mannish and is always accompanied by her girls, prostitutes. The loss of her femininity is presented in the scene that, normally, would be seen as inappropriate in Hollywood cinema—assaulting a woman. Marlowe is held by two men while Amthor viciously slaps him several times—Marlowe is unhurt and manages to punch her, she bleeds. She is punished for her sexual otherness, lesbianism. The ultimate triumph over the destructively deviant sexuality is when Amthor fiercely attacks one of her best prostitutes, probably her lover, and is subsequently killed in a blood scene by one of her goons that was sleeping with the girl (see fig. 50). She is punished because she did not adhere to the conventions set for the women of that era, she is a self-sufficient lesbian. Moreover, her hideous appearance and aggressive behavior contribute to the righteous character of her demise, even though she is a woman.

Fig. 49. Frances Amthor

Fig. 50. Amthor shot after attacking her prostitute

[149] The transformation of Amthor into a brothel keeper serves to, a rather obvious, purpose of delivering some needless female nudity. On the other hand, this brothel scene may also serve a different purpose: to draw attention to the issue of prostitution and exploitation of women in the 1940s, because the film is set in this time period. However, the film's aim to portray this issue may be also an allusion to the situation in 1970s because "[d]uring the 1970s, rape became an important issue . . . the act of rape was seen not as an end in itself, but as a means of enforcing gender roles in society and maintaining the hierarchy in which men retained control" (Jackson 196). Moreover, the nudity incorporated into the film may be also attributed to the 1970s weakening tendencies in a matter of restricting nudity on the screen. Whatever the real aim of this sexual candidness is, it gives the remake a different dimension when compared to the former adaptations and the novel.

In addition to Frances Amthor, another character whose sexuality is depicted as degenerate is Lindsay Marriott (see fig. 51). Marriott's sexual orientation is in the remake depicted more explicitly than in *Murder, My Sweet*. Marriott comes to hire Marlowe because he is "not much of a hero" (*Farewell, My Lovely*), while in his office he fixes Marlowe's desk, he has delicate manners. Marlowe is polite when talking with him, however with a hint of ridicule when he replies to Marriott "I like your name, too" (*Farewell, My Lovely*), and Marriott cheerfully giggles and almost forgets his hat on Marlowe's desk when leaving the office. His homosexuality is frequently mocked throughout the remake—Billy Rolfe (Nulty's partner) remarks after Marriott's departure: "Hmm, been judging a flower show in here, Marlowe? Is that the winning daffodil who just walked out?" (*Farewell, My Lovely*). As in *Murder, My Sweet* and the novel, Marriott functions as an enhancement of Marlowe's masculinity, Marlowe is there to protect him. After Marriott's murder (see fig. 52) Marlowe is interrogated at the police station and he says that "this fairy hired me" (*Farewell, My Lovely*). Marriott's homosexuality is more of a source for comical dialogues than Amthor's homosexuality which is seen as perverse.

Fig. 51. Lindsay Marriott

Fig. 52. Marriott's death—graphic violence

The final scene on Brunette's gambling ship, where everyone is gathered for the conclusion, again, does not reflect Chandler's inference from the novel. Marlowe until this scene does not know who Velma really is, only when Molloy says "Hi Babe. Long

time no see" (*Farewell, My Lovely*), Marlowe realizes that Mrs. Grayle is the woman he was looking for. Mrs. Grayle shoots Molloy and Marlowe, in self-defense, kills Mrs. Grayle who was the one manipulating everyone (see fig. 53, 54 and 55)—"Now it all makes sense, everything . . . Velma form the gutter, whore from Amthor's . . . prostitute marries a millionaire judge. Judge knows nothing about her background, not even that she was in on a bank robbery and let her boyfriend take the rap for her . . . Don't you see, Moose? She is using everybody!" (*Farewell, My Lovely*).

Fig. 53. Mrs. Grayle kills Malloy

Fig. 54. Marlowe shoots Mrs. Grayle in self-defense

Fig. 55. The death of the femme fatale

Every person who allied with her found their death. By this film's finale she is portrayed as a conventional femme fatale who does everything to maintain her newly gained status and hide her sinful past. We do not receive an answer to Mrs. Grayle's motivation for her actions, instead of answers the remake provides her death as a "moral

punishment for the woman's abuse of male trust" (McDonald 119). This film, as well as *Murder, My Sweet*, is more misogynistic than Chandler had been in his novel. In the novel Mrs. Grayle at the end sacrifices her life as not to cause any problems to her affluent husband. However in *Murder, My Sweet* Mrs. Grayle is killed by her elderly husband whom she betrayed and therefore she has to be punished. In the remake, Marlowe is the one who shoots her. The remake gives Marlowe an opportunity to avenge all the unnecessary deaths, people he liked in one way or another—Tommy Ray, Mrs. Florian and Moose Malloy.

The remake presents femininity exhibiting excessive sexuality that is depicted as deviant and harmful to the male population. On the other hand, masculinity is portrayed in many variations—Malloy is overly masculine but his weakness is his blind love for Velma and his half-witted nature; Amthor and Marriott lack masculinity altogether, and Mr. Grayle is stripped of his masculinity by his murderous, treacherous young wife. Marlowe, a tough but sensitive man with strong moral values represents the ideal form of masculinity.

5.3 ADAPTING RAYMOND CHANDLER'S *THE BIG SLEEP*

> …the detective in the picture has to fall for some girl, whereas the real distinction of the detective's personality is that, as a detective, he falls for nobody. He is the avenging justice, the bringer of order out of chaos, and to make his doing this part of a trite boy-meets-girl story is to make it silly. But in Hollywood you cannot make a picture which is not essentially a love story, that is to say, a story in which sex is paramount.
>
> —Raymond Chandler (qtd. in Day)

It is rather surprising that Raymond Chandler, now the canonical mystery writer and one of the creators of the American hard-boiled detective fiction, once wanted to "forget mystery writing and try *English Summer (A Gothic Romance)* and the Fantastic Stories . . . alternate the fantastic and the dramatic . . . or do a suave detective just for the fun" (Chandler qtd. in Day). Fortunately, Chandler's plan proved to be a set of "useless dreams," his wife's reaction, and he managed to put together a novel in three short months—*The Big Sleep*.

Chandler published *The Big Sleep* (1939), his first novel introducing his private detective Philip Marlowe, when he was fifty-one. He used a technique he called cannibalization—revamping his previous short stories and novelettes into a full-length novels, i.e. *Farewell, My Lovely* (1940) and *The Lady in the Lake* (1943). *The Big Sleep* is primarily derived from two short stories published in the pulp magazine *Black Mask*:

"Killer in the Rain" (1935) and "The Curtain" (1936).[150] In the novel, Chandler goes beyond the traditional whodunit scenario. He was more "intrigued by a situation where the mystery is solved by the exposition and understanding of a single character, always well in evidence, rather than by the slow and sometimes long-winded concentration of circumstances" (Chandler qtd. in Day). Therefore, it is the characters and their motivations that the reader has to turn to when trying to unravel the convoluted and often confusing plot of Chandler's novels, especially that of *The Big Sleep*. This labyrinthine plot attracted a lot of harsh criticism, among others Stephen Pendo declared that "the plot of *The Big Sleep* is a confused tangle that demonstrates Chandler's problem of producing a cohesive story line" (38). Not only critics had problem following the book's plot, also the director of the first film adaptation of this novel, Howard Hawks, along the scriptwriters (William Faulkner, Leigh Brackett and Jules Furthman), were puzzled by the novel's tangled plot. Therefore, Hawks asked Chandler who killed Owen Taylor, the chauffeur; Chandler replied "NO IDEA" (qtd. in Day).[151]

[150] Chandler's first hard-boiled story was "Blackmailers Don't Shoot" published in *Black Mask*, 1933—"the first I ever wrote. It took me five months to write this thing, it has enough action for five stories and the whole thing is a goddam pose" (Chandler qtd. in Wolfe *Something More Than Night* 99). Mallory, detective from this and one more story, "Smart-Aleck Kill" (1934), along with other detectives from Chandler short stories (i.e. Carmady and John Dalmas) were merged into Chandler's ultimate hard-boiled creation—Philip Marlowe.

[151] Howard Hawks about the novel and its plot: "I never could figure the story out. I read it and was delighted by it. The scenario too eight days to write, and all we were trying to do was to make every scene entertain. We didn't know about the story. They asked me who killed such and such man—I didn't know. They sent a wire to the author—he didn't know. They sent a wire to the scenario writer and he didn't know. But it didn't stop the picture from being very fast and very entertaining" (Howard qtd. in Breivold 29).

5.3.1 *The Big Sleep* (1946)

> The main hallway of the Sternwood place was two stories high. Over the entrance doors, which would have let in a troop of Indian elephants, there was a broad stained-glass panel showing a knight in dark armor rescuing a lady who was tied to a tree and didn't have any clothes on but some very long and convenient hair. The knight had pushed the vizor of his helmet back to be sociable, and he was fiddling with the knots on the ropes that tied the lady to the tree and not getting anywhere. I stood there and thought that if I lived in the house, I would sooner or later have to climb up there and help him. He didn't seem to be really trying.
>
> —Raymond Chandler (*The Big Sleep* 3)

Despite Hawks' problems with the cohesiveness of the novel's plot, the 1946 film adaptation featuring the dynamic Hollywood duo, Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall, became one of the most highly regarded noir films. Hawks brought these two stars together after their screen pairing debut in *To Have and Have Not* in 1944 on Warner's impetus: "Howard, I want you to make another picture with those two. Do you know a story?" Hawks had Chandler's novel in mind when answering: "Yes. A little like *Maltese Falcon*" (qtd. in Breivold 157). They started to shoot the film in October 1944 and finished in January 1945,[152] but the theatrical premiere was not on until 23 August 1946—the release was hindered by the World War II, the need for films related to the issue, and

[152] The pre-release version of the film, the original cut made in 1945, was released on a the DVD along with the theatrical version and a documentary highlighting the differences in 1997, but only in USA and Canada.

because of reshoots of scenes with Bogart and Bacall.[153] Even though the initial negative references to the film's tangled plot, the film was praised;[154] and Chandler was very much satisfied with the screen transformation of his novel: "when and if you see *The Big Sleep*, you will realize what can be done with this sort of story by a director with a gift of atmosphere and the requisite touch of hidden sadism" (qtd. in Day). Moreover, Chandler admired Bogart's performance as Marlowe—"He can be tough without a gun . . . Bogart is superb as Bogart . . . Also he has a sense of humor that contains that grating undertone of contempt. Ladd[155] is hard, bitter and occasionally charming, but he is after all a small boy's idea of a tough guy" (qtd. in Day).[156]

The novel provides a complex picture of Marlowe based just on the initial conversation with Mr. Sternwood, addressed as General—Philip Marlowe is thirty-three, single because he does not like policemen's wives, he went to college; he is independent, but loyal, straightforward and stubborn cynic with a great sense of humor. His meeting with General launches a set of events that trap Marlowe between two main strata of Los

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[153] "The road from 'Big Sleep I' to 'Big Sleep II' is a twisted one. The original version was ready for release in March 1945, when historical events and the iron will of Ms. Bacall's agent, Charles K. Feldman, intervened. . . . 'Confidential Agent,' Ms. Bacall's second film, which was put ahead of 'The Big Sleep' on the studio's release schedule. Unfortunately, the film was a failure that put her career in jeopardy. In November 1945, Feldman, who represented Ms. Bacall and Hawks, wrote to Jack Warner, the head of Warner Brothers, urging him to reshoot several Bacall scenes in 'The Big Sleep' . . . The new, sharpened Bacall scenes worked magic" (Grimes).

[154] A reviewer for *New York Times*, Bosley Crowther, in review titled "'The Big Sleep,' Warner Film in Which Bogart and Bacall Are Paired Again, Opens at Strand—'Step by Step' of the Rialto," called it a picture "in which so many cryptic things occur amid so much involved and devious plotting that the mind becomes utterly confused." However, *Time* wrote that "actually, the plot's crazy mystifying, nightmare blur is an asset, and only one of many. By far the strongest is Bogart" (Staiger 36).

[155] Alan Ladd played Johnny Morrison in *The Blue Dahlia* (1946) a film based on Raymond's original screenplay.

[156] Edward Dmytryk did not share Chandler's overly positive view–"Spade was tough . . . and that's what was wrong with Bogey doing Marlowe. He made him Spade" (qtd. in Robson 53)—probably because he rated Dick Powell as the best incarnation of all the Philip Marlowes. As the director of *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), Dmytryk's impartiality in this matter may be questioned. Moreover, allegedly, Bogart was the number one choice for the part in *Murder, My Sweet*; he was unavailable. Nevertheless, creating another "incarnation" of Sam Spade character may have been intentional after all—the theatrical trailer to *The Big Sleep* shows Bogart, dressed as a detective, in a public library "looking for a good mystery yarn, something off the beaten track, like *The Maltese Falcon*" and the librarian suggests: "there is one that has everything that *The Falcon* had and more. It's Raymond Chandler's latest best seller, *The Big Sleep*. What a picture that'll make!"

Angeles society—the wealthy Sternwood family and a group of racketeers who live off the members of the high society. Mr. Sternwood, an elderly oil mogul, is the dying head of the family[157] with two daughters, Vivian and Carmen, "Vivian is spoiled, exacting, smart and quite ruthless. Carmen is a child who likes to pull wings off flies. Neither of them has any more moral sense than a cat" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 10).

Even though both of General's daughters show signs of wildness and moral corruption, the adaptation places them in opposition. The adaptation clearly draws the line between good and evil in the first few minutes of the film: Marlowe meets Carmen, a gorgeous brunette dressed in shorts exposing her legs, who is aggressively flirtatious even though she giggles and sucks her thumb; she is "the bad seed," just as she is in the novel (see fig. 56). Vivian is presented in the film as a beautiful, cool, self-confident beauty who does not dress promiscuously (see fig. 57). In the novel, Marlowe meets Vivian while she is lying on a chaise longue with her legs exposed, obviously ready to tease Marlowe—"She was worth a stare. She was trouble. . . . I stared at her legs . . . They seemed to be arranged to stare at" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 13). In the film, Vivian is always dressed in white and Carmen in black—this is a clear visual marker differentiating the two, but the film does not keep this premise.

[157] He is a "cripple paralysed in both legs and with only half of his lower belly. There's a little that [he] can eat and [his] sleep is so close to waking that it is hardly worth the name" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 7).

Fig. 56. Carmen Sternwood

Fig. 57. Vivian Rutledge—meeting Marlowe

Carmen's role is quite diminished in the film adaptation. She is presented here more as a victim than a perpetrator. Due to the Production Code restrictions, she is never shown in Geiger's house naked and high on drugs—Marlowe finds her there fully dressed and we can only assume that the drugs are responsible for her behavior (see fig. 58).[158] Moreover, in the novel Marlowe dresses her back into her clothes, as a little child; therefore, Marlowe attains a role of a nurturing father figure when in Carmen's company. Unlike her biological father, passive General Sternwood who lets his daughters run wild, Marlowe protects her, tries to correct her behavior, and ultimately saves her from a life in prison. Furthermore, Carmen in the adaptation appears in Marlowe's apartment sitting on a chair, fully dressed, waiting for him; not in the bed, stripped naked as in the novel (see fig. 59).

[158] "She was wearing a pair of long jade earrings. . . . She wasn't wearing anything else. . . . . She had a beautiful body, small, lithe, compact, firm, rounded. . . . I looked her over without either embarrassment or ruttishness. As a naked girl she was not there in that room at all. She was just a dope" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 26).

Fig. 58. Carmen at Geiger's house

Fig. 59. Carmen at Marlowe's apartment

Even though Carmen relies on her appearance and a girlish charm—"she would suck her thumb and look coy" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 9)—she does not win Marlowe over, he is disgusted by her. Marlowe's facial expressions, twitching, and angry clenching of his fists demonstrate his need to control himself so he will not hurt Carmen. Carmen refuses to leave, she bites Marlowe, and he then throws her out of his apartment by force. In the novel, Marlowe gets rid of her without using physical violence—"Don't make me dress you again. I'm tired. I appreciate all you're offering me. It's just more than I could possibly take. . . . I'm your friend. I won't let you down-in spite of yourself. You and I have to keep on being friends, and this isn't the way to do it. Now will you dress like a nice little girl? (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 111). Despite keeping his cool in front of Carmen, Marlowe is affected by her aggressive, animalistic sexuality, he tears "the bed to pieces savagely" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 113). Carmen's predatory animalism, and thus the loss of her femininity, is further emphasized by Chandler in the novel, by her constant hissing, baring her teeth and an empty stare: "I looked away. Then I was aware of the hissing noise very sudden and sharp. It startled me into looking at her again. She sat there naked, propped on her hands, her mouth open a little, her face like scraped bone. The hissing noise came tearing out of her mouth as if she had nothing to do with it. There was

something behind her eyes, blank as they were, that I had never seen in a woman's eyes" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 112).

The prohibition of the on-screen nudity weakened Chandler's attempt to draw attention to the issues of pornography, voyeurism, and male confusion built up around the idea of open female sexuality prevailing in 1940s America. In the film adaptation, Carmen is portrayed as a mentally unstable victim. At the end, she will be sent to a mental institution, as proposed by Chandler in the novel, but she will never be held accountable for the murder of Rusty Regan whom General loved as his own son. Moreover, in the novel, Carmen tries to shoot Marlowe because he, as Rusty, refuses her advances.[159] Chandler's Carmen Sternwood is a thumb-sucking, psychopathic drug addict suffering from frequent fits that is not properly cared for until Marlowe appears. Her sister Vivian and old father try to conceal all of her wrongdoings just to keep their name from being dishonored in the papers.

By altering the final scene in the adaptation, not only does Carmen's character lose its purpose, but so does Vivian's. The final scene of the adaptation promises a romance between Marlowe and Vivian, as they escape together from Eddie's gunmen and declare their love for each other—"Look, angel, I'm tired. My jaw hurts, my ribs ache, I killed a man back there and I had to stand by when harmless little guy was killed. . . . I guess I'm in love with you" (*The Big Sleep* 1946).[160] Vivian is not accused of being accessory to the murder by concealing her sister's killing. She is elevated to Marlowe's courageous partner, heroic, and willing to change for a man—she is the person that is in

[159] Carmen in the adaptation also declares her hate towards men who do not succumb to her girlish lure and sexual advances when Marlowe asks her about Shaw Regan: "I didn't like him. . . . He didn't pay any more attention to me than you do. He treated me like a baby all the time" (*The Big Sleep* 1946).
[160] In the novel, it is Eddie Mars' wife Mona who frees Marlowe from Canino and a certain death. In the film, it is Vivian who helps Marlowe escape, he then shoots Canino and as they ride back to the city, he declares his love for her.

need of redemption. In the film Marlowe, the male, is the redeemer.[161] The adaptation subordinates Chandler's main concepts proposed in the novel, i.e. inevitable mortality, corrupted morality and also mystery, to the film's principal focus—love relationship between Marlowe and Vivian. The novel does not develop this relationship, or rather, "women made [Marlowe] sick" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 113), especially the Sternwood sisters. Moreover, Marlowe in the novel refuses Vivian's advances—"Kissing is nice, but your father didn't hire me to sleep with you" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 108). This change in the dynamics between the two leading characters is rooted in the casting decision—Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall.[162] The two actors, characters, and their involvement, are the sole vehicle for the film from the very beginning—the initial credit sequence of the film shows two silhouettes of a man and a woman mutually lighting and smoking cigarettes (see fig. 60), with the actors names hovering over them, clear signifier of their importance to the film. This image in a Production Code Hollywood was a visual equivalent to an attraction between the characters. Furthermore, a shot of two burning cigarettes (see fig. 61) is presented during the opening and also the closing credits "suggesting that the man and the woman are now otherwise engaged in an activity for the image of the phallic cigarette burning in the concave receptacle is a metaphor" (Irwin 249).

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[161] In Dmytryk's Murder, My Sweet (1944) Marlowe is the one in need of redemption—the woman who in the end deserves Marlowe's attention is devoted Anne Grayle, femme fatale's step-daughter.

[162] Lauren Bacall and Humphrey Bogart met at the set for 1944 film *To Have and Have Not*, she was nineteen and he was forty-four. Bogart was still married to his 3rd wife "a tough lady that would hit you with an ashtray, lamp, anything, as soon as not" (Kanfer). Bogart and Bacall's relationship was kept secret until they met again for *The Big Sleep*. Bogart got divorced, Bacall became his 4th and last wife—"The novelist Louis Bromfield had struck up a friendship with Humphrey . . . and when the romance with Bacall went public he offered the couple refuge two thousand miles from California. Twelve days after his divorce from Mayo became final, Humphrey and Lauren . . . journeyed to Ohio . . . where a judge quietly married them . . . Bacall remembered that her new husband gave the lie to his tough-guy image by crying throughout the ceremony" (Kanfer).

Fig. 60. Opening credits

Fig. 61. Smoldering cigarettes

Marlowe and Vivian's relationship, in both the novel and the adaption, starts as a conflict—Vivian believes that Carmen killed Regan and is determined to conceal it for her sister's and also father's sake. In the film, Vivian tries to dismiss Marlowe from the case, she tries to charm and kiss him (see fig. 62), then she tries to deceive him by stating that Regan is in Mexico, and at the end she even pleads guilty of the murder; none of it works and Marlowe keeps looking for Regan.

However, Vivian's intentions to spare her father from grief over the loss of his "surrogate" son seem more honorable in the film than in the novel since Regan is in the film only General's employee.[163] In the novel, Regan is Vivian's third husband whom she did not love: "Rusty wasn't a bad fellow. I didn't love him. He was all right, I guess. He just didn't mean anything to me, one way or another, alive or dead, compared with keeping it from dad" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 162–3).

[163] Vivian's surname is Rutledge in the film, she is probably divorced—"married to a man named Rutledge, but it didn't take" (*The Big Sleep* 1946).

Fig. 62. Vivian: "I'd like more" (The Big Sleep 1946)

Even though, Vivian with her husky voice and lean figure, with an image that radiates strength and elegance, a capable woman who spares with Marlowe verbally,[164] is at the end of the film reduced to the role of the subordinate female; she entrusts herself to Marlowe completely.[165] The film noir of the 1940s provides a happy ending to assure the viewer that "evil" was punished and the detective can walk away with a woman, who, taking him as an example, turns out to be essentially good and worth his affection. There is nothing he cannot fix; male domination prevails and the power of patriarchy stays unbroken:

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[164] One of the scenes that were added to the theatrical version of the film is a dialogue between Marlowe and Vivian at a nightclub. The dialogue is in fact a double-entendre conversation about horse racing, they are toying with each other:

VIVIAN. Well, speaking of horses, I like to play them myself. But I like to see them work out a little first. See if they're front-runners or come from behind. Find out what their whole card is, what makes them run.

MARLOWE. Find out mine?

VIVIAN. I think so.

MARLOWE. Go ahead.

VIVIAN. I'd say you don't like to be rated. You like to get out in front...open up a lead...take a little breather in the backstretch...and then come home free.

MARLOWE. You don't like to be rated yourself.

VIVIAN. I haven't met anyone yet that could do it. Any suggestions?

MARLOWE. I can't tell till I've seen you over a distance of ground. You got a touch of class, but I don't know how far you can go.

VIVIAN. A lot depends on who's in the saddle. Go ahead, Marlowe, I like the way you work. In case you don't know it, you're doing all right.

[165] MARLOWE. There'll be plenty of trouble. You'll be in it just as much as I will.

VIVIAN. I don't mind, as long as you're around. (*The Big Sleep* 1946)

MARLOWE. You'll have to send Carmen away...from a lot of things. They have places for that. Maybe they can cure her. It's been done before. We'll have to tell your father about Regan. I think he can take it.

VIVIAN. You've forgotten one thing. Me.

MARLOWE. What's wrong with you?

VIVIAN. Nothing you can't fix. (*The Big Sleep* 1946)

However, one female character escapes the punishment set for her by the 1940s Hollywood standards—Agnes Lozelle. In the film as in the novel, she looks after herself, making the most of her slyness and attractiveness to use men as muscles in her schemes, a quintessential femme fatale. She works as a salesclerk for Geiger and then after his death does not hesitate and together with Joe Brody, they try to take over the business, which in the novel is a pornographic library but in the film the real nature of the illegal business is never made clear, it is not verbalized. Men who did not fight off their desire for this woman died, Joe Brody and Harry Jones. Agnes is successful in getting money by selling information to Marlowe and thus achieving her desired financial, and therefore also personal, freedom (see fig. 63)—"So long copper, wish me luck. I got a raw deal" (*The Big Sleep* 1946).

Fig. 63. Agnes collects money and leaves unaffected by the deaths of the men she knew

The promised defeat and ultimate destruction of the film noir femme fatale is "forgotten" in this film. I assume that this is due to the film's concern with the development of a love affair between Marlowe and Vivian. The film counted on this chemistry and sexual tension, and ended up creating a finale that was completely different from that proposed by Chandler in the novel.

These three female characters, Carmen, Vivian and Agnes, are not the only ones that cross path with Marlowe in the adaptation's male-dominated noir world. The employment of Marlowe's frequent encounters with numerous female characters presents Marlowe as irresistible to women (except for Agnes)—"*The Big Sleep* is a seemingly infinite realization of male fantasies" (Thomson qtd. in Librach). A book store clerk is willing to close the store just to stay with Marlowe (see fig. 64) and a female cab driver gives Marlowe her phone number making sure he will call her at night because she works during the day (see fig. 65).

Fig. 64. The book store clerk

Fig. 65. The female cab driver

The film's very attractive female characters reinforce a masculine image of female sexuality—the book store clerk gives Marlowe a detailed description of Geiger upon which Marlowe states that she "would make a good cop" and when leaving calls her a "pal" (*The Big Sleep* 1946).[166] Moreover, the cab driver, a profession rarely taken on by a woman, demonstrates her masculine traits when she tails a car with ease and when Marlowe tells her: "buy yourself a cigar" (*The Big Sleep* 1946). Marlowe is enticed by these attractive women who combine good looks with abilities. However, even if the book store clerk appears in the novel, Marlowe seems attracted only to Mona Mars because she is a woman who loves her husband and will do everything for him; she protects him, and she is loyal. Loyalty is a virtue that Marlowe and Mona share, therefore Marlowe admires her.

Since Hawks creates a world with dominant male characters and acquiescent females, the honorable and loyal detective has to punish the source of nearly everything sinister that the film features—gangster Eddie Mars. The demise of this imperious male character engineered with cold wit by Marlowe at the end of the film, ensures the

[166] In the novel, the woman is not mesmerized by Marlowe, as the one in the film—"'You'd make a good cop,' I said. She put the reference book back on an open shelf at the end of her desk, and opened the law book in front of her again. 'I hope not,' she said. She put her glasses on. I thanked her and left" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 21).

detective's revenge for all the dangers that "his woman," Vivian, had to go through—the film proposes a possibility that Eddie or his hired killer Canino killed Regan and subsequently framed Carmen, thus created an opportunity to blackmail Vivian:

> A nice old guy has two daughters. One of them is, well, wonderful, the other is not so wonderful. As a result, somebody gets something on her. The father hires me to pay him off. Before I get to the guy, the family chauffeur kills him. But that didn't stop things. That just starts them. And two murders later, I find out somebody's got something on wonderful. (*The Big Sleep* 1946)

Since the murder of Regan is in the film pinned on Mars (or his hired gun Canino), all of the crimes are in the film committed by male characters and thus Marlowe, the noir hero and an epitome of masculinity, is the one who functions as a role model to which all these men should look up to. All male characters are "macho" types who are not afraid to participate in fistfights and shootouts, thus the film "uses display of violence (physical, sexual, mental) to create a hierarchy of men outlining homosocial power relations among hegemonic, conservative, and subordinated masculinities within its diegesis. As weaker men fall to the bottom (often anticipated by their effeminate behavior and subsequent implications of homosexuality) . . . the tough hero rises to the top, in validation of his brand of masculinity" (Cohan 84). However, the Production Code regulations lie heavy upon this adaptation and thus homosexuality implied by Chandler reaches the screen only in a set of suggestive codes—Hawks insinuates that Geiger "was homosexual by way of his overdecorated residence, with its Oriental decor, all beaded curtains and sculptured vases suggesting the exotic East; and by the florid silk dressing gown Geiger is wearing

when he is murdered" (Phillips *Out of the Shadows* 61).[167] In the novel, Geiger is running a pornographic lending library disguised as a rare book shop and Carol Lundgren[168] is his sexual partner. However, by moderating the sexual otherness of these two characters in the film, the murder of Joe Brody (shot by Lundgren) seems quite under motivated. In the film, Lundgren avenges the death of his boss, maybe a friend, thus the strength and importance of male comradery is elevated—as in the case of General's sadness regarding Regan's sudden disappearance. Another example of male friendship that leads to an act of vengeance, a cold-blooded execution, is Marlowe's fondness of Harry Jones (Agnes' partner who is in love with her)—"funny little guy, harmless. I liked him" (*The Big Sleep* 1946). Marlowe identifies with Harry because he is loyal and protects Agnes,[169] what gets him killed, poisoned by Canino. Therefore, the film turns Marlowe into a ruthless avenger—Marlowe kills Canino on the spot even though Canino's gun is empty. In the novel Marlowe acts in a self-defense: "I didn't want him with an empty gun. . . . He whirled at me. Perhaps it would have been nice to allow him another shot or two, just like a gentleman of the old school. But his gun was still up and I couldn't wait any longer. Not long enough to be a gentleman of the old school. I shot him four times, the Colt straining against my ribs" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 143–4). Moreover, Marlowe's killing of Eddie Mars is almost as merciless as that of Canino—he shoots Eddie several times and thus forces him out of the house where he is gunned down by his own men. This final scene confirms Marlowe's superior masculinity and control, he is standing strong with a

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[167] Chandler describes Geiger's house as a homosexual lair that Marlowe disdains: "The place was horrible by daylight. The Chinese junk on the walls, the rug, the fussy lamps, the teakwood stuff, the sticky riot of colors, the totem pole, the flagon of ether and laudanum-all this in the daytime had a stealthy nastiness, like a fag party" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 46).

[168] As in Chandler's second novel *Farewell, My Lovely* (character of Lindsay Marriott) in *The Big Sleep* the homosexual character, Carol Lundgren, possesses a rather feminine name to strengthen his lack of masculinity.

[169] Marlowe tells Agnes: "your little man dies to keep you out of trouble . . . you don't really care anyway. Just put it down, your little man deserved something better" (*The Big Sleep* 1946). In the novel Marlowe does not tell Agnes that Harry is dead, but that he left her behind—as he should have done. This way Marlowe saves Harry's masculine image, he was not as gullible as Agnes thought.

willing women by his side (see fig. 66). In the novel, Marlowe is anything but victorious at the end. By sending Vivian and Carmen away and not letting General know what really happened to Regan, thus further concealing Carmen's crime, he feels guilty, broken: "I was part of the nastiness now" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 164).

Fig. 66. Vivian and Marlowe—Bacall and Bogart

Hawks' film adaptation of Chandler's novel *The Big Sleep* creates a male dominated world where women exhibit an ungoverned sexuality. Moreover, these female characters, with masculine traits as capability and verbal prowess, flirt with Marlowe who appreciates their looks but also their masculine femininity. The film manages to invert some of the traditional gender hierarchies. All female characters in the film are assertive, not only the femme fatale who uses her open, and thus dangerous, sexuality to manipulate men. This technique was already successfully tested in previous Bogart-Bacall pairing, *To Have and Have Not* (1944)—here "Lauren Bacall's Slim is one of film's richly superior heroines and a rare example of a woman holding her own in a man's world" (Haskell 623), despite not being the murderous fatal woman. Hawks in *To Have and Have Not* created an unusual gender dynamics, unusual for the 1940s Hollywood, he made the woman "a little more insolent than" the man, moreover she would "walk out on

[the man] in every scene" (Hawks qtd. in Breivold 28). This tactics, elaborated into *The Big Sleep* (1946), turned Chandler's novel into a love story developed amidst several murders. Hawks' portrayal of sexually assertive, independent working women is, as Biesen calls it, "the transitional strategy of easing men back from combat [World War II] into relationships with woman at home—in a move from violence to love and toward sexual confrontations with transgressively assertive career women who were working during the war" (179).

5.3.2 *The Big Sleep* (1978)

> I'm a very smart guy. I haven't a feeling or a scruple in the world. All I have the itch for is money. I am so money greedy that for twenty-five bucks a day and expenses, mostly gasoline and whiskey, I do my thinking myself, what there is of it: I risk my whole future, the hatred of the cops and of Eddie Mars and his pals. I dodge bullets and eat saps, and say thank you very much, if you have any more trouble, I hope you'll think of me, I'll just leave one of my cards in case anything comes up.
>
> —Raymond Chandler (*The Big Sleep* 161–2)

Director Michael Winner took a high risk when committing to creating another version of such highly regarded film as *The Big Sleep* (1946). Therefore, it seems that he deliberately used a different approach than Dick Richards in *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975) who imitated the 1940s milieu for his remake. Apart from changing the setting to the 1970s England, the remake, unlike Hawks' 1946 version, closely follows Chandler's novel plot and incorporates most of the novel's dialogue. Chandler's dark, seedy streets

of Los Angeles are absent in this film and are substituted by English evergreen lawns. However, Winner's *The Big Sleep* (1978),[170] free from the Production Code regulations, takes the liberty of presenting all the "sleazy" parts of Chandler's novel in full display; Hawks did not have such freedom. Nudity, drug addiction, pornography, voyeurism, and nymphomania are not hidden or merely hinted at in the remake, but made clearly visible to the viewer, thus managing to capture the sinister atmosphere of Chandler's work even without the black-and-white shadows from the 1946 film adaptation. The remake is more interested in what happens, the succession of events and thus prevention of possible narrative ambiguity which was, in the eyes of a number of critics, a major problem of Hawks' film version—"No one understood the original film. But it was marvelous. So I [Winner] decided to make it very clear what was going on. Which may or may not have been a good thing. We decided to relocate the action to Seventies London as the best possible American version had already been made" (Winner qtd. in Van Praagh 64). In the remake all the loose ends, which are bewildering the devotees of the 1946 film noir, are neatly tied up—Winner includes several flashback sequences that visually "explain" the narrative. Moreover, the remake includes a clear answer to the question that in 1944 neither Hawks, the screenwriters, nor Chandler could answer: "Who killed the chauffer?"—according to Winner the Sternwood's chauffer, Owen Taylor, committed suicide.[171] Chandler in his novel, leaves the question, suicide or murder, open.

Even though the director sees the setting, 1970s London, for the remake as natural—"Chandler was educated in England, you know. . . . I read the book expecting a detective story. It's a poetry . . . mythical London in a mythical year . . . [with] odd corners

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[170] For the sake of clarity and to avoid confusion I shall henceforth refer to this film as "the remake" and the previous film version as "the adaptation."

[171] Michael Winner is bot the director and also the screenwriter of the remake: "'Let's stop messing about,' Winner said. 'I'll write the script myself.' Previous attempts to write Chandler's story into a modern London milieu had failed, but Winner read the book 200 times and pasted together a financeable script in three months" (Mills 22).

and streets that don't scream 'This is London!'"[172] (qtd. in Mills 22–3)—it, unfortunately, does not take into account the cultural changes due to which the same action in the 1940s has a very different impact on the viewer thirty years later. In the 1940s, in America and also the United Kingdom, pornography belonged to illegal, undercover business. In the 1970s "the porn market . . . exploded . . . turning pornography into a multibillion dollar industry" (Downs 22). Therefore, Chandler's shocking uncovering of Geiger's illicit pornographic racket, in the remake loses its intended importance.

The attitude towards nudity and the depiction of sexual activity have drastically changed since Hawks' carefully hidden hints at these forbidden transgressions in the 1946 version. However, despite the booming pornography market and prevalent nudity, Winner still managed to provoke the audience of the 1970s, and especially the female population. Winner adapts Chandler's scene when Camilla (Carmen in the novel and the adaptation), under the influence of drugs, is photographed stark naked to be later blackmailed (see fig. 67):

> Miss Carmen Sternwood was sitting on a fringed orange shawl. She was sitting very straight, with her hands on the arms of the chair, her knees close together, her body stiffly erect in the pose of an Egyptian goddess . . . Her eyes were wide open. The dark slate color of the iris had devoured the pupil. They were mad eyes. . . . Out of her mouth came a tinny chuckling noise which didn't change her expression or even move her lips. She was wearing a pair of long jade earrings. . . . She wasn't wearing anything else. (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 25–6)

[172] Moreover, Winner tried to justify his setting alterations by stating: "Chandler loved England. He continually looked on his youth as the golden period of his life, and when he got older he came back here again and again. I think he'd have been rather interested to see this version of the book" (qtd. in Raw and Gurr 136).

Fig. 67. Camilla as the "Egyptian goddess" in Geiger's house

By including this scene in the remake, Winner portrays the most critiqued aspect of the pornography business—victimization of women. The 1970s was the time when feminists in America and also Britain started to criticize the pornography industry because "it had an explicit ideology of sexism and male supremacy, and it abused women throughout its production and use" (Kramarae and Spender 1641). Camilla is also a victim of such abuse—she is coerced into making pornography, Geiger takes her nude pictures without her consent, she is under the influence of drugs—a heroin kit shot appears on screen (see fig. 68). Therefore, her enraged lunge with a gun at Joe Brody, who is in possession of her nude pictures,[173] is understandable. In the adaptation, Hawks was not able to portray pornography; therefore, Carmen is dressed in Oriental kimono-like dress, suggesting that this exoticism accounts for something aberrant—Geiger's house is decorated in the same Oriental manner, a "code" associated with homosexuality in the films made in the era of Production Code. Thus Carmen's aggression towards Joe Brody who has pictures of her fully dress, in the adaptation, becomes only a scene in which Vivian may, again, play the role of the dominant, smart, solicitous older sister.

[173] The director provides a shot of Camilla's pornographic pictures to the audience.

Fig. 68. Heroin kit—open portrayal of drug abuse

Furthermore, the on-screen nudity enables to portray Camilla in the remake as a promiscuous woman, which was in the adaptation only obscurely suggested. Her excessive animalistic sexuality dominates the film—Marlowe finds Camilla nude in his bed, as in the novel, and manages to make her leave while she hisses and angrily protests (see fig. 69). Since Marlowe is played by Robert Mitchum who was 60 at the time the remake was shot, Marlowe becomes Camilla's mentor and protector, a substitute for her indifferent dying father. Despite her open sexuality, Camilla is presented in the remake as a careless insane young woman acting like a child—dressed like a teenage girl, she speaks about herself in the third person, hisses, giggles, and runs around. Camilla is not the sexy yet deranged woman from the novel or from the first film adaptation even though she does not suck on her thumb. Camilla's mental condition is more explicit in the remake: she is more aggressive (attacks Joe Brody and almost shoots him, they fight for the gun) and even has a seizure at the end, as in the novel. Moreover, in the remake, as in the novel, she is depicted as a nymphomaniac who, when refused by men, is not afraid to kill: she actually kills Rusty Regan and tries to shoot Marlowe (see fig. 70). The ending of the remake closely matches the novel's: after Camilla's failed attempt to shoot Marlowe she will be sent to the sanatorium and Charlotte (Vivian, in the novel and the

film adaptation) has to flee. The old General dies with what is left of his pride and glory, not knowing he has raised a murderer who killed the man he loved like a son.

Fig. 69. Camilla in Marlowe's bed

Fig. 70. Camilla aiming at Marlowe

Charlotte is definitely of interest to Marlowe but no romance develops as in the previous adaptation. Charlotte is cunning and intelligent but "is at least twice as lewd as the screenplay requires her to be, and nowhere near as electrifying" (Maslin). Charlotte tries to be coquettish, seductive and therefore she repeatedly smacks her lips (see fig. 71).

Fig. 71. Charlotte Regan

The seduction techniques she uses on Marlowe are very straightforward, as in the novel—upon Marlowe's examination of Camilla's pornographic photographs Charlotte states that Camilla has a "beautiful little body," with a hint of jealousy, and that Marlowe "ought to see [hers]" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 44) instead. Moreover, her suggesting to go to Marlowe's place and subsequent kissing scene (see fig. 72) seems in the remake a more desperate method to keep Marlowe off the case since Mitchum's Marlowe is quite old. In the novel, it is Marlowe who asks Vivian whether she would like to see his place,[174] in the remake Charlotte invites herself. Marlowe is not interested in her propositions, as in the novel, he even proclaims about her that "she'd make a jazzy weekend but she'd be a bit wearing for a steady diet" (*The Big Sleep* 1978 and Chandler *The Big Sleep* 90).

Fig. 72. Charlotte seducing Marlowe

Charlotte, in the remake "comes across as someone tired of her genteel life with plenty of money and little to do" (Raw and Gurr 139). Therefore, she developed a gambling addiction and, in connection with organized crime, and thus Eddie Mars, she frequently employs thugs to do her dirty jobs. In the remake she acts like a spoiled wealthy

[174] "'Hold me close you beast,' she said. . . . I strained her against me until the shivering of her body was almost shaking mine. I kept on kissing her. After a long time she pulled her head away enough to say: 'Where do you live?' 'Hobart Arms. Franklin near Kenmore.' 'I've never seen it.' 'Want to?' 'Yes,' she breathed" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 107–8).

woman who, presumably, tries to protect her family. Her motives to protect her sister and father, however, do not seem sincere since her relationship with her husband is in the remake depicted as dysfunctional—Rusty was, allegedly, in love with Mona[175] who became Mars' wife and thus he eventually married Charlotte. Moreover, Charlotte expresses her discontent about her husband's relationship with her father to Marlowe: "Rusty was a lot of fun for dad. More fun for dad than he was for me" (*The Big Sleep* 1978).

General's deep affection towards Rusty is in the remake highlighted by displaying General's collection of framed photographs of Rusty (see fig. 73). Moreover, General with quivering voice and watery eyes implores Marlowe to find his surrogate son, offering much more money for locating him (£10,000) than he was willing to pay for her daughter's troubles to disappear (£1,000):

> I'll give you £10,000 to find Rusty. I don't even have to know where he is. A man has a right to live his own life. I just want to know that he's all right. . . . Oh, he spent hours with me. Sweating like a pig. Telling me about the Irish Revolution. Just a big curly-headed Irishman from Clonmel with sad eyes. A smile so wide. I may be vain in my judgement of a man but he seemed pretty clean to me. Find him for me, Marlowe. Just find him. (*The Big Sleep* 1987)

[175] To conceal Camilla's crime, Eddie Mars and Charlotte pretend that Mona fled with Rusty. Marlowe believes it since Rusty was in love with Mona: "I think . . . he ran off with a woman who meant more to him than a rich wife he couldn't get along with" (*The Big Sleep* 1978).

Fig. 73. General keeps Rusty's photographs

General's relationship with Rusty is, in the remake and also the adaptation, a demonstration of superiority of male comradery over any involvement of a man with a woman. In the remake, an alliance between a man and a woman becomes toxic and leads to his doom—Camilla kills Rusty Regan and tries to kill Marlowe, Owen Taylor commits a suicide because he fails to protect Camilla, Joe Brody and Geiger are in business with Agnes and are also killed, Harry Jones, who falls in love with Agnes and protects he,r is poisoned by Canino, and Eddie Mars's problems begin when Charlotte seeks him out.

Agnes, as in the novel and, surprisingly, also in the adaptation, portrays a quintessential femme fatale. The remake presents Agnes as a beautiful female criminal determined to get some money and disappear (see fig. 74). However, in the remake she seems less self-confident than in the novel. She takes back her power only after Joe Brody is killed. In the scene where Agnes and Brody are shown together, she even seems submissive, as Brody yells at her to shut up and she meekly does as told. But she is definitely the one with the brains and the power to manipulate; she says: "a half-smart guy, that's all I ever meet" (*The Big Sleep* 1978), declaring her dominance. In the remake, close to the end, she finally leaves with the money and a smile on her face; she seems relaxed and self-confident, confirming a true noir femme fatale interpretation. One of the

final shots of Agnes portrays her standing alone against a light background, giving her status of exceptionality (see fig. 75). Marlowe acknowledges her perseverance, even though deadly to her male partners: "Agnes was wiping herself off the slate for good. Three men dead: Geiger, Brody and Harry Jones and she went walking off between the waters with my 200 in her bag and not a mark on her" (*The Big Sleep* 1978).

Fig. 74. Agnes Lozelle

Fig. 75. Agnes Lozelle—the femme fatale

All the female characters, Camilla, Charlotte and Agnes, are in the remake portrayed as unsympathetic. Camilla is a psychotic, murderous addict, Charlotte is a sex-starved, bored and ineffectual temptress, and Agnes seems unaffected by the death of men she allied with. Hawks' adaptation, on the other hand, was overcrowded with beautiful, likeable females that functioned as a diversion for Marlowe on his quest. Marlowe is in the adaptation given almost limitless sexual opportunities, but he resists all these temptations thus affirming his integrity. In the remake, unlike the adaptation, Marlowe is driven by his compassion towards the dying General.

The remake creates a world in which being in family, business, or love relation with a woman is a punishment for the man—the General suffers in a house with his two wild daughters he cannot handle; Harry Jones, who falls in love with Agnes dies a horrible

death; and Eddie Mars at the end of the film leaves with his wife who is not devoted to him anymore. Marlowe, at the end of the remake is the only man who cleans his hands off all these women and thus manages "to protect what little pride a sick and broken old man has in his family, so that he can believe his blood is not poisoned. That his little girls, though they may be a trifle wild, are not perverts and killers" (*The Big Sleep* 1978).

The film version of the novel *The Big Sleep* that retains Chandler's challenge of the black-and-white morale of 1940s American society is the remake, *The Big Sleep* (1978), even if it is set in 1970s England. The 1946 adaptation present a simplistic world in which the crime is punished and the detective triumphs. Therefore, in the film adaptation, Vivian had to be turned into a submissive heroine who is eventually tamed in the end by a strong masculine figure— the detective—and promised an "appropriate" life. Both film versions of the novel are more misogynistic than Chandler in his literary piece. Moreover, the remake creates a male dominated milieu in which women become only an impediment in a man's attempt at a healthy and happy life, therefore, Marlowe never gets married.

5.4 ADAPTING MICKEY SPILLANE'S *I, THE JURY*

> Revenge is an act of passion; vengeance of justice. Injuries are revenged; crimes are avenged.
>
> —Samuel Johnson

Mickey Spillane wrote his first novel *I, the Jury* (1947) so he could build a house, he needed $1,000. He considered himself a writer, not an author, writing was his profession, a job—"making money to keep the smoke comin' out the chimney" (Spillane qtd. in Collins and Traylor 187). Even though he has been critically "abused,"[176] Spillane's fiction became very popular with the reading public very quickly. Spillane introduced Mike Hammer, a war veteran private eye with a singular code of honor and administration of justice—eye for an eye, into a post-World War II climate. Spillane knew what the public demanded:

> When the war was over, people were used to violence. You know I was in the military—I knew what they were thinking, I knew what they were eatin' and dreamin'. That's why I didn't make Mike a pilot like I was. I made him come out of the trenches where most of the people were. And they knew what a person's mind could do to them when they came back and a .45 was the gun that they used, you know. (Spillane qtd. in Collins and Traylor 189)

[176] Spillane's novels irritated the critics since 1947 (between 1947 and 1952 he wrote seven novels) and the reviews addressed the same theme, a flaw in their eyes—the books included too frequent and too detailed descriptions of sex and violence. Spillane remembers: "I have gotten the worst reviews in the world. Nobody has ever gotten them as bad as me. And they would say this man writes the most trivial garbage in the world, it's terrible, it's infused with sex and violence and don't ever read this stuff. So we made this big ad out of the bad reviews, quoting from them. Then underneath we'd have a line like, this book sold six million copies. The top of the ad said, Mickey Spillane says about his new book, 'I hope this one gets lousy reviews.' I wrote for entertainment, I wasn't trying to educate anybody" (qtd. in Collins and Traylor 189–90).

Besides the plot driven by violence, Spillane in his page-turner fiction created male and female characters that strikingly resemble the comic strips' "über-heroes"—tall, physiologically perfect and willing women and a tough man, an ugly avenger, and a private detective, Mike Hammer. Hammer lacks chivalry of Chandler's Philip Marlowe or frigid vengeance of Hammett's Sam Spade—Hammer does not take prisoners. Moreover, as his name suggests, he uses his fists first, unlike Spade or Marlowe who try to think their way out of the problem before they clench their fists.

Even though Mike Hammer was not Spillane's only fictional creation, the novels featuring this character are the most popular. Spillane became one of the best-selling detective fiction writers[177] and thus Mike Hammer made his way to radio, comic strip, TV series and film. In 1953 Spillane sold film rights for his four novels to a British producer, Victor Saville, and thus three films, and three[178] different Mike Hammers were immortalized on the Hollywood screen—*I, the Jury* (1953), *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), *My Gun Is Quick* (1957). However, Spillane disdained the directors' selections of actors to portray Mike Hammer—he thought that Biff Elliot (the first Mike Hammer) lost his career because he was a miscast in *I, the Jury* (1953), he was "dismissive and even scornful" (Collins and Traylor 44) of *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), he "felt sad for the actors who had to play" in *My Gun Is Quick* (1957) and was sure that Robert Bray "was caught in the wrong vehicle" (Collins and Traylor 194). Mike Hammer returned to screen in 1963 and Mickey Spillane was cast as his fictional tough detective, he also co-wrote the script of *The Girl Hunters*—"today many critics concur that Spillane's was the definitive Hammer screen

[177] "Beginning with *I, the Jury* (1947), Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer novels almost immediately achieved an unparalleled popularity in detective fiction, with more than 225 million copies sold making Spillane America's most widely translated author. *I, the Jury* alone sold over 2 million copies in hard-cover and reprint editions, and Spillane's fourth novel, *The Big Kill* [1951], had record-breaking 2.5 million first edition. . . . at one point seven 'Hammers' ranked in the 10 bestseller of all time . . . The gap between popular appeal and critical acclaim has probably never been wider before or since than with Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer novels" (Brunsdale 322).

[178] *The Long Wait* (1951) is Spillane's novel that does not feature the character of Mike Hammer.

portrayal, transforming form gutter-bum to trench-coated classic private eye with style and humor" (Brunsdale 337). This film adaptation made an unequivocal visual link between the creator and the creation. This link was further fortified by Spillane's impersonation of Hammer in TV commercials—eighteen years lampooning his fiction and himself as well. However, the film incarnations of Spillane's fiction remained, for a long time, dismissed. Only *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), subsequently, achieved a status of a highly regarded noir film—in 1999 the Library of Congress selected *Kiss Me Deadly* to be included in the National Film Registry.[179]

5.4.1 *I, the Jury* (1953)

> Jack, you are dead now. You can't hear me any more. Maybe you can. I hope so. I want you to hear what I'm about to say. You've known me a long time, Jack. My word is good just as long as I live. I'm going to get the louse that killed you. He won't sit in the chair. He won't hang. He will die exactly as you died, with a .45 slug in the gut, just a little below the belly button. No matter who it is, Jack, I'll get the one. Remember, no matter who it is, I promise.
>
> —Mickey Spillane (*I, the Jury* 5)

As in the novel, the 1953 adaptation revolves around Hammer's search for the murderer of his best friend Jack, a man who gave "his right arm for a friend . . . he stopped a bastard of a Jap from slitting [Hammer] in two" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 2). The scene of the hideous murder of a defenseless amputee is presented during the opening credits of the film, supported by an atmospheric score, establishing the dominant focus of the film—

[179] Other films that are analyzed in this work were also selected *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) in 1989 and *The Big Sleep* (1946) in 1997.

violence. Hammer swears to avenge his friend, he will execute the killer no matter who it is. In the adaptation the director adopts the first-person narration of the novel in the form of Hammer's voiceover. Hammer on screen is a tough man oozing testosterone, shoving people in anger and not afraid to be the law, the jury and also the executioner.

However, the hyper-masculine traits of the novel's detective are in the film, due to the Production Code restrictions and the casting choice, toned down. His hyper-masculinity is given by his huge body, physical unattractiveness, abundant sexual drive, fearlessness, emotional restrain, and invulnerability. Even though Hammer is on a mission to right the wrong, in the adaptation, he becomes quite emotional, often whimpers, and even though he is a skillful fist-fighter he is knocked out in a bar scene with a coat hanger. Biff Elliot, the first film Hammer, stated that: "Mike Hammer is a cartoon character like Superman. I am not Superman. I'm an actor. . . . I took a cartoon character and turned him into a flesh-and-blood human being similar to what Mickey Spillane was. It's impossible to please a writer who's writing, without knowing it, his own autobiography" (qtd. in Collins and Traylor 19). Moreover, in an interview Elliot revealed that he had to have his shoulders padded (see fig. 76) despite his solid built, he was a 1939 Golden Glove Champion (Shalek)—in the novel Hammer stands six-foot tall and weighs 190 pounds. The unnatural width of Elliot's shoulders created a visual incarnation of Hammer's comic book ancestor *Mike Danger* (see fig. 77). Nevertheless, the novel's Hammer size—"three sizer bigger and a hell of a lot tougher" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 26) than a common man—is not reflected on screen, most of the male characters tower over Hammer, especially the police inspector Chambers. Hammer is in the adaptation portrayed as "an emotional hothead who could be as tough as he was tender. He fights hard and loves hard" (Collins and Traylor 19).

Fig. 76. Biff Elliot as Mike Hammer

Fig. 77. Mike Danger[180]

Hammer's masculinity is further enhanced, in both the novel and the film, by his conflicts with other man whose masculinity is feminized—Hal Kines and George Kalecki. George Kalecki, who allegedly supports Hal Kines through college, in the adaptation grieves over Kines' death and is enraged by Kines' relationship with one of the sex-starved Bellemy twins, thus implying a homosexual affair of these two men. In the novel their homosexuality is confirmed by Hammer's observation in Kalecki's apartment: "there was only one bed. So they did sleep together" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 52). Hammer in both the novel and the adaptation overpowers Kines and later kills Kalecki in self-defense declaring his superiority.

[180] http://comicvine.gamespot.com/mike-danger/4005-40011/

The female equal to Mike Hammer is his secretary Velda—loyal, helpful and extremely beautiful. In the novel Velda carries her own gun, has a private eye license and frequently investigates on her own. Despite her toughness, she has a soft spot for her boss, she likes him greatly and would accept his marriage proposal in a blink of an eye. Therefore, she is always frustrated and angry with him when spots a lipstick mark on Hammer's cheek or shirt, which is quite often. Hammer is also very fond of her; he respects her. Moreover, he is hesitant when it comes to revealing his relationship with Charlotte to her, because "Velda [is] too good a woman to lose" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 78). However, in the film adaptation Velda is the one who "claims" her right on Mike—she kisses him without any hesitation (see fig. 78) and when faced by Charlotte she is confident and states that Hammer is "like a homing pigeon, no matter where you let him loose, he always comes home to roost" (*I, the Jury* 1953), to Velda. She is not intimidated by Charlotte. Her strong equal relationship with Hammer is evident when he introduces her to Charlotte as "the best assistant [he] ever had" (*I, the Jury* 1953). Moreover, when is Velda captured by some thugs she in unique code warns Hammer. Velda is not a dame in distress waiting for the man to rescue her—she also fights off one of the thugs and then upon Hammer's victory triumphantly throws her hair and calls the police (see fig. 79). Velda is in both the novel and the film, a smart, tough and self-confident woman who is only an asset in Hammer's life; she is a unique female character that was rarely depicted on the Hollywood screen of the Production Code era.

Fig. 78. Velda kisses surprised Hammer

Fig. 79. Strong Velda has Hammer's back

On the other hand, Charlotte Manning, the beautiful blond femme fatale, is the one who, in the novel and also the adaptation, fuels Hammer's vendetta and simultaneously becomes his love interest. In the novel, Hammer's first exposure to Charlotte is through a "full-length photo of a gorgeous blonde. . . . she stood there tall and languid-looking . . . long solid legs . . . the kind that make you drool to look at . . . incredibly wide shoulders for a woman, framing breasts that jutted out" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 16). This picture turns Charlotte into an ultimate sex-object. In the adaptation Hammer is deprived of such a portrayal of a woman, a female figure materializing male fantasies. However, the adaptation manages to foreshadow her open sexuality when Hammer, upon his arrival to Charlotte's apartment, picks up her stocking and she then confesses that she has been expecting him—she manipulates him from the very beginning (see fig. 80). Her profession, a psychiatrist who is an author of a book *Analyze Yourself*, only adds to her feminine picture of a male fantasy—Charlotte appears to anticipate Hammer's needs, she already analyzed him based on what Jack has mentioned about him. Charlotte has beer and food ready for him imitating an image of a devoted wife waiting late for her husband with dinner ready (see fig. 81).

Fig. 80. Charlotte's stockings

Fig. 81. Charlotte has beer, which she does not drink

In the novel, her feminine manipulation is more complex because Hammer wants to marry her, this fact is not implied in the film. Charlotte's perfect portrayal of a caring wife and a mother is in the novel attained by her agreement with Hammer's every decision; she prepares him dinner; tells him she wants children of her own; she is willing to give up her dark room and her psychiatric practice when they are married; she completely adapts to his needs because Hammer said so: "no wife of mine is going to work. I want her at home where I know where she is" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 198). Despite Charlotte's intellectual, financial and professional dominance over Hammer, she sees him as the epitome of a "real" man:

> when you came to see me I saw a man that I liked for the first time in a long time. . . .I have hundreds of patients, and surprisingly enough, most of them are men. But they are such little men. Either they have no character to begin with or what they had is gone. Their minds are frail, their conception limited. . . . well, when you constantly see men with their masculinity gone . . . you get so you actually search for a real man. . . . I diagnosed you the moment you set foot in my office. I saw a man who was used to living and could make life obey the rules he set

down. Your body is huge, your mind is the same. No repressions. (Spillane *I, the Jury* 82)

Charlotte makes clear that she is exhilarated that she found a man that is stronger than herself and justifies Hammer's vengeance by stating that "to a man friendship is a much greater thing than to a woman" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 44). Moreover, in the novel Charlotte tries to strengthen her hold on Hammer by her open proposal of sex, which he, surprisingly, declines—Hammer in the novel has sex with Mary Bellemy and refuses Charlotte because what they have is "too beautiful to spoil . . . [their] time will come, but it must be right" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 142) . The adaptation, due to the Code's restrictions, does not include such proposals. Nevertheless, the adaptation manages to capture Charlotte's feminine mystique and also her masculine traits of a cold-blooded killer—she is cunning, intelligent but a sadistic murderess. As in the novel, in the film Charlotte counts on her open sexuality and her relationship with Hammer when she is confronted by him at the end. Hammer is determined to carry out vengeance and Charlotte tries to persuade[181] him otherwise, while performing a striptease—she removes her scarfs, coat, gloves and shoes (see fig. 82). Hammer shoots her close range before she manages to pull

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[181] HAMMER. You wanted the whole world, Charlotte, all of it. Not to use it, just to have.
CHARLOTTE. I'm tired Mike.
HAMMER. You should be, you've come a long way.
CHARLOTTE. My mistake was falling in love with you . . . that's why you can't pull that trigger any more than I could. Listen to me.
HAMMER. Too late.
CHARLOTTE. You told me you loved me, Mike. You said that yourself.
HAMMER. I told you a lot of things!
CHARLOTTE. Can't just wipe them away like they were nothing. There's so much we could do together, Mike. The two of us.
HAMMER. I'm sure enough Charlotte. No plans for the New Year?
CHARLOTTE. The world, Mike! Could be ours!
HAMER. I never wanted the world! Just room for the two of us.
CHARLOTTE. I'm frightened, Mike! Hold me, hold me tight darling. [two shots]
HAMMER. So long, baby.
CHARLOTTE. How could you?
HAMMER: It was easy. (*I, the Jury* 1953)

a trigger and kill Hammer with a hidden gun (see fig. 83). In the novel, she is silent during Hammer's summary of the murders and motives and completely undresses, counting on Hammer's male sexual desire, which he overcomes because it is the right thing to do, in his eyes: "I'm the jury now, and the judge, and I have a promise to keep. Beautiful as you are, as much as I almost loved you, I sentence you to death . . . She was completely naked now. A suntanned goddess giving herself to her lover . . . The roar of the .45 shook the room" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 245). In the novel Hammer's motivation to kill Charlotte, except for vengeance, was the lack of evidence against her and his fear of her walking away unpunished for her crimes. Hammer does not believe in the justice system: "I'm not letting the killer go through the tedious process of the law. You know what happens, damn it. They get the best lawyer there is and screw the whole thing and wind up a hero! The dead can't speak for themselves" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 4). In the adaptation she has to suffer because of the murders, lies and her greed.

Fig. 82. Charlotte persuading Hammer

Fig. 83. Charlotte ready to kill Hammer

Not only Charlotte's open sexuality, even though expressed only at the end of the film, is in the adaptation seen as deviant, but also Marry Bellemy's. Mary is another woman that throws herself on Hammer, demands his full sexual attention. In the novel,

Mary is perpetually trying to seduce Hammer and is very persuasive—she is a nymphomaniac. Hammer stating that he is only a human, eventually, succumbs to her provocative sexuality. Spillane does not depict the sexual intercourse, only Mary's stripping naked and then Mike's shoulder shrugging—"I couldn't push her away, nor did I want to now" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 212). Mary manages to seduce Mike in the woods while attending a tennis match with his fiancée Charlotte. On the other hand, the film, under the Code's force, could not explicitly show Hammer's sexual encounters. However, Mary in the adaptation does not lose her sex-drive. She is playful with him (using a back scratcher) and explicitly displays her desire—she is the initiator, embraces and kisses him while locking the door (see fig. 84 and 85.). Even though Hammer does not yield to her advances, she is pleased with herself. Moreover, her excessive sexual appetite is suggested when all the Christmas presents are addressed exclusively to men.

Fig. 84. Seductive Mary locking the door

Fig. 85. More seduction by Mary

Both the novel and the film present a story of a man's loss of control and his desire to gain it back, he succeeds only by eliminating the one who is responsible for the chaos—a woman. The only female character that is not a danger to a man is Velda, all the other women present a perilous femininity that infringes the boundaries of compliant and

domestic female roles and thus threaten the male dominance. Moreover, the novel and also the adaptation, despite the Production Code's limitations, portray female sexuality as aggressive and thus murderous, and men who are not masculine enough fail. At the end the victorious detective, the epitome of masculinity, survives and by his side is a devoted but strong, intelligent and independent woman, Velda. Unlike Raymond Chandler who included a female heroine, Anne Riordan, embodying the same qualities as Velda, only once in his novel *Farewell, My Lovely*, Spillane makes Velda an inseparable part of Hammer novels attempting at a portrayal of gender equality, despite being labeled a misogynist writer. Spillane's Velda is turned from a "decorative object" in a detective's office, as Sam Spade's secretary Effie Perine, into a fearless woman successfully operating in a male dominated world. She represents a break from the traditional hard-boiled treatment of women who are either portrayed as femmes fatales or helpless female redeemers. Moreover, in Spillane's third novel *Vengeance is Mine!* (1950) Velda is in charge of the detective agency—Hammer relinquishes all control to Velda: "from now on the business is yours. I'll do the legwork. . . . You're the boss now. . . . I won't even tell you how to operate. You can call the signals and carry the ball yourself if you want to" (Spillane *Vengeance is Mine!* 358–9). Velda has the abilities and her being a female is not relevant, Hammer trusts and acknowledges her—Spillane created the first American professional female private investigator, twenty-seven years before Marcia Muller's female private eye Sharon McCone joined the hard-boiled detective fiction in the 1977 novel *Edwin of the Iron Shoes*.

5.4.2 *I, the Jury* (1982)

> They call him "The Hammer"…He is a private eye with a style of his own…He is a boss with a ton of charm…He is sexy…And as a lover, who could say no? But when he is told his best friend has been murdered…Watch it! Hammer is Law…Hammer is justice…The Hammer's way…He is easy to love…And dangerous to cross.
>
> —Theatrical trailer *I, the Jury* 1982

I, the Jury (1982), a remake,[182] free from Production Code regulations, definitely does not shy away from the violence, nudity and open depiction of sex in comparison to its predecessor, or even the literary source—"*I, the Jury* was released in 1982 with an 'R' rating because of the scenes of nudity and violence, and in Great Britain it received an 'X' rating, making it forbidden to anyone under twenty-one years of age" (Schwartz 124). This erotic thriller, probably to include more violence, nudity and sex, alters many characters and narrative units from the novel and also the previous film version—remake is set in 1980's New York, Charlotte's psychiatrist office is turned into a kinky sex therapy clinic, CIA's undercover mind control operations and a gang that smuggles weapons are added; wild car chases and explosions blast on screen and Hammer is not an independent investigator but a mere puppet following evidence planted by his "friend"

[182] For the sake of clarity and to avoid confusion I shall henceforth refer to this film as "the remake" and the previous film version as "the adaptation."

from NYPD. Hammer in the remake becomes "the perfect killing machine" (*I, the Jury* 1982).[183]

The pre-credits scene presents Hammer[184] as a private detective with no scruples when it comes to his clients—he is intimate with a married woman he should keep an eye on; he is "busting [his] balls on this job" (*I, the Jury* 1982), literally. During the opening credits Hammer's sexual prowess is underlined by a shot on his groin with a revolver tucked at his pants, a phallic symbol denoting the man's virility (see fig. 86). This updated, 1980s, Hammer is an extreme womanizer, he is slick and lean and seems much younger than any previous screen Mike Hammers. He definitely is a tough man who fist-fights and is not afraid to shoot but the film takes the liberty to turn him into a Rambo-like character[185] at the end—eliminating the enemy with a machine gun (see fig. 87). The remake embraces the extensively criticized Spillane–Hammer crude, sadistic and erotic hard-boiled approach. The added action scenes, Hammer's torture and subsequent overpowering of his captors and his tireless pursuit of a psychotic serial killer, underline Hammer's masculinity and image of an invincible but reckless macho male—as in the novel.

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[183] Many elements from Spillane's other novels are incorporated into the remake: "From *The Girl Hunters* comes a suggestion that Pat Chambers (Paul Sorvino) loves Velda; a one-on-one fight reminiscent of Hammer slugging it out with the Dragon; and the gimmick of plugging the barrel of the villain's gun, so that it explodes on said villain. From *Kiss Me, Deadly* comes the kidnapping of Velda, and from *One Lonely Night* comes Hammer's one-man assault on an enemy fortress. In *One Lonely Night,* more than any of the other books, Hammer seems an ex-soldier, using combat-style, commando-like tactics, when he attacks the nest of Commies holding Velda captive, and machine-guns 'em down" (Collins and Traylor 92).

[184] As in the case of the 1953 adaptation, Mickey Spillane was not satisfied with the portrayal of his hard-boiled detective and thus the film as well: Armand Assante, as Mike Hammer, "didn't fit the character at all. Armand is a great actor. But he's a very short guy. He did not fit the things that we had. On top of which, they wanted to throw a lot of sex into this picture, which was not what I had in the book. And, as usual, they went out and did it their way. It wasn't a successful picture. Unless they stick to the original type of story, it's going to be a failure" (Spillane qtd. in Collins and Traylor 199).

[185] The first Rambo film (*First Blood*) was shot in 1982.

Fig. 86. Gun—phallic symbol

Fig. 87. Hammer—Rambo style

The scene where Jack, Hammer's war friend, is killed by an unknown shooter is almost a perfect copy of the opening scene form the adaptation—adding more plausibility by highlighting the man's disability, amputated arm (see fig. 88 and 89): "the killer didn't leave after the shooting. He stood here and watched him [Jack] grovel on the floor in agony . . . The trigger-happy bastard must have stood by the door laughing . . . Tormenting a guy who's been through all sorts of hell. . . . This was no ordinary murder" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 3). Hammer sets for the revenge quest, even though he does not declare it out loud as in the novel or the adaptation, and the only reliable companion on this quest is his secretary Velda.

Fig. 88. Murder of Jack Williams

Fig. 89. Dead Jack--graphic

Velda is in the remake definitely the big sexy secretary but also a capable detective who is not afraid to fire a gun and kill, a woman depicted by Spillane on the pages of the novel (see fig. 90): "She had million-dollar legs, that girl, and she didn't mind showing them off. For a secretary she was an awful distraction. . . . wore tight-fitting dresses . . . Don't get the idea that she was easy, though. I've seen her give a few punks the brush off the hard way. When it came to quick action she could whip off a shoe and crack a skull before you could bat an eye" (Spillane *I, the Jury* 12–3). As in the novel and the adaptation, in the remake Velda and Hammer are definitely close and trust each other—Hammer lets Velda shave him with a straight razor (see fig. 91). Moreover, Velda participates in a shootout by Hammer's side, an equal partner. Their mutual physical attraction is visible but does not evolve into a sexual relationship:

> HAMMER. Everything I touch dies. You didn't know that?
>
> VELDA. I don't care. I love challenges. Marry me. Don't I take good care of you?
>
> HAMMER. The best. I could never be faithful.
>
> VELDA. Sure you would. You'd remember my Sicilian grandma and you'd realize it wasn't worth what happened to you. (*I, the Jury* 1982)

Velda and Hammer are only partners but would give one's life for another—Hammer does not care about his own safety but tries to protect Velda. Later in the remake, Velda is kidnapped by a serial killer and Hammer saves her, however, she is not a passive female victim waiting for a man to save her—she nearly frees herself using her wits, knowledge and experience to dissuade the murderer from committing another crime.

Fig. 90. Velda repairing Hammer's gun

Fig. 91. Velda shaving Hammer

The Bellemy twins from the novel and also the adaptation are in the remake turned into "sexual surrogates" (prostitutes) working at Charlotte Bennett's sex therapy clinic. They provide Hammer with some information concerning Jack, however, he does not have sex with any of them as he does in the novel—he does not need any kind of sex therapy. Nevertheless, later on they are both killed by a psychotic serial killer Kendricks with a nasty attitude towards redheads—he dresses up his victims as his mother (red wig and makeup), undresses them and then stabs them to death (see fig. 92 and 93). This killer was created by an ex-CIA member specializing in mind control. The character of Kendricks represents the eroticized violence which is the ultimate essence of the film—the remake makes sex and violence inseparable. The most illustrative example of the eroticized sadistic violence is the scene when Kendricks stabs the twins and their cries of pain and terror blend with cries of pleasure echoing form the sex group session held downstairs—sounds and shouts of group orgasm.

Fig. 92. Bellemy twins tortured

Fig. 93. Bellemy twins murdered by Kendricks, a psychotic serial killer

Charlotte, the novel's femme fatale, in the remake becomes an exotic female psychiatrist (see fig. 94) who specializes in sexual therapy incorporating female and also male sexual surrogates thus portraying a male and female sexuality as equal—opened sexuality of women is not considered deviant or a threat anymore in the 1980s. Moreover, Charlotte's feminine manipulation of Hammer from the novel and the adaptation is absent in the remake, she does not try to entice him by playing a role of a virtuous woman worth marrying. The remake incorporates the "sexual storm, the nudity, the frankness, the immorality, the sadism, the violence" (Schwartz 125) from Spillane's novel but by adding the graphic sex the film throws Hammer's moral code into the wind and Charlotte is, therefore, portrayed only as a sex-toy and a murderess to hire. Charlotte, like Hammer, is in the remake a mere puppet in hands of a man—a former CIA agent who gives her orders—therefore, her only means to exercise control over Hammer is by submitting to him sexually. Since the director of the remake was not limited by the Production Code, unlike the adaptation, it could adapt the final conflict between Hammer and Charlotte—Hammer's merciless shooting of the killer. However, a striptease scene is cut very short since Charlotte is wearing only a bathrobe, so Hammer does not hesitate and shoots

Charlotte from a close-range. Charlotte mortally wounded asks "how could you?" and Hammer coldly replies "it was easy" (*I, the Jury* 1982), as in the novel and the adaptation. Nevertheless, the remake depicts the dying Charlotte, still conscious and with a gun in her hand and she does not even try to retaliate, she just gives up and Hammer delivers his famous line to a corpse (see fig. 95). It seems like his answer, "it was easy," is not directed to Charlotte but to the audience stating that all the viewers seen him go through, being beat up, shot at and tortured is what defines him.

Fig. 94. Charlotte Bennett

Fig. 95. Dying Charlotte

The remake, unlike the adaptation, amplifies violence from the source novel because the 1980s Hollywood films focused on screen violence—"their graphic nature and intensity . . . had become not just commonplace for American audiences but expected" (Kendrick 79).[186] Moreover, the gratuitous nudity and violence towards women prevail in the remake. The eroticized violence from the novel when Hammer at the end shoots nude Charlotte is in the remake taken a step further when incorporating a psychotic serial killer with an Oedipus complex stabbing women dressed as his mother. Both

[186] The remake features a typical 1980s scene exhibiting excessive violence: Hammer tracks down a former sexual surrogate that Jack used to meet at the clinic and before she manages to give Hammer any information a Japanese chef slashes her throat and Hammer subsequently burns the man's face on the grill.

masculinity and femininity are in the remake tied exclusively to sexuality—in the sex therapy clinic Hammer learns from the female sexual surrogates that their principal aim is to boost the libido and thus masculinity of the male patients: "we are very old-fashioned here, we want our men to feel like men" (*I, the Jury* 1982).

CONCLUSION

> It's the movies that have really been running things in America ever since they were invented. They show you what to do, how to do it, when to do it, how to feel about it, and how to look how you feel about it.
>
> —Andy Warhol

Adaptations and remakes are creative interpretations of the original; there is not a single view, a single correct interpretation of the original. Therefore, film adaptations and remakes are either constantly criticized and dismissed or praised and called for. Adaptations and remakes, which create the analytical portion of this dissertation, were analyzed similarly to the literary texts, comparing and contrasting similarities and differences between the literary source (the hard-boiled detective novel), its film adaptation and the remake. These analyses provide novel interpretations of both the source novels and the film incarnations, focusing on the representations of masculinities and femininities in both media.

The 1931 pre-Code adaptation, *The Maltese Falcon* a.k.a. *Dangerous Female*, of Dashiell Hammett's novel *The Maltese Falcon,* creates the world where women are indulgent towards men's sexual morality—Wonderly does not care much about wearing Iva's kimono at Spade's apartment, Iva seems completely untroubled by her faithless marriage and her husband's death, and Effie knows all about Spade's romances and still lets him flirt with her. *Dangerous Female* portrays Spade as an animalistic sexual predator who feels at home in such a milieu.

While *Dangerous Female* focuses on open female sexuality and masculinity that is irresistible to women, *Satan Met a Lady* (1936), the second incarnation of Hammett's

novel, portrays women as either innocent "kittens" smitten by the detective's charm or dangerous criminal masterminds that beat the detective at his own game—Miss Purvis and Madame Barabbas. The second film version of Hammett's novel succeeds in distancing itself from the literary base and portrays Hammett's world as black-and-white, a traditional good-guy versus, in this case, bad-woman rivalry. *Satan Met a Lady* may be labeled a fast moving entertainment, a mockery of a detective genre which bears almost no resemblance to the Hammett's novel or the previous film—the only link between the two film versions is a reference to a "lost dog case."

Spade, in the third version of the novel *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), is an image of masculinity that is authentic and honest, he sacrifices his feelings to achieve justice. On the other hand, the female criminal is punished for her misdeeds and an attempt on luring the detective to the wrong path with her open sexuality. The novel presents a detective who with a cold determination sends Brigid to jail, unwilling to play "the sap" for her, he sacrifices Brigid as Gutman sacrificed Wilmer. Spade never attaches himself to any woman, only when he can gain something from the relationship; therefore, Spade is as "evil" as Brigid, who pays dearly for her involvement with him. Moreover, Hammett's closing scene, which does not appear in the film, in Spade's office after the long night with the crooks, depicts a self-contemptuous detective who circles back to his old ways when his mistress Iva appears and demands his attention.

Hammett's novel in which intelligent but crooked people search for an object that becomes their demise is a detective hard-boiled drama that presents timeless topics of love, desire, honor, and sacrifice. Therefore, it is no surprise that it was turned into three original films that carry characteristics of the era they were created in. The decade from 1931 to 1941 marks an era of the Production Code enforcement and its influence is visible

in these films—from a mild impact on the *Dangerous Female* to omission of sexually suggestive scenes in *The Maltese Falcon* (1941).

The first film version of Hammett's novel, *Dangerous Female* (1931), revolves around the femme fatale and her sexual allure and turns a hard-boiled detective into a playboy. *Satan Met a Lady* (1936), an attempt at a comedy, is a long forgotten second film version of Hammett's novel that created a character of a goofy detective in a battle of wits with a beautiful, smart and independent female criminal. In 1941, Huston created a noir film, *The Maltese Falcon,* which is revered as a definitive version of Hammett's hard-boiled style. Nevertheless, all three versions keep the antipathy towards women, the femininity, thus also towards the sexual "otherness," already present in the novel—they portray the masculine private detective as victorious and the effeminate men are punished along with the strong and determined femme fatale.

Even though *The Big Sleep* (1939) is Chandler's first published novel introducing the character of hard-boiled detective Philip Marlowe; *Farewell, My Lovely* (1940) is the first Chandler's work that was adapted for the screen. *Farewell, My Lovely* became an inspiration for the film *The Falcon Takes Over* (1942), the third film in the "Falcon" series. *The Falcon Takes Over* turned Chandler's hard-boiled novel into another Falcon story with Marlowe transformed into sleek, gentleman, amateur sleuth Gay "The Falcon" Lawrence. Moreover, the film version creates a predictable black-and-white dichotomy that ensures that the crime has been disciplined and the amateur sleuth ends up the one capable of delivering the justice. In the novel, Chandler lets the femme fatale decide about her fate—she escapes after shooting Malloy and only after three months, when she is found in a bar, and is cornered by a cop she commits a suicide. Unlike Diana, the captured femme fatale to be prosecuted for manslaughter along with Burnett, Chandler's Velma

could have walked free. Furthermore, none of the male characters presented in *The Falcon Takes Over* are able to measure up to the leading male, Gay Lawrence. Lawrence serves as an epitome of pre-noir masculinity—he is witty, sophisticated, and always ready to help any woman in need and does not shy away from romantic involvement with these women. However, the film retains Chandler's portrayal of an intelligent working female, an equal to the main male character—has a degree in journalism; as in the novel, she is a valuable source for the investigation. Ann is a rare appearance in mystery crime films, a strong female character that is equally capable of investigation as the male detective.

Murder, My Sweet (1944) is the second attempt to adapt Chandler's novel *Farewell, My Lovely* for the screen. Nonetheless, the film is the first in which Chandler's private detective appears under the name Philip Marlowe. Chandler in his novel creates a miscellaneous world where the distinction between the good and the bad is not clear-cut. However, the majority of characters in *Murder, My Sweet*, which function as projections of Chandler's themes, appear as bounded, they are either positive, without the shades of grey: Ann Grayle, Mr. Grayle, Lt. Randall, or thoroughly negative: Amthor, Dr. Sonderborg, Jessie Florian and Mrs. Grayle. Therefore, by adding the character of a truly virtuous woman, Ann Grayle—the redeemer—creates a balance between good and bad/evil, a simplistic black-and-white noir dichotomy. Moreover, by turning Ann into a woman worthy of Marlowe's affection, making Malloy an illiterate lovelorn goon, Amthor an old quack, and Mr. Grayle a lovesick elderly man, the film emphasizes Marlowe's masculinity. In this lonesome noir world of *Murder, My Sweet*, Marlowe does not have an equal, male or female, no one he could look up to—Ltd. Randall, Anne Riordan or Red Norgaard.

The third attempt at adapting Chandler's novel is a remake *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975). This film, as well as *Murder, My Sweet*, is more misogynistic than Chandler had

been in his novel. In the novel Mrs. Grayle at the end sacrifices her life as not to cause any problems to her affluent husband. However in *Murder, My Sweet* Mrs. Grayle is killed by her elderly husband whom she betrayed and therefore she has to be punished. In the remake, Marlowe is the one who shoots her. The remake gives Marlowe an opportunity to avenge all the unnecessary deaths, people he liked in one way or another—Tommy Ray, Mrs. Florian, and Moose Malloy.

The remake presents femininity exhibiting excessive sexuality that is depicted as deviant and harmful to the male population. On the other hand, masculinity is portrayed in many variations—Malloy is overly masculine but his weakness is his blind love for Velma and his half-witted nature; Amthor and Marriott lack masculinity altogether, and Mr. Grayle is stripped of his masculinity by his murderous, treacherous young wife. Marlowe, a tough but sensitive man with strong moral values represents the ideal form of masculinity.

Despite Howard Hawks' problems with the cohesiveness of plot in Chandler's novel, the film adaptation, *The Big Sleep* (1946), featuring the dynamic Hollywood duo, Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall, became one of the most highly regarded noir films. The film adaptation of Chandler's novel *The Big Sleep* creates a male dominated world where women exhibit an ungoverned sexuality. Moreover, these female characters, with masculine traits as capability and verbal prowess, flirt with Marlowe who appreciates their looks but also their masculine femininity. The film manages to invert some of the traditional gender hierarchies. All female characters in the film are assertive, not only the femme fatale who uses her open, and thus dangerous, sexuality to manipulate men. Moreover, the promised defeat and ultimate destruction of the film noir femme fatale, Agnes, is "forgotten" in this film. I assume that this is due to the film's concern with the

development of a love affair between Marlowe and Vivian. The film counted on this chemistry and sexual tension, and ended up creating a finale that was completely different from that proposed by Chandler in the novel.

Director Michael Winner took a high risk when committing to creating another version of such highly regarded film as *The Big Sleep* (1946). Therefore, it seems that he deliberately used a different approach than Dick Richards in *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975) who imitated the 1940s milieu for his remake. However, the remake creates the world in which being in family, business, or love relation with a woman is a punishment for the man—the General suffers in a house with his two wild daughters he cannot handle; Harry Jones, who falls in love with Agnes dies a horrible death; and Eddie Mars at the end of the film leaves with his wife who is not devoted to him anymore. Marlowe, at the end of the remake, is the only man who cleans his hands off all these women and thus manages "to protect what little pride a sick and broken old man has in his family so that he can believe his blood is not poisoned. That his little girls, though they may be a trifle wild, are not perverts and killers" (*The Big Sleep* 1978).

The film version of the novel *The Big Sleep* that retains Chandler's challenge of the black-and-white morale of 1940s American society is the remake, *The Big Sleep* (1978), even if it is set in 1970s England. The 1946 adaptation present a simplistic world in which the crime is punished and the detective triumphs. Therefore, in the film adaptation, Vivian had to be turned into a submissive heroine who is eventually tamed in the end by a strong masculine figure— the detective—and promised an "appropriate" life. Both film versions of the novel are more misogynistic than Chandler in his literary piece. Moreover, the remake creates a male-dominated milieu in which women become only an impediment in a man's attempt at a healthy and happy life, therefore, Marlowe never gets married.

Both Mickey Spillane's novel *I, the Jury* and its film adaptation *I, the Jury* (1953) present a story of a man's loss of control and his desire to gain it back, he succeeds only by eliminating the one who is responsible for the chaos—a woman. The only female character that is not a danger to the detective Mike Hammer, is Velda, his loyal secretary. All other women present a perilous femininity that infringes the boundaries of compliant and domestic female roles and thus threaten the male dominance. Moreover, despite the Production Code's limitations, the novel and also the adaptation, portray female sexuality as aggressive and thus murderous, and men who are not masculine enough fail. At the end the victorious detective, the epitome of masculinity, survives and by his side is a devoted but strong, intelligent and independent woman, Velda. Unlike Raymond Chandler who included a female heroine, Anne Riordan, embodying the same qualities as Velda, only once in his novel *Farewell, My Lovely*, Spillane makes Velda an inseparable part of Hammer novels attempting at a portrayal of gender equality, despite being labeled a misogynist writer. Spillane's Velda is turned from a "decorative object" in a detective's office, as Sam Spade's secretary Effie Perine, into a fearless woman successfully operating in a male-dominated world. She represents a break from the traditional hard-boiled treatment of women who are either portrayed as femmes fatales or helpless female redeemers.

I, the Jury (1982), a remake, free from Production Code regulations, definitely does not shy away from the violence, nudity and open depiction of sex in comparison to its predecessor, or even the literary source. It amplifies violence from the source novel because the 1980s Hollywood films focused on screen violence which was in the 1980s expected by the audience and the prevailing trend in filmmaking. Moreover, the gratuitous nudity and violence towards women prevail in the remake. The eroticized violence from the novel when Hammer at the end shoots nude Charlotte is in the remake

taken a step further when incorporating a psychotic serial killer with an Oedipus complex stabbing women dressed as his mother. Both masculinity and femininity are in the remake tied exclusively to sexuality—in the sex therapy clinic, Hammer learns from the female sexual surrogates that their principal aim is to boost the libido and thus masculinity of the male patients.

Since each film adaptation is a subjective interpretation of the previous source they are built on, it is impossible to draw a conclusion that would apply to all ten films. Nevertheless, films that were produced and consumed in a certain era share specific features. The films of the pre-Code era (e.g. *Dangerous Female* 1931) present both men and women sexually active, almost predatory. The films made during the enforcement of the Production Code (*Satan Met a Lady* 1936; *The Maltese Falcon* 1941; *The Falcon Takes Over* 1942; *Murder, My Sweet* 1944; *The Big Sleep* 1946; *I, the Jury* 1953) portray the punishment of the femme fatale as rightful, sexuality other than heterosexual is seen as deviate and thus is carefully coded within these films, and the male lead is built into a moral example the other men should look up to. On the other hand, the films made free from Production Code (*Farewell, My Lovely* 1975; *The Big Sleep* 1978; *I, the Jury* 1982) portray homosexuality quite vividly, do not shy away from scene of violence, nudity and sex and depict male bond and comradery as more important than an equal relationship between a man and a woman. Women, in all of the films in question, are predominantly portrayed as dangerous, openly sexual predators who deserve punishment for their transgression against the gender roles the society prescribed for them. And female characters that revel in domesticity and subordination are praised. A rarity on screen is a female character who is an equal to the male lead—an independent, capable, single working woman. Nevertheless, a break from the stereotypical portrayal of women is

presented by Mickey Spillane in the character of Mike Hammer's secretary Velda—she is an independent, intelligent and tough female detective who can handle guns, her employer and a case she is working on. This character was also adapted for screen, however, her objectification, focus on her physical attractiveness, still prevails.

Even though the films, may aim at conveying a message to women that a transgression against the prescribed gender roles does not pay, what female spectators "pick out" from these films, I believe, is an image of a woman who strives to break free from the patriarchal construction of difference between masculinity and femininity no matter the consequences.

Our culture has rapidly gone from text based to visually based, people probably watch more films than read books. Therefore, I believe, this dissertation, which includes film analyses, may spark off an interest in adaptation theory and remaking, portrayal of gender in film and film noir. Moreover, it may also lead the reader back to the very core, the "dawn" of this thesis—the American hard-boiled detective fiction.

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