COULTER, CAITLIN BROOKE, M.A. Nietzsche, Mann, and Modernism: A Framework for Morality in Raymond Chandler's Detective Fiction. (2019)
Directed by Dr. Anthony Cuda. 58pps.

In the wake of several newly released television detective series, there has been an increase in public discussion that centers on the dark philosophy of the hard-boiled detective. However, many of the contemporary conversations revolve around the cinematic history of film noir and the numerous philosophies it drew on or sought to counter. Scholars writing about these early noir films, which provide the basis for the contemporary detective movies and television series, argue for the impact that Modernist authors and thinkers had on them. However, the relationship between Modernism, the Gothic, and American detective fiction goes further back than the genre-changing film release of *The Maltese Falcon.* As one of the most celebrated and ground-breaking authors of this genre, Raymond Chandler is a necessary cornerstone upon which to build this conversation and explore the intersection of Modernism, the Gothic, and American detective fiction. This essay will look at Chandler's impulse to question traditional morality and trace this impulse back through his education and influences to the strand of Modernism exemplified by Friedrich Nietzsche, his new philosopher, and Thomas Mann's embodiment of his philosophy in literary fiction. This thread of Modernism works to destabilize a culturally dictated standard of morality, celebrate the philosopher-individual, and exert a clear influence on Chandler's work and characterization of Philip Marlowe, Chandler's iconic private detective figure. Establishing this influence is imperative to viewing Raymond Chandler's detective fiction as the serious literature that he sought to write, and establishing the literary tradition of his moral questioning.

NIETZSCHE, MANN, AND MODERNISM: A FRAMEWORK FOR MORALITY IN RAYMOND CHANDLER'S DETECTIVE FICTION

by

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A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of The Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfilment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

Greensboro
2019

Approved by

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Committee Chair

Dedicated to my God, my family,
and my “easy senior class,”
Dr. Grewell’s LIT483

APPROVAL PAGE

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CHAPTER I

THE FRAMEWORK FOR MORALITY

Introduction

In the wake of several new television detective series, there has been an increase in public discussion that centers on the dark philosophy of the hard-boiled detective. Correlations between Gothic genre and mystery fiction reach at least as far back as Edgar Allan Poe and continue in tandem with reviews of *True Detective* and Sherlock Holmes movies. However, many of the contemporary conversations revolve around the cinematic history of film noir and the numerous philosophies they drew on or sought to counter. Scholars writing about these early noir films, which provide the basis for the contemporary detective movies and television series, argue for the impact that Modernist authors and thinkers had on them. 20th century noir films had a clear influence on recent productions of American detective fiction films, and academia has done well to explore the connections among the different generational televised adaptations of the hard-boiled detective who roams the amoral American streets. However, the relationship between Modernism, the Gothic, and American detective fiction goes further back than the genre-changing film release of *The Maltese Falcon* (1941). Those involved in this conversation should trace it back through the books that inspired the films and even farther to the Modernist texts that influenced American detective fiction in the twentieth

century. As one of the most celebrated and ground-breaking authors of this genre, Raymond Chandler is a necessary cornerstone upon which to build this conversation and explore the intersection of Modernism, the Gothic, and American detective fiction. More specifically, this work will look at Chandler's impulse to question traditional morality and trace this impulse back through his education and influences to the strand of Modernism exemplified by Friedrich Nietzsche, his new philosopher, and Thomas Mann's embodiment of his philosophy in literary fiction. This thread of Modernism works to destabilize a culturally dictated standard of morality, celebrate the philosopher-individual, and exert a clear influence on Chandler's work and characterization of Philip Marlowe, Chandler's iconic private detective figure. Establishing this influence is imperative to viewing Raymond Chandler's detective fiction as the serious literature that he sought to write, and establishing the literary tradition of his moral questioning.

Much of the existing scholarship on Raymond Chandler centers on his reaction to American philosophies and genres of writing but very little engages with his European influences. In the handful of prestigious biographies written on Chandler, less than half regard his time in England as influential to his writing (Hiney; MacShane; Marling); only two make brief reference to the Gothic novel (Priestman; Gross); and none engage with the impact of German Expressionism on his work at length. As a result, the biographies do not delve as deeply as they might, forced to refrain from the depth of analysis provided by contextualizing Chandler's work within the genre of philosophically minded literary fiction. MacShane talks about how Chandler wished to write "real fiction while using the detective-story form" and Hiney contends that although he wrote within a

"disposable genre…Chandler was always more than a hack entertainer" (MacShane 50-51; Hiney viii). Gross writes of Chandler's "shadowy dream of a literary culture" and yet none of these scholars finds their way back to situate his writing within serious literature (Gross 18). I argue that this discrepancy exists in part due to their lack of engagement with the influence of Gothic Modernism and German Expressionism, particularly as understood through Nietzsche's philosophy and Mann's inclusion of this in his literary fiction.

Nietzsche's Modernism and German Expressionism

Producing a consistently controversial body of work, Friedrich Nietzsche widely influenced German and French writings, particularly through the articulation of his philosophy in *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886). Set up as a series of aphorisms, each of the major sections work through an individual problem that is lengthily qualified in subsequent sections. Walter Kaufmann notes that, although difficult, it is "possible" to briefly capture exactly what makes the book great: "the prophetic independence of its spirit; the hundreds of doors it opens for the mind, revealing new vistas, problems, and relationships; and what it contributes to our understanding of much of recent thought and literature and history" (Kaufmann 189). While this essay is clearly interested in the last point of this list, the book's influence on later authors and works cannot exist without elements of the first two clauses. These elements worked themselves deeply into the strand of Modernism that Thomas Mann exemplifies and Raymond Chandler continues in his Marlowe canon.

"Independence of spirit" describes not only the controversial foundation of the work and its author but also captures a colloquial attribute of Nietzsche's ideal man, the free spirit and new philosopher. In the first of the nine sections, Nietzsche criticizes the prejudices of the "malicious philosophers" and suggests the need for a new generation of philosophers (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 204). It is not the philosophers' innocence that causes Nietzsche's suspicion and mockery, but rather the lack of honesty in their own evaluations and philosophies. He begins with the realization that every great philosophy has merely been the "personal confession of its author" and the intentions behind each philosophy are the true impetus behind the production of the philosophy itself (203). He questions the strongly held belief in the "faith in opposite values" by questioning the will to truth: for what reason are we so inquisitive towards the "truth" while still uninterested in interrogating the value of truth itself (199-200)? The desire to accept the unconscious biases of hereditary instincts and estimations results in what Nietzsche terms the prejudices of philosophers, and this lack of personal introspection and questioning draws his criticism:

> For all your love of truth, you have forced yourselves so long, so persistently, so rigidly-hypnotically to see nature the wrong way, namely Stoically, that you are no longer able to see her differently… But this is an ancient, eternal story: what formerly happened with the Stoics still happens today, too, as soon as any philosophy begins to believe in itself. It always creates the world in its own image; it cannot do otherwise. Philosophy is this tyrannical drive itself. (206)

The old philosopher cannot look within himself and becomes subject to all the impositions of popular prejudices and easy acceptance of likable truths and dichotomies

(215, 221). It is from this understanding that Nietzsche explores the need for a new sort of philosopher.

Nietzsche's vision of the new philosopher fills much of the rest of the text and an intimately comprehensive tracing of his argument would take just as much room as the original document, if not more. Kaufmann notes that Nietzsche is constantly introducing distinctions and different concepts that are generally deposited under the same label, while "asking us to shift perspectives, or to perceive hues and gradations instead of simple black and white" (376). As a result, he acknowledges that many "superficial" readers will understand this to mean Nietzsche contradicts himself or that "he never embraces any meaningful conclusions," which is a false understanding of a book which, Kaufmann argues, "abounds in conclusions" (376). These conclusions produce the bulk of Nietzsche's influence on the literary and philosophical world, and it is by way of these larger conclusions that I will address his influence on Modernism and Raymond Chandler's work through the image of the new philosopher—the free spirit, the "good German," the *übermensch* of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.* Michael Lacewing's work on Nietzsche and the new philosopher provides a useful framework with which to move concisely through Nietzsche's vision; they are creators of new values, free spirits and experimenters, as well as critics and skeptics.

This new philosopher as a creator of values remains constantly in tension between the old philosopher who creates false values and the scholar who is capable of analyzing true values. While the scholar is capable of surveying and synthesizing values, it is the new philosopher who must interrogate the seeming dichotomy of opposites and create a

new set of values which acknowledges that "it is immoral to say: 'what is right for one is fair for the other'" (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 339; Lacewing 2). For this new philosopher to reject the philosophic tendency to create favorable moral conditions, he must reject an unconditional will to truth and thus move 'beyond good and evil' (Lacewing 1; Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 227). This title phrase does not mean Nietzsche considers this future man evolved past the state of good and evil, but rather that he does not consider such absolute statements such as 'this thing is evil' or 'this virtue is good' as valid or comprehensive observations (Kaufmann 376). Without the fixed models of good and evil, however, the new philosopher cannot find predetermined markers for orienting his judgement. As a result, he must create new values. The creation of values itself is not inherent to the new philosopher; Nietzsche posits that all of humanity subconsciously seeks to create favorable conditions for itself and tends to do this through the social and historical biases and hereditary influences which he discusses at the beginning of the work. The power of the new philosopher lies in his strength of spirit, an important and reoccurring concept for Nietzsche[1], and the conscious creation of unmasked knowledge and perspectives through constant experimentations with traditional morality.

The characterization of the new philosopher as an experimenter (often translated 'tempter' from German) has drawn considerable academic attention because of its multi-

[1] Nietzsche develops a measurement of spirit and a conception of how to order rank among men through their ability to bear undiluted the knowledge and 'truth' of the world. He notes that "the strength of a spirit should be measured according to how much of the "truth" one could still barely endure—or to put it more clearly, to what degree one would *require* it to be thinned down, shrouded, sweetened, blunted, falsified." (239, emphasis Nietzsche)

faceted meanings as a pun in German. English translations obviously lose this element of wordplay and deeper meaning, although standard translations include footnotes and commentary on the various ways this wordplay affects the concept that Nietzsche develops (Kaufmann 242-243). The idea of temptation—both directed inwards from and outwards toward the new philosopher—plays a necessary role in his interactions with those around him. As a new philosopher, a man must resist the temptation of depending on any influence, whether money, family, traditional moral schematics, or the allure of favorable conditions (Lacewing 2). He must also use the power of temptation to influence those around him and change the world around him; the ability to enact change becomes necessary to the new man's conceptualization of philosophy (2). Most important in regards to this essay is the third implication of this German pun: the new philosopher must experiment beyond conventional understandings of moral boundaries. Nietzsche muses that the new philosophers "will certainly not be dogmatists. It must offend their pride, also their taste, if their truth is supposed to be a truth for everyman—which has so far been the secret wish and hidden meaning of all dogmatic aspirations" (243). He must look beyond the various masks that peoples, ideologies, and philosophies hide behind and grimace at the "bad contact" with the average man (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* 228). Only then, "with the strength of his spiritual eye and insight," can he create distance and space for himself, allowing the new philosopher to engage with things more profound, "ever new stars, ever new riddles" (258). With this discerning perspective then, he can see "the most solemn concepts which have caused the most fights and suffering" and look at them as an old man looks at a child's toy (259).

The new philosopher, for Nietzsche, is necessarily a type of critic and skeptic but reaches beyond both to a new sort of questioning and a "courage and hardness of analysis" (322-323). This generation of skeptics shies away from a "paralysis of the will" which causes the sick skeptic to hide behind the guise of "objectivity" and "being scientific" (320). Instead he is "suspicious of easy answers and the refusal to give answers, and will dig deeper for the truth" (Lacewing 3). Only in the scope of his influence does the new philosopher deviate from the better critics. A critic sets out to analyze and mark out the boundaries of a set of knowledge, what it can and cannot say (3). The new philosopher has all the necessary 'rigor and neatness' of the brave skeptic[2], but uses this knowledge to create and influence and determine (3). Nietzsche says of these men, "With a creative hand they reach for the future, and all that is and has been becomes a mean for them, an instrument, a hammer. Their 'knowing' is *creating,* their creating is a legislation, their will to truth is—*will to power*" (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* 326, emphasis his). The new philosophers will apply a knife "vivisectionally to the chest of the very *virtues of their time*" and lead to a greater man, the *übermensch* [3] (327). Nietzsche calls for a new breed of philosophers who will rise up from the herd—whose spirits are strong enough to question the foundations of the thinkers and moralists before them.

[2] Paragraph, or Aphorism 209 discusses the differences between the two types of skepticism at length, but describes the good critic, the German critic, as one who has the bravery to despise a truth and yet seize it, to not believe and yet to not lose himself, to be severe and 'audacious' in its truth seeking. (Nietzsche 321-323)

[3] The *übermensch* is never explicitly referenced in *Beyond Good and Evil,* although most scholars agree that the figure painted of the ideal new philosopher is referent of the übermensch in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.*

Nietzsche's call for intellectual engagement recalls Kaufmann's brief summation of *Beyond Good and Evil's* influence and the second point that he makes, which is "the hundreds of doors it opens for the mind" (Kaufman 189). Even more than a philosophical stance on the "attempting" mind, *Beyond Good and Evil* engages with the potential for change inherent in this free spirit and questioning new philosopher. Although Kaufman positively describes this separation from the world-as-it-is, Nietzsche does not shrink from the tension that such a philosopher will create in the process of opening those doors (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 325). In calling forth new philosophers, he calls for those who will pursue honesty, the "only virtue" left to free spirits and new philosophers. Nietzsche comments that "more and more it seems to me that the philosopher, being *of necessity* a man of tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, has always found himself, and had to find himself, in contradiction to his today; his enemy was ever the ideal of today" (327). To open doors for the mind to explore necessarily creates controversy in its turning away from these social ideals and traditional spaces, and, as Kaufmann wryly notes, "Nietzsche was controversial to the marrow" (Kaufmann 181). This controversy served him ill during his lifetime; by 1887, *Beyond Good and Evil* had only sold 114 copies and Nietzsche notes in a letter that "one simply does not want my literature; and I—may no longer afford the luxury of print" (quoted in Kaufmann 183). It was not until 1903 that copy production picked back up, but the long lasting influence of his work in retrospect is undeniable. Karl Jaspers writes on the influence of Nietzsche

> the contemporary philosophical situation is determined by the fact that two philosophers, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, who did not count in their times and, for a long time, remained without influence in the history of philosophy, have

> continually grown in significance. Philosophers after Hegel have increasingly returned to face them, and they stand today unquestioned as the authentically great thinkers of their age. [...] The effect of both is immeasurably great, even greater in general thinking than in technical philosophy. (Jaspers)

Additionally, the "general thinking" to which Jaspers calls attention is the same conglomeration of "much of recent thought and literature and history" that Kaufmann writes of in his introductory review. By presenting a philosophy that is not limited to the technical tinkering of philosophers, Nietzsche embodies the same influential nature for which he calls in the new philosophers and their hammers. *Beyond Good and Evil* influenced an audience of more than his contemporaries; it reached out into Modernist thought, literature, and history. The doors *Beyond Good and Evil* opens by questioning traditional morality and calling for persons of strong spirit and introspection lead directly to the writing desks of Thomas Mann and eventually Raymond Chandler by way of German Expressionism and Gothicism.

German Expressionism developed after the writings of Nietzsche but scholars still regard him as one of the important foundations of thought and style that influenced the movement as it developed in Germany at the start of the 20th century. As one of the foremost Modernist movements, German Expressionism saw the visual and literary arts as an opportunity not just to describe the outer material world but also to react against positivism and naturalism and depict the inner truth of man through emotion (Andrew). Particularly in literature, Nietzsche's nihilistic diagnosis of human life and transcendental emptiness was influential in shifting the underlying current of Modernist Expressionism (Andrew). His philosophy, often shortened to the concise mantra, 'God is dead,' was

"taken up by Expressionism as an antagonism between apocalyptic visions of modern civilization versus renewal and rebirth of man" (Andrew). Although his influence grew at the turn of the century, Nietzsche nonetheless wrote himself into the history of German Expressionism through both his philosophy and his persistent inclusion of Germany in his work. The tradition of German Expressionism includes a diverse range of artists, playwrights, and poets, as well as writers Carl Sternheim, Ludwig Rubener, and Leonhard Frank, all of whom were fiercely dedicated to their country and the philosophies they believed would better it. Perhaps most prevalent in the eighth section, "Peoples and Fatherlands," Nietzsche's investment in his nation and his analyzation of its people appears throughout *Beyond Good and Evil*. He begins with an analysis of music and concludes that the best sort of music must be necessarily

> German in the best and worst sense of the word…inexhaustible in a German way…a certain German powerfulness and overfulness of the soul...a truly genuine token of the German soul...[which] expresses best what I think of the Germans: they belong to the day before yesterday and the day after tomorrow—as yet they have no today. (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 363-364)

It occurs again in his discussion of the German soul (367-370), German honesty (370), German writing (372), German speaking (373-374), and even the Germanization of the French (382-383), all of which readers may draw from only one of the nine segments of a single work. It is easy to see how Nietzsche's writing is well positioned to be included in the German movement of Expressionism, which developed but a few decades after the first edition of *Beyond Good and Evil* was published. Although Nietzsche was not averse to examining the flaws of his nations' people, his generally congratulatory tone towards

Germany that stands out. This German pride, particularly at the turn of the century, can be seen in many of the German Expressionists, and especially in the novels and personal writings of Thomas Mann, who so heavily relied on and looked up to Nietzsche.

Mann's Modernism and German Expressionism

Thomas Mann is widely regarded for his essays, novels, short stories, and social critiques, all of which touch on the psychology and philosophy of the artist and intellectual. He was born in 1875 and came of age during the philosophical and expansive shifts of German Expressionism and turn-of-the-century Modernism. His analyses and critiques of the European and German soul draw heavily on the philosophy and writings of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Freud (Ames 249). However, it was the influence of Nietzsche's writing which he particularly accredits with legitimizing his work. Mann wrote, "There is another element that links me with modernity and alone gives my work some validity on the intellectual plane: my experience with romanticism's self-transcendence in Nietzsche" (Winston 152). Although Mann would attempt to distance himself from Nietzsche's more "demonic" thoughts in the wake of the World Wars, he was never able to fully extricate himself from the influence of his fellow German (Bergoffen 1). Some scholars have sought to delineate precisely which of Nietzsche's thoughts Mann agreed with and which were simply influential to his style, an endeavor that fails to recognize the overall impact that Nietzsche's thought had on Mann, his writing, and by extension, German Expressionism and Modernism. There is not agreement as to whether Mann upheld or rejected the "gaudier" doctrines of "the

superman cult or ‘renaissance immoralism’” (Hatfield 181). There is, however, academic consensus that he was intrigued and drawn in by the “more fundamental aspects of Nietzsche’s thought: the dichotomy between “life” and art, the question of nihilism, the underlying ethical concern, and the penetrating psychological insights” (181). Mann himself writes of the imperative role that Nietzsche played, making so strong of a claim as to say that "the experience of Nietzsche's criticism of culture and his stylistic artistry is of the first order of importance in . . . my life” (E. Mann 23). Certainly, this ideological sway appears in the multiple references to Nietzsche in his essays and critiques, but these attributions are only the outer edge of Nietzsche’s influence on Mann’s embodiment of German Expressionism and Modernism.

Another point of academic agreement is their mutual patriotism that provides yet another instance of Nietzsche’s influence on Mann. The way in which Nietzsche spoke and wrote of his country influenced the younger German quite profoundly. Stanley Corngold proffers that “Nietzsche educated the young Mann into a kind of "psychologically-oriented patriotism," an intellectual love of the nation that provokes passionate criticism” (Corngold 62). This criticism came heavily later in life when Mann was a German expatriate living in America during the Cold War. However, critics often dismiss his denouncement of German Nazism and the work he did to disseminate anti-Nazi propaganda in Germany and direct their harshest censure towards Mann’s love of Nietzsche and his country. Mann did not hesitate to point to the tumultuous changes of the late 19th and early 20th centuries and credit the German Expressionism and Modernism for his intellectual leanings. He affirmed the immense role of German

literature and thought in his work continually. Mann writes, "What I owe to the German tradition of thought, and how deeply rooted I am in that tradition, is perfectly clear" (quoted in Winston 184). Some scholars claim that Mann's more refined style and elements of narrative discipline place him on the outskirts of German Expressionism, but his novels' inclusion of Gothic elements cause many to include him as one of the foundational writers of his time (Dennis 18). As an example, *Death in Venice* typifies Mann's German Expressionism and Gothic Modernism with its "decay and gothic solitude," chaotic moral turmoil, creeping sickness as the beginning of introspection, and will to power which crumbles under examination (Loayza).

Death In Venice

Published in 1912, *Death in Venice* is a novel of writhing tensions that asks its readers the question that Nietzsche does not answer: what happens to a man who is capable of questioning the materialistic superficiality of life and moving towards a view of his own nature but is too weak to transform into an *übermensch*? What great chaos can or will such failure wreak upon the man? Mann imagines the destruction that comes with turning a newly opened eye to such knowledge but also uses the novel to destabilize a socially accepted conception of morality. Focusing on this aspect of Nietzschean thought, Mann's novel both incorporates the philosophical wrestling of his German influence and lays a foundation for the American collaboration that occurs in Chandler's fiction. Mann writes of "a heart that is no longer hard enough for evil or good, of a broken will that no longer commands" and challenges a stable conception of comfortable morality (Nietzsche

Beyond Good and Evil 322). Following Nietzsche's imperatives, Mann does not "dally with 'Truth' to be 'pleased' or elevated' or 'inspired' by her" (324). Instead, Mann exposes to readers a man who is incapable of handling undiluted truth, disrupts traditional understandings of morality, and calls for readers to determine their own moral judgements. He does so through a grim account that bounces between a narrator and the decaying mind of a man who believes he is searching for beauty.

Following the dying Aschenbach around the city of Venice, *Death in Venice* leads readers through Aschenbach's inner dialogues as he justifies his erotic attraction to a young boy as a Platonic appreciation of beauty. When he is not comparing the innocent Tadzio to Phaedrus, a reference explicitly harkening back to Plato's praise of pederasty, Aschenbach lays on the beachside, listless and watchful for "his beloved" for hours on end (T. Mann 55). Even when he leaves at the end of the day, Aschenbach struggles with a sense of emptiness and reproach which is suggestive of ennui.[4] However, the narrator and not Aschenbach notes that when he "put aside his work and left the beach he felt exhausted, he felt broken—conscience reproached him, as it were after a debauch" (46). Although Aschenbach is unaware of his sickness, readers are aware of the old man's slow mental decline resulting from the cholera spreading throughout the city. Once again it is the narrator who informs readers that, "the aging man did not want to be cured, that his illusion was far too dear to him. […] Aschenbach was no longer disposed to self-

[4] Ennui is a reoccurring theme in Modernist texts, where it takes on the implication of existential boredom and loss of meaning. If ennui is best understood as a lack of engagement, then it is necessarily in conflict with the Modernist conception of morality and Nietzschean understanding of the good soul as actively engaged.

analysis" (46-47). In light of Nietzschean philosophy, this revelation by the narrator adds another element of uncertainty to readers' understanding of the decisions that Aschenbach makes; is he consciously making these observations and decisions (because of a naturally weak spirit) or is it all simply a result of his fevered brain? Does this ennui stem from a lack of moral engagement or from the cholera consuming Aschenbach without his knowledge? Mann complicates the reading of this protagonist by juxtaposing Aschenbach's inner justifications and thoughts with the observations of the narrator, subjecting readers to the "tension between technique and morality" (McKay 195). The narrator's perspective creates a sense of objectivity that lays the moral tension at the feet of readers rather than Aschenbach (189). When it becomes clear that Aschenbach lacks the perspective and force of will required to exert explicit moral reasoning, the final questioning of his morality passes to whomever is capable of that perspective and discernment, namely, the reader. Although it is a less direct call to readers than Nietzsche uses, the underlying imperative of *Death in Venice* is still to look within and wield a will to knowledge. To do so within the paradigm that Nietzsche puts forth requires turning away from personally favorable conditions that masquerade as socially influenced morality.

When presented with a blunt synopsis of the story, it would seem that the 'moral analysis' should be relatively simple for readers. After all, social tradition tends to consider sexuality one of the more easily delineated indicators of morality, regardless of what the societally normative behaviors may be. Under traditional moral schemes, an aged man should not sexually desire a young boy, and he should definitely never act upon

that desire, even if he should be so corrupt as to have those inclinations. However, readers do not receive a condensed list of strictly objectionable actions by which to judge Aschenbach's rejection or adherence to traditional morals. Instead, the narrator gives readers Aschenbach's reasoning, and theoretically objective appreciation of beauty, alongside his slow death and inner turmoil over his own academic work. The narrator does little to direct readers towards a decision and instead supplies the information that Aschenbach is unable to, while readers must determine its moral implications. In doing so, Mann displays Modernism's characteristic disturbance of simple moral decisions by giving "literary form to the general problem of finding a satisfactory basis for moral judgements" by preventing readers from "thinking that ethical problems don't really exist" (Thody 167). Mann typifies the Modernist tendency to shift and disturb conventional moral schemes by muddying the delineation between right and wrong—and good and evil—as markers of morality and by requiring readers to wrestle with the ambiguity of morality themselves. These "ambiguous spaces crammed with Gothic details" echo the Nietzschean imperative to find the "hard, unwanted, inescapable task…in being the bad conscience" of the times (De Mille 1; Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 327). Mann's integration of Nietzsche's moral upheaval with German Expressionism through the dark corridors of Gothic style introduces readers to a parallel of corrupted beauty through which to consider the destabilization of moral boundaries.

The complicated relationship between beauty and morality is a theme that reoccurs throughout Modernist texts and is one which Nietzsche often references in his exposition on the false beauty of masks and the 'temptation' of favorable conditions

(Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 240-241). *Death in Venice* continues to prod the readers' minds with this relationship as early as the second page of the story where Aschenbach contemplates the beauty of the imposing mortuary chapel (T. Mann 4). Readers encounter it as the narrator recounts the academic accomplishments of Aschenbach and comments that his work was "beautiful, it was spiritual, it was exact" (11). By setting Aschenbach on a moral and intellectual pedestal at the beginning of the novel, Mann creates a dramatic fall for the protagonist, positioning him to move from a scholar engaged with the truth and virtues of his work to a crazed old man entertaining ideas that society would condemn as dangerous. At worst, Aschenbach falls into the weakness of herd mentality by means of his rejection from both socially held moral standards and his will to knowledge. The reason behind his actions complicates readers' easy judgements. They are privy to Aschenbach's internal dialogue and this interiority provides the supposed 'moral' impetus behind his pursuit of Tadzio—: beauty. The young boy's inherent beauty draws and attracts Aschenbach, and because of the previous complicated relations of beauty and morality, readers are able to make two observations. First, we find that Tadzio, at least to Aschenbach, represents pure aesthetic morality and beauty, and secondly, because of this belief Aschenbach becomes convinced that he is actively pursuing beauty and morality even when he falls from the pedestal of moral stability the first pages of the novel place him on. He has fallen prey to the "seductive" finery and "beautiful pomp- and lie-costumes" of paralysis of the will, this beautiful sickness that pervades Europe, much like the cholera to which Aschenbach also falls (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 320). Betraying his *übermensch* potential, Aschenbach

attempts to mask the corruption of his knowledge with a mask that alludes to traditional beauty and morality.

Aschenbach's attempts to mask his age and beautify himself symbolically mirror this deceit, as does the continually confronted Gothic decay that lies behind traditionally beautiful images and objects. Aschenbach mixes images of divinity and beauty to describe the living art and godlike imitation he sees in the child but does not seek to maintain the traditionally held distance from such 'holy' things, and instead strives to be near the boy, even as he knows his own presence will corrupt Tadzio.[5] The relationship is complicated in the evocation of the image of the luscious but "dead-ripe fruit" which is arguably the introduction of cholera (T. Mann 32). This image correlates the appearance of beauty with a sickness that corrupts as it spreads and leads inevitably to death, mirroring the similar corruption and death of Aschenbach's morality. At one point, roughly halfway through the book, Aschenbach notes that "'Beauty makes people self-conscious'" and then considers "within himself" why this would be (34). Although he soon gets distracted by contemplating Tadzio's teeth, Aschenbach strikes an important point: if a beautiful appearance correlates to a hidden (im)morality, even in as complicated a relationship as Nietzsche suggests, then it would, indeed, make people self-conscious. These contemplations and correlations lay groundwork for the disgust of

[5] Mann's use of mythological and aesthetic terms in Aschenbach's musings on Tadzio are spread throughout the book. However, some key examples can be found in the scene when Aschenbach first encounters Tadzio, when he describes Tadzio rising from the sea and playing on the beach, and as Aschenbach sees Tadzio beckon him towards the ocean (although this moment is arguably a hallucination) directly before the old man's death (25, 33, 73).

readers towards Aschenbach's self-conscious attempts to make himself appear beautiful (this physical deceit occurring alongside his moral decay).

Mann uses this instinctive reaction to Aschenbach's pitiable desperation as a way to demonstrate all the Nietzschean images of the failed scholar. This scholar has decorated himself with "the garish finery of such moral word tinsels," "recollects 'himself' only with an effort and often mistakenly…easily confuses himself with others…errs about his own needs" (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 351, 317). One of the great ironies that plays itself out over the course of the text stems from this connection between the initial disgust with which Aschenbach describes the pathetic attempts of an old man masquerading as a young man and the eventual efforts he himself makes towards the same end. The narrator takes over momentarily and divulges that

> the presence of the youthful beauty that had bewitched him filled him with disgust of his own aging body; the sight of his own sharp features and grey hair plunged him in hopeless mortification; he made desperate efforts to recover the appearance and freshness of his youth and began paying frequent visits to the hotel barber. Enveloped in the white sheet, beneath the hands of that garrulous personage, he would lean back in the chair and look at himself in the glass with misgiving. (Mann 67-68)

As the narrator describes the various methods and cures for Aschenbach's appearance, it characterizes him as 'incapable of objecting to the process-rather as it went forward it roused his hopes. […] It was a young man who looked back at him from the glass" (T. Mann 68). The stark contrast between the 'youthful beauty' and Aschenbach's pitiable attempt to make himself appear beautiful as well is uncomfortable and draws readers back to the observations that Aschenbach himself made concerning the young-old man on

the ship. The terms used to describe the minor character in the first half of the book are well applied to Aschenbach's grotesque masquerade: both delusional men are "truly repulsive" and "ghastly" (19-20). They have "no right" to wear what they wear and to attempt to associate as one of the young men (17). They are "suffered" and "endure[d]," and their masks are an affront to readers, even though Aschenbach's original disgust at the concept of such mockery turns back on itself over the course of the book (Mann 17). The internal disgust at the young-old man's charade has disappeared for Aschenbach but it remains for the readers.

The horror of the entire masquerade lends itself to the airs of a Gothic novel, a novel of "deliberately undefinable horror" (Brann). Dark Gothic elements accentuate the novel, and preceding Aschenbach's moment of deception is a wild Dionysian dream of deceit and lascivious poisoned festivities, while a storm-wind, which was "turbid and smelt of decay," follows (Mann 65-69). Mann weaves the language and style of Gothicism together with German Expressionism and Nietzschean philosophy and in doing so highlights the reprehensibility of the corrupted Aschenbach. Aschenbach is not accurately representing himself and is actively seeking to appear other than he is, which is an affront to Nietzschean philosophy. Self-deception is a sign of herd mentality and Aschenbach should not have succumbed to it as a man who "taught a whole grateful generation that a man can still be capable of moral resolution even after he has plumbed the depths of knowledge" (8). Mann tells the story of moral corruption and failed potential and by doing so asks the readers to examine the shift in the moral paradigm. Mann's disruption of the assumed norms of traditional moral schemes confronts readers

and calls them to demonstrate the *übermensch's* strength of spirit through the moral questioning that Aschenbach cannot perform.

Mann does not shirk from disrupting the moral schemes for readers and laying the responsibility before them, even as he muddies traditional moral delineations. How do readers know good from evil if even the most apparent example of moral perversion (pedophilia and pederasty) appears in such a convoluted and complicated manner without the simplicity of literary justice to indicate how they should judge? How can anything be definitively said about the larger moral question posed when the morality of Aschenbach's actions cannot be definitively understood? Aschenbach is arguably pursuing beauty and morality (as embodied by Tadzio) when he commits his many questionable actions. Traditional and socially determined (by the herd, according to Nietzsche) moral boundaries are held in tension as Aschenbach confronts the reality of the spreading sickness in the city and ponders whether to inform the Polish family. Aschenbach fully realizes the moral implications of not sharing this information but revels in the deadly secret he shares with the city. The narrator relates Aschenbach's decision to abandon his personal morals:

> The knowledge that he shared the city's secret, the city's guilt—it put him beside himself, intoxicated him as a small quantity of wine will a man suffering from brain-fag. […] His art, his moral sense, what were they in the balance beside the boons that chaos might confer? He kept silence, he stopped on. (65)

This final, direct correlation of art and moral sense further amplifies the way that Mann is placing into a fictional world the Nietzschean ideology of questioning traditional delineations of morality. He writes of the "characteristically human experience of finding

it difficult to distinguish between good and evil—or even tell the difference between right and wrong," and it is an experience from which Mann does not allow readers to shrink (Thody 169). The model that this novel sets, through its collaboration of German Expressionism, Gothic underpinnings, and moral questioning, exemplifies the influence that this strand of Modernism has on Raymond Chandler and the destabilization of traditional moral schemes in his works of hard-boiled detective fiction. As an early model in the literary tradition, which produces and influences film noir and subsequently Raymond Chandler, Mann continues within academic circles as an embodiment of Nietzsche's philosophy within the form of serious literary fiction. As such, he provides the model through which we come to understand Chandler's detective fiction as a serious addition to the literary canon of philosophically minded fiction.

CHAPTER II

RAYMOND CHANDLER'S DETECTIVE FICTION

Raymond Chandler's Connection To Modernism and German Expressionism

Although Mann produces an extremely important model for taking Raymond Chandler's detective fiction seriously, far more ties Chandler back to this European tradition than the inclusion of Nietzschean philosophy. Chandler's connection to the Modernist and Gothic impulses of Nietzsche and Mann begins with his classical education in England and manifests more explicitly through his other, less popular writings. During his schooling in England at Dulwich, he received an education that relied almost exclusively on Greek and Latin classics, from which he learned how not to write. With a Nietzschean opposition to masking insecurities, he notes that

> a Classical education helps you from being fooled by pretentiousness, which is what most current fiction is too full of. In this country [America] the mystery writer is looked down on as sub-literary merely because he is a mystery writer, rather than for instance a writer of social significance twaddle. To a classicist -- even a very rusty one -- such an attitude is merely a parvenu insecurity. (Chandler, quoted in Hiney)

This drive for authenticity and exposure to the classical liberal arts seems to have influenced Chandler towards the strange mix of English Gothic and American Realism for which he receives both praise and censure today. Although he writes very little on his personal preferences towards literary movements, he does disclose his appreciation for

the “strong element of burlesque in my writing” (Chandler, quoted in Norman). William Marling remarks that Chandler wanted romance, but disdained “armchair romanticists” even as the opposing lens of realism repelled him (Marling 9). In his early essays, “The Tropical Romance” and “Realism and Fairyland,” Chandler argues for the potential of the detective figure to live in the tenuous space between these two dichotomies and develop the role of the ‘idealist’. Dulwich library ledgers show that Chandler did not often frequent the library, but when he did visit, he typically borrowed melodramas (Hiney). Even the Black Mask, where Chandler first published his short stories, encouraged this connection to the Gothic, having developed out of the genre as well (Marling 24). Chandler uses the elements of German Expressionism and Gothic melodrama throughout his novels but filters them through the American realism of detective fiction, emulating Mann’s inclusion of Nietzschean philosophy within literary fiction.

Academic work often downplays the Gothic undertones to the Marlowe series in favor of examining other elements and patterns of the novels. However, a more holistic view of Chandler’s literary works indicates a much stronger Gothic influence than is typically acknowledged. Will Norman credits the narrow scope of acknowledgement to the academic tendency to bypass Chandler’s works outside of the Marlowe cannon. In his collection of notebooks which scholars often neglect, Chandler includes a short story, *English Summer: A Gothic Romance*. Here he allows his Gothic and Modernist influences to play a larger role in the writing outside of the well-worn formula of the detective novel. Norman notes,

> The campy Gothicism of this posthumously-published story has never been taken seriously by literary scholars. However, it is precisely its generic and stylistic excesses which help us to understand how Chandler's transatlantic orientation structured his hardboiled fiction. (Norman)

Chandler's European education had a direct impact on his writing and the elements of the Gothic melodrama and Modernism on his American detective fiction often escape academic attention. Because Chandler became such an American icon for hard-boiled fiction, it is understandable, though unfortunate, that "the strains of Gothic burlesque and romance which Chandler understood to be fundamental to his writing have been largely absent from orthodox critical accounts of his work, along with serious consideration of his English affiliations" (Norman).[6] Taking Chandler's education, European influences, and attraction to the Gothic into consideration allows us to grasp the origins and complications of the moral questions that he poses throughout the Marlowe canon and solidly situates his work within the literary tradition that Mann typifies.

Raymond Chandler published his first novel and the first introduction to Philip Marlowe, *The Big Sleep*, in 1939 at fifty years old. By this time, he had finished his English education, studied language and literature in Germany and France, held and been fired from several miscellaneous jobs, and served in World War I—an experience which led him to suffer from depression and alcoholism for the rest of his life. His unique

[6] Norman continues, extrapolating out the role of *English Summer* specifically, advancing it as a tool for recognizing the Gothic elements of Chandler's works: the effect of "English Summer" is that of a distorted mirror held up to the Marlowe stories, which many Chandlerians would wish not to acknowledge, reflecting as it does the incongruous elements that were always present there - the vampiric *femmes fatales* and imposing mansions inspired by the *fin de siècle* Gothic romance, the chivalric conduct of the conquering hero which derives not so much from Mallory as from the English nineteenth-century medieval revival, and the latent sentimentalism.

perspective on American life soon lent him a reputation as being able to represent the American experience "in fragmentary pictures of setting and place" (Jameson 124). Ross Macdonald praises the careful balance in Chandler's writing, saying "Chandler [writes] like a slumming angel and invest[s] the sun-blinded streets of Los Angeles with a romantic presence," while Paul Auster notes that, "Raymond Chandler invented a new way of talking about America, and America has never looked the same to us since" (Macdonald). The "darker concrete reality" Chandler presents is one that constantly runs readers up against figures of questionable morality and the questionability of moral figures (Jameson 129). The inversion of assumed morality lurks constantly at the edge of readers' figuring through the tales of crooked cops and martyred mobsters, even though they may not be cognizant of this subconscious reckoning. Some techniques Chandler uses are subtle, using specific words and deliberate actions that direct readers toward particular tensions. Others are explicit; Marlowe, the prominent detective character in Chandler's work, often states his reasoning for abandoning what traditional moral structures expect of him and even nihilistically questions the use of morality in a world surrounded by the inevitability of death and its apathy (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 230). Both methods call on readers to complicate traditional models of morality, which is an extrapolation of Nietzsche's Modernism, as modeled in Mann. This tension lends itself uniquely to the German Expressionism of film noir, which is a contributing factor to Chandler's immediate success within film.

'Film noir' was first coined in the fall of 1946 by French film critics who sought to brand the new gritty style of films which were produced by German filmmakers who

sought refuge in California after World War II (Scorsese; Higham 27). Relying heavily on the Nietzschean philosophies of German Expressionism, film noir exploded onto the cinematic scene in America with all the grit that the post-war society craved as they "contemplated personal tragedies and national disaster" (Thomas Elsaesser quoted in Scorsese). Two of the four "common" causes of film noir, the "German influence" and Modernism, coexist in the filthy American streets (Silver 12). James Naremore explores the "hardly surprising" influence of Modernism on film noir, explaining that "additional support for 'deep' narrative techniques, involving stream of consciousness and nonlinear plot, was ultimately found in Friedrich Nietzsche, Henri Bergson, and Sigmund Freud" (Naremore 45, 43). Scorsese examines this societal mirroring, noting that "the noir world is corrupt, threatening and violent…critics saw the typical noir narrative as an existential nightmare from which the protagonist can never awaken" (Scorsese). Dave Kehr puts it succinctly: "The simplest way of describing film noir is as a collision between the visual conventions of German Expressionism and the lurid plotting of the American pulp novel" (quoted in Naremore 278). These films, academically considered the successful synthesis of hard-boiled fiction and German Expressionism, stem from the same hard-boiled books that Chandler was dissecting, rewriting, and analyzing during his study of the American detective novel (Scorsese; Arden 76). He "apprenticed himself" to the art of detective fiction, "cannibalizing" other's stories, until he felt that he had finally figured out the balance between the genre and his own personal preferences (Arden 76). Because of his already developed appreciation of the Gothic and its German roots, Chandler found an easy collaboration with the swiftly growing genre, moving seamlessly between the pages

of the books and the film adaptations. Eventually, Chandler's proficiency with the combination of German Expressionism and hard-boiled American grit brought him multiple opportunities to adapt noir work for film and he went on to be a twice Oscar-nominated screenwriter (IMDB). To each of these projects he brought his characteristic prose with its underlying notes of pain and melodrama, as well as the unconventional moral compass of Philip Marlowe. This iconic career, late-born as it was, materialized first in Chandler's most well-known story, both on and off the screen, *The Big Sleep*.

The Big Sleep

Raymond Chandler published *The Big Sleep* in 1939, a tale that boasted of "kidnapping, pornography, seduction, and murder," all of which stand between Philip Marlowe, private eye, and the truth (Chandler *The Big Sleep* back cover). Dying millionaire General Sternwood contacts Marlowe and retains his services in handling the blackmailing of one of his daughters. Rather than being a simple business, Marlowe discovers various illegal operations and must find a way to stop the murders from increasing, all while maintaining the integrity of his client's wishes. Although he never delivers a fatal blow, Marlowe finds his conduct and personal morality questioned by both his client and police personnel. However, Marlowe has no pretention or mask of favorable conditions and the introspective figure regards himself as "different, standing alone and having to live independently" (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 329). Philip Marlowe cuts a lonely path through the dimly lit cathedrals of the city alleys as a Nietzschean new philosopher bred together with the American ideal. Chandler describes

his sleuth, Philip Marlowe, as the "hero," and a "man of honor," and yet Marlowe does not earn these terms through shining examples of conventional scruples and soft hands (Chandler *The Simple Art of Murder* 18). Within the novels, Marlowe troubles traditional morality and pursues a will to knowledge through his lack of adherence to orthodox rules, his implementation of his own ethical code of conduct, and his rendering of both life and death as impotent and insignificant.

There are several instances throughout the book that exemplify Marlowe's conscious deviance from expected behavior, particularly as understood by others in society, which positions him as a type of isolated *übermensch*. Every time Marlowe confronts another accusation of inappropriate behavior or questionably decent actions, he agrees.[7] Additionally, Marlowe himself often brings his supposed moral irregularities to the attention of readers, calling for them to determine for themselves the implications of this value creation. He does so in a conversation with General Sternwood, paying client of Marlowe and father of Mrs. Regan and Carmen Sternwood. When the General accuses Marlowe of allowing persons of authority and interest in the case to believe an untruth, Marlowe does not pretend that he was not dishonest or misleading at times. He proudly owns this aspect of his job and attributes it as necessary to his success, saying, "The game I play is not spillikins. There's always a large element of bluff connected with it" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 212). This knowledge of the type of work that he does is not a

[7] In some of these cases, he argues that although he has acted against socially understood ethics, his actions fall within his own moral framework and exploration of the (missing) truth of a situation. I will explore these instances in a later portion of the essay.

revelation to Marlowe but it does reveal to readers the lack of remorse he has towards his unconventional approaches to justice and client satisfaction. He has no qualms towards his motivations, and when Vivian Regan screams that he is a "son of a bitch" Marlowe only replies, "'Uh-huh. 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'" (227). Marlowe does not attempt to sidestep allegations of impropriety. Rather he claims them, multiplies them, and does not indicate remorse or a desire to acclimate to social moral norms. This undiluted recognition of self is fitting by the light of German Expressionism and Nietzschean philosophy; both celebrate the clear-sighted examination of the inner self. Nietzsche reminds readers that the "genuine philosopher…lives 'unphilosophically' and 'unwisely,' above all *imprudently*, and feels the burden and the duty of a hundred attempts and temptations of life—he risks *himself* constantly, he plays the wicked game—" (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 315). Introspective and yet constantly physically involved in the danger and rigors of the case, Marlowe embodies this 'unphilosophical' risk of life and limb.[8] Combined with the physicality of the American detective novel, the *übermensc*h's ideology of socially perceived imprudence manifests in multiple ways throughout the book, particularly in Marlowe's refusal to limit himself to his society's expectations of truth, as well as his imprudent manner of risking his own health to question the veneer of truth.

Marlowe accumulates more than verbal offenses against his community's standard of appropriate methodology. Although begrudgingly acknowledging Marlowe's

[8] Nietzsche notes that the strong-spirited man "like a rider on a steed that flies forward…like semi-barbarians—and reach *our* bliss only were we are most—*in danger*" (Nietzsche 343).

success thus far, Captain Gregory of the Missing Person Bureau tells Marlowe, "'You look like a nice guy, but you play too rough'" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 205). Marlowe agrees, and readers must as well, having witnessed Marlowe's method of sleuthing this far into the novel. Marlowe is as blunt in describing his physical violence as he is in sharing his other offenses, at one point even describing how "I hit Agnes on the head with less delicacy than before, kicked her off my feet, and stood up" (87). In giving Marlowe multiple instances of physical violence and aggression, although he admittedly never kills, Chandler is emulating what he saw as one of the key characteristics of detective stories: giving murder "back to the kind of people who commit it for reasons" and to people with "a sharp, aggressive attitude to life" (14). In doing so, however, he is necessarily engaging with the mindset and actions of those whom society has deemed outside of proper moral constraint or understanding. He must be savage and quick to draw when the other man's gun is up because there is not "long enough to be a gentleman of the old school" (159, 202). Chandler writes Marlowe as "a common man," and as a result, Marlowe cannot balance on the narrow cusp that traditional moral schematics dictate he stand firm on (18). Tension develops here between European Modernism, inherent to German Expressionism and Chandler's education, and the celebration of the common man inherent in American hard-boiled fiction. Nietzsche's *übermensch* must overcome the herd mentality, but the American detective is meant to stay within the thick of it, self-aware and miserable. This tension is palpable in Marlowe's character and often betrays itself in his imaginings of soiled chivalry that cannot right a single wrong.

Chandler is haunted by the mirage of an out-of-place knight whose damsels in distress end up being the destruction and false mask he is fighting all along.

From the beginning of *The Big Sleep*, Chandler uses chivalric imagery. He depicts the stained glass window with a knight in symbolically "dark armor" who was feebly attempting to untie the naked damsel with "very long and convenient hair" (3). The reoccurring imagery of tainted Gothic symbols and beautiful masks covering indecency (or the traditional immorality of the naked woman) in even these two short sentences sets the stage for the thematic continuation of the decaying standards of chivalry and morality. This image combines both the Gothic elements that Chandler admires and the questioning nihilism of Nietzsche much in the same way that Mann imagines the denigration of Aschenbach. It reappears in one of Marlowe's introspective monologues where the action pauses for a brief moment as something causes the detective-philosopher to contemplate an idea or implication of much more than just the case. Right in the middle of one such moment, Marlowe finds himself in a heated and tense scene with Carmen Sternwood. Suddenly, he refers back to a chess problem that he had been working on before in what seems be a wildly unrelated wandering from the issue at hand. He notes, "I looked down at the chessboard. The move with the knight was wrong. I put it back where I had moved it from. Knights had no meaning in this game. It wasn't a game for knights" (156). This brief divergence from the plot occurs directly in the middle of a scene in which Carmen Sternwood attempts to seduce Marlowe by laying naked in his bed. Although Marlowe is far from monkish inhibitions, he throws her out in a fit of weariness and disgust. He seems to act from a moral standpoint, refusing the seduction of her "very round and

naughty eyes" (154). However, Marlowe troubles this moral high ground by his ensuing existential comment on knights and recalls to readers chivalric notions and traditional moral standards concerning ladies in distress, which is the character that Carmen has developed throughout the book. She is a young and perceived as being taken advantage of, evidenced by the pornographic photos taken of her while doped up and her inability to handle the blackmail she received as a result. With this reference to knights, their inherent chivalry, and a wrong move played, Chandler twists the image of the knight, a traditional standard of 'good' and 'truth'. Once again, he reveals the conflict in his Nietzschean potential as an *übermensch* and his own ineffectiveness in the mangled facades of American crime. A sense of futility rises again near the climax of the novel as Marlowe returns to the Sternwood mansion to report to General Sternwood. As he reenters the house, he wearily notes that nothing has changed and that "the knight in the stained-glass window still wasn't getting anywhere untying the naked damsel from the tree" (209). Perhaps the knight had good intentions, perhaps he did not, but through the eyes of the street-wearied detective, perhaps it did not really matter. To view Marlowe as an exceptional common man, or an *übermensch* laboring among the herd, seems to require him to be a leader or an enactor of categorical change but Chandler consistently taunts readers with Marlowe's inability to turn his will to truth into legislative difference (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 326).

As the protagonist and narrator of the book, Marlowe is set up in literary tradition as a hero, as a good guy, and as an arbiter of the law who should be exemplifying good and right behavior (as imagined by the post-world war II push for virtue in the global

spotlight) and enacting large scale change. Marlowe's lack of adherence to orthodox rules complicates readers' understanding of this correlation; just as Mann lays the job of Aschenbach's moral qualification at readers' feet, the lack of authorial resolution to this underlying tension turns it into readers' responsibility to decide how to classify Marlowe (McKay 189).[9] Additionally, the repetitive nature of hard-boiled detective fiction is inherently unchanging. Perhaps the detective may catch the perp of a specific crime, but there will always be a dirty crook to catch and a victim to save and a masquerade of truth to dismantle. This echo of Nietzsche's eternal recurrence marks the underlying absence of change available to Marlowe. However, despite Marlowe's rejection of traditional moral schemes in particular instances and elements of his behavior, readers are unable to label Marlowe as amoral because of the code of conduct to which he holds himself. This tension mirrors the Modernist impulse to reject passivity of acceptance and instead search out one's own understanding. The will to power is conceptually only available to the *übermensch* but both the free spirit and the scholar may throw off society's mask of truth and find values, even if they may not create them. Much of Marlowe's cynicism as a detective contrasts to Aschenbach's anxiety. Both men have the potential to distance themselves from the herd, questioning the veneer of morality and traditional assumptions as a new philosopher. However, Aschenbach does not possess the necessary strength of spirit and spirals into madness because of the knowledge he wills and discovers.

[9] McKay expands on this idea, explaining that by aligning the perspective of the narrator with the characters and occasionally distancing the narrator from the "implied" author, authors confront readers more directly. As a result, the responsibility for the interpretation of the events of the story and the character of its actors shifts away from the narrator and towards readers.

Marlowe, on the other hand, stares at the "problem of the value of truth" and creates his own delineations of judgement outside of the societal standards even as he continues to question and disrupt them (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 199). Both Mann and Chandler embody Nietzsche's philosophy within the protagonists of their literary fiction but explore opposite sides of the same coin that Nietzsche presents.

As a detective, Marlowe holds himself to an ethical standard bound by his own moral criteria, but implements one that is indicative of Chandler's own understanding of the American detective figure. In one of the genre's iconic descriptions of the 'hard-boiled private eye', Chandler tells of the only man who may go down mean streets if there is to be any quality of redemption in the art of the detective story (Chandler *The Simple Art of Murder* 18). He is not a perfect man, nor is he mean or tarnished or afraid; he is common, revengeful, and lonely; he is proud and honorable and unusual. Chandler describes a man whose private life holds no extreme of excess and who speaks as the men of his own age do. Most importantly, Chandler writes of a man who holds to his own sense of character—"by instinct, by inevitability, without thought of it, and certainly without saying it" (18). The entirety of this caricature echoes the egoism of the Nietzschean *übermensch* and the tension of knowing oneself. Chandler deeply embeds this concept of the detective figure into Marlowe's character in *The Big Sleep*. As Chandler's first iteration of this image, Marlowe moves freely within the confines of this vision, particularly holding to his personal conception of character. Marlowe can choose not to closely follow the boundaries imposed by socially disseminated ideals of morality, as previously shown, but he follows his own moral principles. Chandler makes a point of

providing Marlowe with opportunities to show readers that he has a standard by which he lives, even though it troubles common conceptions of morality. While readers must still question the traditional moral framework, the picture of Marlowe's personal code of morality provides the impetus that drives this necessary contemplation. Just as Nietzsche and Mann call for their readers to know themselves in their own distinct ways, Chandler continues this picture of Modernism through the lens of the American detective.

Although the subtler interactions of the characters drive most of this entreaty, Chandler takes the occasional moment to draw direct attention to Marlowe's societally unsupported morality. Towards the end of the story, following several instances of violence and situational manipulation, General Sternwood receives a report and directly confronts Marlowe, snarling at him, "'and do you consider that ethical?' Marlowe boldly replies, 'Yes,' I said. 'I do'" (212). Marlowe does not only claim knowledge of his departure from traditional moral schemes but presses the issue further and claims that his actions fall within his own comprehension of morality. In Nietzschean terms, the hard-boiled PI has taken his hammer and created his values, his will to truth, as Aschenbach was unable to. Marlowe demonstrates the moral aptitude to question general structures of ethics and delineate his own brand of moral boundaries, a position which Modernist protagonists often find themselves in (Halliwell 16). Marlowe is not amoral and readers would be wrong to sum up his character as such. Rather, this demonstration of personal morals, however founded, should spark readers' engagement with their own questions of morality (15). Must they consider an action "wrong" simply because society has traditionally considered it so? Marlowe does not look to other thinkers for this question,

but asks it in his own way, providing non-philosophical readers with the structure of potential questioning. He gives his moral defense to General Sternwood, growling:

> You don't know what I have to go through or over or under to do your job for you. I do it my way. I do my best to protect you and I may break a few rules, but I break them in your favor. The client comes first, unless he's crooked. Even then all I do is hand the job back to him and keep my mouth shut. (Chandler, *The Big Sleep* 212-213)

Marlowe positions his breaking of rules within the context of the detective-client relationship, and by doing so attempts to turn a moral liability into a positive enactment of his own ethical code through representing a 'truth'. In this way, Chandler presents readers with a dilemma: either they must reject Marlowe's explanation and cling to a traditional schematic, embrace Marlowe's reasoning without question because of his status within the book, or readers must pause and do their own questioning of traditional moral understandings. Although not all will choose the 'risk' of the third option, Chandler presents the opportunity and calls for active engagement by readers and for those equipped to do so, this shift causes the mask of moral tradition to lose its stability (Halliwell 16).

Finally, Chandler and Marlowe trouble traditional morality through implying the insignificance of death and even murder. The demystification of violence and death begins with the removal of purpose and distinction in any individual act of viciousness (Jameson 146). There is so much death and violence that soon it strikes readers as simply being "shoddy and cheap […] and morally insignificant" (146). F. R. Jameson theorizes about all the energy and effort Marlowe expends throughout the book, only to waste itself

on a body that had been dead the entire time. He argues that this anticlimactic moment undergirds the sense of moral insignificance and the mindlessness of life itself: "the present fades to little more than a dusty, once lived moment which will quickly take its place in the back years of an old newspaper file" (Jameson 148). This echo of Modernism carries through the final speech of the novel where Marlowe rejoins after his melancholic near-success:

> What did it matter where you lay once you were dead? In a dirty sump or in a marble tower on top of a high hill? You were dead, you were sleeping the big sleep, you were not bothered by things like that. Oil and water were the same as wind and air to you. You just slept the big sleep, not caring about the nastiness of how you died or where you fell. Me, I was part of the nastiness now. (Chandler, *The Big Sleep* 230)

Marlowe is the detective necessary to the story but he claims no privilege of understanding the larger 'truth' as a benefit (18). Rather, he sees life as either "dreary continuity or rapid change" (Halliwell 6). Its status as something impotent and ultimately untenable colors readers' perceptions of the P.I.'s actions throughout the book. Similar to the effect of Aschenbach's slow descent into a miserable attempt to escape the undiluted 'truth', the blunt musings of the cynical detective cause readers to question the meaningfulness of adhering to traditional morality if all it can be is a false construction of favorable conditions through which to deceive oneself. Scholars agree that Nietzsche sought to expose every myth that allows humanity to perpetuate its delusions in exchange for comfort (Burton et al.). He perceived man's challenge to be the transcendence from "all myths that prevent him from confronting life in total freedom and to create his own values and purpose" (Burton et al.). This concept, filtered through Chandler's soiled

Gothic sense of futility, results in Marlowe's skeptical despondence and sense of moral insignificance. The final paragraphs seem to ask the same questions implied at the end of *Death in Venice*: what does it matter if you follow the moral guidelines of society and avoid the 'nastiness' if you were simply following a false pretense until you found the sweet release of 'the big sleep'?

Marlowe paints a picture of the relief from consciousness that death brings, which is reminiscent of Aschenbach's seeming lack of internal conflict when he dies. In *Death in Venice*, the narrator describes the lifting of the burden of morality from Aschenbach's shoulders:

> It seemed to him the pale and lovely Summoner out there smiled at him and beckoned; as though, with the hand he lifted from his hip, he pointed outward as he hovered on before into an immensity of richest expectation. And, as so often before, he rose to follow (T. Mann 73).

Finally, at the cusp of death, Aschenbach lets go of the moral tension he had been holding up to this point, as corrupted and convoluted as it may be. No longer tortured by the truth he tried so hard to avoid, Aschenbach provides a potent example of what Marlowe might have become without his ability to face himself. This egoism requires the strength of spirit which Nietzsche searches for in his work and regards as the measure that decides the rank of a man and the potential of his spirit. He lays out the necessary requirements for such a noble man, saying he is one who "has power over himself, who knows how to speak and be silent," qualifications which mirror both Chandler's "complete man" and the character who exemplifies them—Philip Marlowe (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 395; Chandler *The Simple Art of Murder* 18). The self-control and introspection of

Chandler's detective reintroduces the Nietzschean *übermensch* and his destabilization of traditional moral schematics in a form that allowed readers across America to contemplate German Expressionism and this Modernism.

Chandler forces his readers to contemplate the meaning and stability of traditional moral practices and expectations. They are brought "up short, without warning, against the reality of death itself, stale death, reaching out to remind the living of its own moldering resting place" (Jameson 148). Rich in Nietzschean influence and ideology, Mann's *Death in Venice* follows the moral degradation of Aschenbach and his attempts to re-mask the will to knowledge and truth that he had uncovered. Mann uses the slow unraveling of a 'failed' Nietzschean soul to shift and disturb conventional moral schemes by muddying the delineation between right and wrong as markers of morality and by requiring readers to wrestle with the ambiguity of morality themselves. This disturbance of conventional moral standards does not die with Aschenbach, however, and the influence of its Gothic decay lies over Chandler's *The Big Sleep*. As both protagonist and narrator, Marlowe troubles traditional morality through his lack of adherence to orthodox rules, his implementation of his own ethical code of conduct, and his rendering of death as insignificant. His rendering of justice begs that "what is fair for one *cannot* by any means for that reason alone also be fair for others" and forces readers into corners of contemplation and questioning of the appearance and value of truth (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 347). Chandler clearly does not approach the same questions through the lens that Mann does and filters the Gothic and German Expressionism through the form of the American hard-boiled fiction. However, both instances of literary fiction embody

the Nietzschean question; both texts demonstrate the impact of this Modernism in the texts' similar challenges to right and wrong. The narrator does not resolve the instability of morality but rather passes it to readers through the mechanisms and characters of the books. Chandler captures this Modernist tendency to shift and disturb conventional moral schemes in *The Big Sleep* when Marlowe retorts sardonically, "I may break some rules, but I break them for you" (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 212). Although only the first Marlowe novel to combine these influence, *The Big Sleep* marked the entrance of a genre-defining author and a detective-philosopher, both of whom would continue to challenge their readers in every subsequent novel of the "culminating American hero" (back cover).

Farewell, My Lovely

By the time of Chandler's second foray into full-length detective fiction novels, he had started to include more of the conventional elements of romance into his work, even if they usually end in the lover's death or melodramatic promises of eternal despair. Chandler had a complicated relationship with women and his portrayal of them has elicited a fair amount of criticism. However, the brief period between his first novel and his wife's death in 1954 saw a slight rise in his attempts to include romance, even if it was not a likable, cliché kind. The knight, after all, sometimes wears black armor and the damsel is usually hiding something behind her pretty facade (Chandler *The Big Sleep* 2). Published in 1940, *Farewell, My Lovely* tells the tale of an ex-convict, Moose Malloy, and his quest to find his former love, the lounge singer Velma. At the same time, Marlowe is caught in the middle of a ransom for a necklace gone wrong and is framed for

murder. He eventually finds the owner of the necklace, Mrs. Helen Grayle, and they develop a sexually tense and morally ambiguous partnership. In an unsurprising and Nietzschean twist, the façade of the beautiful women crumbles away to reveal that not all is as it appears. As the novel continues its course, the two separate jobs soon meld into one large web of seduction, deception, and "more corruption than your average graveyard" (Chandler *Farewell* back cover). Criticized as confusing by some, *Farewell, My Lovely* combines three separate crime plotlines and is often considered Chandler's most intricate work. It also stands as a paradigmatic instance of the influence of the Nietzschean censure of masks and beauty as a comfortable cover for decay, a clear instance of the literary tradition in which Mann writes. It also continues to reveal Chandler's uncomfortable relationship with Gothic notions of chivalry as translated to the Modernist stage of American crime fiction. Moose Malloy turns out to be the most honest and 'good' of all the characters and the seemingly innocent women are the most despicable. This constant unsettling of perceived morality causes readers to question the value of traditional moral structures and to distrust the mask of 'favorable conditions' that Aschenbach embodies and against which Nietzsche speaks so adamantly in his work.

One of the elements of Chandler's protagonist that allows readers unique engagement with questions of moral stability is the level of sardonic wit that pervades Marlowe's commentary. Although he does occasionally become very intimate with readers and reveal his thoughts and feelings without a buffer, more often than not Marlowe reveals his thoughts through self-deprecating and laconic comments. A prime instance of this narrative voice is his commentary on his manipulation of Mrs. Florian.

You can almost hear the dry commentary as he writes, “A lovely old woman. I liked being with her. I liked getting her drunk for my own sordid purposes. I was a swell guy. I enjoyed being me. You find almost anything under your hand in my business, but I was beginning to be a little sick at my stomach” (34). Marlowe’s sardonic response to his own introspection is typical of the American stereotype of the hard-boiled P.I.. It also provides a unique perspective from which to examine the detective’s engagement with his own moral foundations. Engaging and questioning the standards of ‘good and evil’ are distinctly Nietzschean characteristics, but Marlowe approaches this destabilization from a vantage point particular to the American hard-boiled detective. As intensely as Aschenbach refuses to look squarely at his own moral inconsistencies and deviations from traditional moral schematics, Marlowe confronts his own lack of adherence to culturally held standards of morality. The protagonists’ varying strengths of spirit undergird the marked difference in their reactions; Marlowe demonstrates a rank of spirit far closer to the Nietzschean *übermensch* than the choleric German vacationer Mann writes. It is important to recognize the sarcasm and dry humor in Marlowe’s tone. This sardonic approach creates a space of engagement that recognizes the social expectations of behavior, acknowledges his own interactions with that standard, and subsequently forces readers to engage with this tension at the same time Marlowe does. Echoing the objective standpoint of readers in Mann’s *Death in Venice* when Aschenbach can no longer make his own moral decisions, *Farewell, My Lovely* draws the audience alongside Marlowe into a space that questions traditional moral structures and individual engagements with them. In this specific instance, Marlowe looks at his manipulation of a

witness and the means he employs to obtain the necessary information. This old woman is a source of information and she simultaneously evokes disgust and sympathy in Marlowe. The detective easily uses her penchant for alcohol multiple times throughout the case. Although the knowledge that Marlowe obtains because of this boozy seduction is imperative to the case and the narrative, he clearly expresses a sense of repulsion towards the method of obtaining it. The complex set of emotions that she and various other characters evoke in Marlowe brings to mind Nietzsche's understanding of proper emotional responses to interactions with base humanity. He writes, "Anyone who, in intercourse with men, does not occasionally glisten in all the colors of distress, green and gray with disgust, satiety, sympathy, gloominess, and loneliness, is certainly not a man of elevated tastes" (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 227). Although Chandler does not write Marlowe any sort of conclusive sentiment towards this particular type of detective work, Marlowe's comment that he had "had enough of the scene, too much of it, far too much of it" is indicative of an internal standard (Chandler *Farewell* 36*)*. Marlowe has no moral qualms towards alcohol and often plies informants for details over a stiff drink or four, but abusing an addiction and weakness of character to obtain that information rubs him the wrong way. His personal conviction stands in stark contrast to the utter lack of resolve that Aschenbach demonstrates, particularly at the end of *Death in Venice*. This scene demonstrates to readers Marlowe's ability to create value. Although Marlowe may have previously constructed the moral delineation he reveals, this is the moment that readers discover it. It is through this depiction that readers may further delineate the

presence of Marlowe's unwritten code of conduct, even if they must wade through his cynical commentary and self-deprecating asides to do so.

Another instance of this ironic negotiation of traditional morality appears in Marlowe's interaction with Helen Grayle. Although the sexual undertones dominate much of the scene, Marlowe's pushback against his own failure provide interesting commentary on the troubling of traditional morality by both Mrs. Grayle and Marlowe. When Marlowe confides that he failed to "take care of" a man who had paid him to do so, he tells Helen it "makes me feel guilty. Makes me want to cry. Shall I cry?" (131) Once more, Marlowe's mocking attitude derails what could come across as a genuine confession of internal struggle over his actions. Rarely is it acceptable to dismissively mock a man's death; readers are given no indication by Marlowe's words alone that he understands the possible moral implications of his inability to keep the man alive. Mrs. Grayle serves as the moral foil to Marlowe's ambiguous response. She remains unaffected by the conversation, instructs Marlowe to "have a drink," and proceeds to change the subject (131). Her cold response, even when compared to Marlowe's lukewarm conscience, sets the detective up as the only one of the two with a substantive personal morality. Even if neither one has the traditional moral compass that their society would proscribe, their brief conversation lays the problem before readers and asks them to consider the ramifications of traditional moral frameworks for the characters and themselves. However, I argue that Marlowe repeatedly demonstrates a clear sense of personal conviction and dedication to a will to knowledge throughout the rest of the book, even in his other interactions with Mrs. Grayle.

The excessive sexual tension between Helen Grayle and Marlowe continues at a slow burn throughout their conversations in the book. Because of Marlowe's tendency to keep his interactions with women to witty banter and blatant appreciation for eye candy, their tension does not seem to cross any social boundaries until she whispers for him to kiss her. Describing her advances in sultry detail, Marlowe draws readers into the narrative just to engage her in the shudderingly embarrassing interruption of Mr. Grayle, Helen's husband. Marlowe recounts: "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" (135). Marlowe's sense of guilt contrasts with the "half-dreamy, half-sarcastic expression" on Helen's face as she dismisses her husband without any remorse (135). Marlowe feels repulsed by both her and by himself, saying, "I was still cold. I felt nasty, as if I had picked a poor man's pocket" (136). It is worth noting that this one instance of being caught in a morally questionable position elicits multiple expressions of regret. Marlowe tends towards limited expressions of emotion and this repeated sense of vulnerability is untypical of the detective. This emphasis drives the scene's examination of the correlation between lust, corrupted beauty, and morality, situating the novel well within the tradition of modern Gothic works such as *Death in Venice*. Much like Aschenbach's pursuit of beauty and a socially unaccepted lust towards Tadzio, Marlowe is struck by Helen's appearance, desires her (although in a much more erotically explicit manner than Aschenbach), and pursues her when given the opportunity. He places himself in a physical encounter with someone who society deems morally off-limits. Helen is beautiful but morally stagnant, eventually repulsive. Marlowe is the book's

'good guy' and plays the role of hero protagonist, so how do readers justify his socially unacceptable pursuit of a married woman? Chandler uses the corruptibility of beauty to expose a larger moral question to ponder.

Mirroring Mann's moral shifts in the language of decaying beauty and beauty as a false mask, Marlowe describes the moment that Helen is exposed for a murderer and fraud, remarking that, "Suddenly, without any real change in her, she ceased to be beautiful. She looked merely like a woman who would have been dangerous a hundred years ago, and twenty years ago daring, but who today was just Grade B Hollywood" (279). He finds himself disgusted by her lack of morality but mocks her for having "certain dregs of conscience" which keep her from committing or making up her mind (279). She has the half-drawn pallor of death with eyes that were "dead gray, like half-frozen water" (282). Marlowe seems to insinuate that although all murderers are bad, those who have a clear understanding of their own moral principles, even their disregard for them, are better than those who have not questioned their beliefs or wrestled with the moral assumptions to which they hold. This Nietzschean theme of active engagement with questions of morality continues to thread its way through the text and Chandler's works, reflecting the influence of Modernism on his writing and creation of an complete, common, unusual, "man of honor" (Chandler *The Simple Art of Murder* 18). As Chandler writes in the hard-boiled tradition with the force of the Gothic and German Expressionism behind him, the detective becomes the closest thing to a hero because he is the only one equipped to walk both the clean sidewalks uptown and the dirty, violent streets of the worst districts and yet not let either of them drag him down. After all the

appeal of "the story is this man's adventure in search of a hidden truth, and it would be no adventure if it did not happen to a man fit for adventure" (18).

Marlowe's violence becomes far more conspicuous in this novel than in *The Big Sleep*. Chandler even goes so far as to chronicle his detective's giddy engagement with the hired muscle who doped him up and tied him to the bed in the crime house he eventually escapes from. Marlowe describes his retribution in vivid detail:

> I giggled and socked him. I laid the coil spring on the side of his head…I hit him twice more…I used my knee on his face. It hurt my knee. He didn't tell me whether it hurt his face…heaved him on to the bed and strapped him wrist and ankle and stuffed half a yard of sheet into his mouth. (173)

Marlowe's clear enjoyment of the violence he acts out against those who 'did him wrong' is not traditionally moral, but pushes Marlowe into a position of acknowledging the violence he enforces while attempting to convince the audience of its propriety or justification. Although "it is immoral to say: 'what is right for one is fair for the other,'" readers have the opportunity to question the events and actions for themselves, an exercise for the free spirit or scholar and requirement for the *übermensch* (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 339). Readers encounter a portion of the exercise in Marlowe's self-directed pep talk before his altercation with the hired man. Marlowe reminds himself, and consequently readers, that:

> You're a tough guy. Six feet of iron man. One hundred and ninety pounds stripped and with your face washed. Hard muscles and no glass jaw. You can take it. You've been sapped down twice, had your throat choked and been beaten half silly on the jaw with a gun barrel. You've been shot full of hop and kept under it until you're as crazy as two waltzing mice, and what does all that amount to? Routine. (Chandler *Farewell* 171)

Marlowe clearly does not align with traditional moral schematics, standards which would dictate an abstinence from extreme and repeated violence and which would certainly find fault in the enjoyment that Marlowe has in returning this physicality. Marlowe's physical retribution does not earn him a badge of traditional morality, but his justification for his actions positions them as another instance of Marlowe's personal standards of morality playing themselves out. In contrast with Aschenbach's mental and physical frailty, the American detective is able to rise to any occasion through the strength of both his mind and body. Calling on readers to analyze and trouble the morality or 'truth' of Marlowe's actions continues the work of Mann and Nietzsche's Modernism by upsetting traditionally understood morality and behavior in a rejection of a "will to mere appearance" (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 350).

Chandler reminds his readers of the tension between the hard-boiled and Gothic melodrama genres by refusing to let Marlowe completely forsake a code of conduct. He is questioning the role of traditionally upheld standards as a herd mentality but does not accomplish this complication through complete dismissal of a structure of morality. This tension hearkens back to Nietzsche's introduction of distinctions and hues of morality, as opposed to a complete dismissal of the categories of "good" or "truth" or "virtue." Rather he calls for a continual deliberation of perspective and the acknowledgement of "hues and gradations instead of simple black and white" (Kaufmann 376). Chandler's demonstrates his utilization of this balance at the end of Marlowe's commentary on his violence as he considers the man who he just attacked:

> He had a smashed nose. I waited long enough to make sure he could breathe through it. I was sorry for him. A simple hardworking little guy trying to hold his job down and get his weekly pay check. Maybe with a wife and kids. Too bad. And all he had to help him was a sap. It didn't seem fair. I put the doped whiskey down where he could reach it, if his hands hadn't been strapped. (Chandler *Farewell* 173)

Even though this particular "little guy" presumably assisted in the multiple beatings and drugging of Marlowe, Marlowe takes the time to make sure he will not suffocate. He ponders the possibility of this man's life outside of their dirty business, humanizing him and reacting in line with that. In doing so, he encounters the same dilemma that Aschenbach encounters when he contemplates warning Tadzio's family, but reacts in quite the opposite way. Marlowe realizes the tenuous balance he holds in the schematics of crime and morality, evident in one of his parting remarks: "'So long,' I said. 'I leave you to dirtier hands than mine'" (183). Marlowe's interaction with his own sense of morality clues readers in to Chandler's perception of his own troubling of traditional morality. Marlowe never claims to be a model of commonly accepted morality. He likes "smooth shiny girls, hardboiled and loaded with sin,'" and he relishes the opportunity to return violence quid pro quo against those who abuse him physically (196). He exemplifies the "noble morality" that Nietzsche calls for and exhibits the "capacity for, and the duty of, long gratitude and long revenge…the sophisticated concept of friendship, a certain necessity for having enemies" (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 396). To compare Marlowe to Aschenbach is complex, but on at least one plane of comparison, Marlowe does not argue for his own moral impeccability as Mann's protagonist does. Marlowe admits social vices but holds them in contrast with the 'clear' reprehensibility

of the villains that he pursues and apprehends in the name of the law and his private business. This clear-sighted wrestling with his own status is indicative of the strand of Modernism that argues for the engagement of moral questions as the basis of morality itself. Marlowe refuses to settle for the favorable conditions and mask of slave morality, which defines the herd mentality. He bears the weight of the Gothic tradition in his contemplation of corrupted chivalry and demonstrates the influence of German Expressionism in his pursuit of the messy inner life. Marlowe may not realize the position he stakes within the Modernist conversation, but his character places him squarely within the paradigm created by Mann, Nietzsche, and other Modernists of this school of thought.

The moral imagery of Modernism reveals itself in unexpected ways throughout *Farewell, My Lovely,* particularly in contrast to the lack of overt religious references in *The Big Sleep*. While the overly blunt style of Chandler typically does not lend itself to lengthy descriptions, *Farewell, My Lovely* contains two such scenes, both of which wrestle with elements of morality and interactions with traditional understandings of it. What readers find in these scenes parallels many of the introspective passages in *Death in Venice*. At one point Marlowe, doped up and desperate, recounts how he "lay down on the bed again. 'Pray,' I said out loud. 'There's nothing left but prayer.'" (Chandler, *Farewell* 272). Marlowe then launches into a page long description of a vivid dream, if not a spiritual experience[10], where he moves among the hold of a boat, the Himalayas,

[10] Although both this and the next discussed passage are dreams, I count them as impactful on the character of Marlowe as they are on the books direction as a whole because of how I read Nietzsche's statement on dreams. Because his philosophy is so imperative to the structure of Modernism that I am

and finds giants who are pleasant and men with machine guns (272). The rich descriptions of this portion of the text stand in high relief beside the terse comments and action-filled accounts so typical of the American detective Marlowe, and, by extension, Chandler. Marlowe's incorporation of prayer in a story of corruption and deeply interwoven 'nastiness' is a crucial addition to the conversation about how Chandler continues the work of Mann as incorporating Modernism and Nietzsche's philosophy into serious literary fiction. When Marlowe awakes from this trance he faces one of the most action-filled and revealing moments of the plot. He discovers exactly who the murderer is and must play the go-between with Moose Malloy and Mrs. Grayle. His 'vision' following his prayer provides him with the context necessary to understand the interactions between the two players. Chandler writes Marlowe's journey to understanding the morality of the situation directly within the spiritual imagery of his call to prayer. This scene positions Marlowe as sensitive to spiritual experiences and demonstrates his will to power as a willingness to move beyond his typical habits and value creations. It also uses heavy doses of Gothic imagery and the dynamic style of German Expressionism with its visceral descriptions of a character's inner thoughts and emotions.

Another instance of this Gothic moral imagery are Marlowe's dark imaginings. Although Marlowe is far from a verbose narrator, there is one scene where he records

using, I include a brief excerpt here: "What we experience in dreams…belongs in the end just as much to the over-all economy of our soul as anything experienced "actually": we are richer or poorer on account of it, have one need more or less, and finally are led a little by the habits of our dreams even in broad daylight and in the most cheerful moments of our wide-awake spirit" (Nietzsche 296).

vivid dreams of the various types of morality embedded in cops, especially of those he has to interact with on cases. In a narrative move away from the typical subjective tone of his first person narration, Marlowe implements a more objective distance and allows his narration to review the events of the case in more Gothic imagery:

> It got darker. I thought; and thought in my mind moved with a kind of sluggish stealthiness, and if it was being watched by bitter and sadistic eyes. I thought of dead eyes looking at a moonless sky, with black blood at the corners of the mouths beneath them. I thought of nasty old women beaten to death against the posts of their dirty beds. I thought of a man with bright blond hair who was afraid and didn't quite know what he was afraid of, who was sensitive enough to know that something was wrong and too vain or too dull to guess what it was that was wrong. I thought of beautiful rich women who could be had. I thought of nice slim curious girls who lived along and could be had too, in a different way. I thought of cops, tough cops that could be greased and yet were not by any means all bad, like Hemingway. Fat prosperous cops with Chamber of Commerce voices, like Chief Wax. Slim, smart and deadly cops like Randall, who for all their smartness and deadliness were not free to do a clean job in a clean way. I thought of sour old goats like Nulty who had given up trying. I thought of Indians and psychics and dope doctors. I thought of a lot of things. It got darker. (237-238)

The rich language and sensual corruption of Chandler's prose reaches back to the Gothic tradition that influenced him and strikes back against the brisk pace of the hard-boiled tradition. Chandler writes of richly sensual moral divergence in the same way that Mann writes of the slow denigration of the plague within the city and Aschenbach's mind. This break in the action of the novel also allows readers to pause and reconsider the questions that Marlowe and Chandler pose throughout the rest of the text. What should be made of the "beautiful rich women who could be had" and the "tough cops that could be greased" and the cops who would never be free to "do a clean job" (238)? Marlowe's disgust towards the false masks of those around him highlights the influence of German

Expressionism and Gothicism on his writing. The pondering of the detective-philosopher also mirrors the Modernism of Nietzsche and Mann and the influence it had on Chandler's troubling of conventional morals, particularly through the rough and tumble character of Marlowe.

Conclusion

Marlowe troubles the image of the hero figure at almost every page turn. His sexual interactions with Helen and his violent acts of retributions emphasize the absence of traditional moral standards in his actions. However, readers constantly comes across evidences of Marlowe's own moral compass. He troubles traditional morality but does not hesitate to enact his own iteration of guiding principles. In short, Marlowe practices his will to power through his contemplation of traditional moral schematics, his search for the truth behind the 'truth' and his repeated demonstrations of his strength of spirit. He does not fall prey to the herd mentality nor does he cower away from the knowledge he searches out, as Aschenbach does. Modernism's moral instability makes its presence seen in the tenuous space that Marlowe occupies, questioning socially normalized frameworks and pushing against black and white morality. As Marlowe quips, "It's not that kind of story…it's not lithe and clever. It's just dark and full of blood" (Chandler *Farewell* 284). This exploration of moral 'hues' and 'perspectives' continues the work of Mann and Nietzsche as it forces readers to examine their own understandings of traditionally questionable behavior. Academia critically acclaims Mann's work as a fictional instantiation of Nietzschean philosophy through the lens of Modernism and

German Expressionism and it is precisely within this same genre that Chandler writes. The impact of Modernism's moral instability on Raymond Chandler's work continues to display itself through the continual positioning of readers as necessarily engaged with questions of morality and the demonstration of Marlowe's own unconventional, yet deeply held to, moral code; he enacts on American streets the value creation of the German new philosopher.

Raymond Chandler reveals much of his understanding of the role of his writing in the dark pictures he paints at the end of his essay, "The Simple Art of Murder." By using Gothic images of fear, death, gloom, and every individual's capacity for total deception, Chandler materializes the world of hard-boiled fiction. This world is one

> in which gangsters can rule nations and almost rule cities, […] in which a screen star can be the finger man for a mob, and the nice man down the hall is a boss of the numbers racket; […] a world where a judge with a cellar full of bootleg liquor can send a man to jail for having a pint in his pocket, […] where no man can walk down a dark street in safety because law and order are things we talk about but refrain from practicing…It is not a fragrant world, but it is the world you live in. (Chandler *The Simple Art of Murder* 17)

The only redemptive possibility for such a world, Chandler writes, is in the man that has the strength of spirit to walk such streets. Chandler is emphatic that "the detective in this kind of story must be such a man" (18). Chandler draws on the balance described by Nietzsche who argues that the only counter to the counterfeited and the masked is the "sublime inclination of the seeker after knowledge who insists on profundity, multiplicity, and thoroughness, with a *will* which is a kind of cruelty of the intellectual conscience and taste" (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 351). In constant contradiction

to his surroundings and his situation, the ideal detective "in search of hidden truth" is the only one who can walk alone and not sway to either side (Chandler *The Simple Art of Murder* 18*)*. He embodies the Nietzschean philosopher who, "being *of necessity* a man of tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, has always found himself, and *had* to find himself, in contradiction to his today" (327). He is exactly the man that Aschenbach could have been but was too weak to become. It is into the character of Philip Marlowe that Chandler channels all of these expectations and into the plot and body of his cases that he lets loose the strange dynamic of American realism and German Expressionism. Marlowe feels this tension deeply and his serial self-deprecation echoes the Nietzschean philosophers who often feel rather like "disagreeable fools and dangerous question marks" (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 327).

It was the evocative character of Philip Marlowe and Chandler's deeply contemplated image of the man that detective fiction required which swiftly captured the imaginations of the reading public. The influences of German Expressionism and Gothicism resonate within the trappings of the American crime fiction novel that Chandler so meticulously sets out to recreate. However, Chandler never intended to produce more dime-a-dozen pulp fiction stories. He wrote to elevate the genre and center it within the Gothic melodramas which he so admired. Chandler took the form of the detective genre but imbued it with Nietzschean philosophy and Gothic imagery, producing novels that hold their own alongside Mann within the literary tradition of German Expressionism. The unique combination that Chandler brought to the genre soon sent readers clamoring for more books and in short time the stories made their way onto

the big screen where the shady streets and internal conflict played themselves out in the striking characteristics of film noir. The lasting impact of these films echoes in the modern detective series who draw on the legacies of the noir films. These episodic versions of the classic hard-boiled tale focus not on the case-by-case success rate but instead on the personal wrestling and inner life of the detective characters. Critics of these contemporary films and series point back to the impact of Raymond Chandler and the other legends of American hard-boiled fiction but often overlook the roots of this influence in the Modernism of Nietzsche and Mann. Mann's *Death in Venice* uses the Nietzschean structure of questioning social standards of morality through the image of the failed potential and weak spirit of Aschenbach. Providing the model of serious literature in this genre, *Death in Venice* is indicative of the literary fiction that Nietzschean philosophy affected. This Modernism, overlapping with German Expressionism and underpinned by the Gothic, is a structuring force in the work of Raymond Chandler and can be traced in the destabilization of traditional moral schematics which occurs so often throughout his Marlowe canon. Chandler's writings continue the work of his influencers and call readers to rise above the herd's mask of morality. Raymond Chandler writes this challenge into the very plot and prose and dares his audience to "live beyond the old morality" as Marlowe's sardonic voice asks, "Can I go on being a son of a bitch, or do I have to become a gentleman?" (Nietzsche *Beyond Good and Evil* 401; Chandler *The Big Sleep* 228)

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