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## THE NOIR LEGACY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

Submission Date: May 04, 2024, Accepted Date: May 09, 2024,

Published Date: May 14, 2024

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/ijll/Volume04Issue05-03>

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### ABSTRACT

The article explores the legacy of noir heritage and influence of the noir detective on contemporary literature. It analyses how noir tropes and themes have been adapted and reinterpreted by contemporary authors, creating new and exciting works of literature. The noir detective, which emerged in American literature of the 1940s and 1950s, has had a profound and indelible influence on modern literature. Noir characteristics such as cynical protagonists, dark atmosphere, and intricate plots continue to resonate with readers and writers today. The article explores how contemporary writers use noir elements to create complex characters, exploring themes of violence, corruption, and moral ambiguity.

### KEYWORDS

Noir detective, dark atmosphere, intricate plots, hard-boiling genre, cynical hero.

### INTRODUCTION

What comes to the mind of an ordinary person when he or she hears Noir? A rotten dark city, corrupt police officers, ruthless criminals, fatal beauties and their twisted criminal stories. Over its almost century-long history, this genre of detective literature has undergone quite a few changes. It has acquired various branches and subgenres, and its elements can be

found in a wide variety of books, comics and literary works.

“Swell. Come in. Here's another one for you.” Spade pressed the girl forward. “She killed Miles. And I’ve got some exhibits—the boy’s guns, one of Cairo’s, a black

statuette that all the hell was about, and a thousand-dollar bill that I was supposed to be bribed with.”

Noir in its original understanding and noir today are practically two independent phenomena, connected only by basic elements and conventions. Each new work, each new author brought something of their own to the noir detective story, playing with visual style, atmosphere, characters and plots. Initially, noir was the name for a special type of hard-boiled detective stories that appeared on the shelves of American bookstores in the 20s of the 20th century. During the era of the “Great Depression (1929-1933) known as the most severe crisis of the 20th century, the prevailing picture of events during the recession is inextricably linked with the name 32 1st US President - Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who assumed the presidency at the height of the crisis - in 1932” The noir detective story was distinguished by an intense crime plot and a rough, naturalistic style of storytelling. In terms of style, Ernest Hemingway and John Dos Passos can be considered the progenitors of noir literature. The authors of the new genre of noir in literature adopted their language and added to it naturalism in the description of violence, social issues, self-destruction, an abundance of slang and profanity, several new types of characters like the already mentioned femme fatales and seasoned it all with an abundance of scenes of smoking and drinking alcohol.

Another distinctive feature of this detective literature that made detectives stand out among the mountains was the special image of the main character. This was not a servant of the law, but a private detective or, for example, a journalist conducting his own investigation, a person directly involved in an act of crime, a criminal or even a victim. These characters, as a rule, were rather unsympathetic people with a pronounced

deviant model of behavior. For a long time, this kind of literature was unclaimed literature for an amateur. Noir novels and short stories were published in various tabloid magazines like “Black Mask.”

“More than one famous author of the hard-boiled or crime noir genre were first introduced to the reading public through the Black Mask. Masters of the detective story whose work was published in Black Mask include none other than Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett. Indeed, it was in the Black Mask that Hammett introduced the Continental Op, one of the most famous characters of the genre and pulp magazines.”

This genre reached its real peak of popularity only in the 1950s and 60s. Then novels from the 1920s and 1930s began to be republished en masse. The founder of Noir is considered to be the American writer Cornell Woolrich, his books such as *The Bride Wore Black* (1940), “*Waltz into Darkness*” (1947), “*Deadline*” at *Down*” (1944) are considered classic black novels. Another important author of the genre is William Burnett, who in 1929 published one of the first noir detective stories, *Little Caesar*. Lecturer at Queen's University Belfast Andrew Pepper names three fathers as founders of noir detective Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler and Mickey Spillane:

“While the classic hardboiled private detective—as exemplified by the creations of writers such as Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler and Mickey Spillane—may bend or break the law, this is done by a protagonist with meaningful agency in pursuit of justice, and “although not every one of their cases may have a happy conclusion, the hero will nonetheless emerge with a clean ethical slate.”

The emergence of noir did not leave its mark on another important phenomenon of American culture: comics. In 1939, in issue 27 of “ Detective Comics ”, one of the darkest and truly noir superheroes “ Batman ” appears for the first time. In his image, biography and surroundings, the influence of hard-boiled black detectives is clearly felt, depicting, in fact, a sacrifice in front of his eyes where his parents were killed, so he is forced to restore justice and justice with his own hands. At the same time, Batman cannot be completely called a positive character. In “ Detective ” Comics “he killed people, ignoring his main rule, went crazy and became a maniac. He also beat and inflicted bodily harm not only on his enemies, but also on his allies. Don't forget about the setting of Gotham , a city that seems to have been copied from the pages of the best noir detective stories. It is full of various criminal societies and corrupt police officers. The crime rate is off the charts; slums coexist with rich buildings.

There are plenty of other noir comics out there. 8 years before Batman on the pages of the American newspaper “ Detroit ” Mirror “the first comic book about detective Dickie Tracy “ Dick ” was released Tracy .” How Frank Noessel states from university Louisville , USA :

“The name of the strip and its protagonist, Dick Tracy, derive from the common slang term for a detective, namely, “dick,” a shortened form of “detective.” The surname Tracy, of course, is derived from the verb “to trace” since certain detectives are involved in tracing lost persons, among other duties. Dick Tracy originated during a time of exceptional lawlessness in the US that included the rise of organized crime and many highly publicized criminals such as Bonnie and Clyde, John Dillinger, Pretty Boy Floyd, Ma Barker, and others. These outlaw types appeared in the early strips, and

their characters were drawn from real life, albeit with name changes. The strip evolved over the years, and the plots always reflected the times (The Great Depression, WWII, the Silent Generation, moon exploration, and so forth). ”

Works with this character combined not only a black detective story, but also a spy thriller and an action movie. Nowadays, interest in noir and comics continues unabated. Any fan of this genre will immediately name both Frank Miller’s “Sin City” and the “ Marvel Noir ” series. However, most people learned about this genre through various films, the flow of which continues unabated to this day. The term “ Noir ” first appeared in France. In 1946, film critic Nino Frank coined the phrase “Film Noir,” borrowing it from Marcel Duhamel’s noir book series. However, noir was able to become a term that implies films with similar features and intonation only in 1955, when Raymond Bordet’s book “Panorama of American Film Noirs ” was published in France, which immediately became popular among fans of the detective genre. The author in his work analyzed a number of detective works from “The Maltese Falcon” to “The Naked City”.

“ Spade, who had held his breath through much of this speech, now emptied his lungs with a long sighing exhalation between pursed lips and said: “You won't need much of anybody's help.” You're good. You're very good. It's chiefly your eyes, I think, and that throb you get into your voice when you say things like 'Be generous, Mr. Spade. '” She jumped up on her feet. Her face crimsoned painfully, but she held her head erect and she looked Spade straight in the eyes. “I deserve that,” she said. “I deserve it, but— oh!— I did want your help so much. I do want it, and need it, so much. And the lie was in the way I said it, and not at all in what I said.” She turned away, no longer holding herself

erect. “It is my own fault that you can't believe me now.”

In their opinion, noir detectives were characterized by an atmosphere of darkness, hopelessness, an abundance of violence and crime-related plots. The authors stated that from the American pulp novels of the 20-30s, a new style in literature is found not only in the police and gangster genres, but also offers new criminal adventures and psychology. With the help of cinematography, noir emerged from the low status of fiction, ceasing to be exclusively tabloid entertainment. Great masters such as Alfred Hitchcock and Wolsen Worth turned to this style.

The period of the classic noir detective story falls on the 40-50s of the 20th century. By this point, this is already a fully formulated literary style with its own characteristics and specificity. The plot is almost always complicated with multiple twists and turns. Most of the images in such stories occurred at night, making the events more gloomy. The heroes loved to disappear into the shadows, thereby emphasizing their unity with their environment. Monochrome pictures were described, the authors often described the scene of action in a non-standard way, experimenting with the corners of the blinds, reminiscent of the bars of a grill. All these experiments came into the American cool genre thanks to German expressionism.

The first pure noir detective story is considered to be Deishl's literary work . Hammett “The Maltese Falcon” (“ The Maltese Falcon ” by Dashiell Hammet ), written in 1930. It was this work that introduced into American literature the type of tough, cynical hero and the image of a calculating, selfish woman who betrays him over and over again. All this, in keeping with the dark style and intense narrative, stood in stark contrast to other

genres of literary work. Its protagonist, Sam Spade , while similar enough to the operative to be his slightly younger brother, is a more fully realized character, captured and portrayed in all his ambiguity.

“SAMUEL SPADE'S jaw was long and bony, his chin a jutting v under the more flexible v of his mouth. His nostrils curved back to make another, smaller, v. His yellow-gray eyes were horizontal. The v motif was picked up again by thickish brows rising outward from twin creases above a hooked nose, and his pale brown hair grew down—from high flat temples—in a point on his forehead. He looked rather pleasantly like a blonde satan .”

Being the "brains" of the Spade agency and Archer ", he tries to convey to Miles Archer is dealing with a young client in whose presence he feels trouble. When Archer , blinded by the woman's flattery, walks to his death, Spade is hardly surprised and makes little effort to hide his recent affair with the woman who is now Archer's widow . Meanwhile, Spade is tired of Iva Archer and her advances. Spade , under suspicion for Archer's murder , digs deeper into the case and learns that the young woman has given a number of aliases and legends. Her real name is revealed to be Brigid O'Shaughnessy , and Spade soon connects her with a group of international thieves, each of whom appears to be competing with the others for possession of an ancient and priceless treasure known as the Maltese Falcon. Supposedly the football-sized, gem-encrusted bird has been stolen and repossessed several times over its four hundred years of existence, most recently ending up in the hands of a Russian general.

Spade's quests eventually bring him into contact with most of the thieves' leaders, with the exception of the general himself, who at the end of the detective novel

is revealed to have replaced the genuine item with a worthless lead fake. Among the thieves are two particularly memorable characters, interpreted in John Huston's film by Sydney Greenstreet and Peter Lorre respectively: Casper Gutman, a smooth-talking, extremely fat manipulator and opportunist who keeps trying to win Spade's trust ; meanwhile, another, Joel Cairo , a member of the international underworld, repeatedly (and most unsuccessfully) attempts to intimidate Spade with a gun, which Spade proceeds to take from him.

In the novel, Spade's character develops significantly as he tries to simultaneously deal with current affairs and his growing affection for the clearly treacherous Bridget O'Shaughnessy . It seems that in Brigid Spade has finally met a worthy match, a woman whose cunning and natural intelligence compare favorably with his own. In her presence, it is all too easy for Spade to forget the feigned advances of Eve Archer or even the tomboyish charm of his secretary Effie Perine; however, it is more difficult for him to forget about the tightly drawn web of circumstantial evidence, in which, in his opinion, Bridget is very entangled . After the coveted falcon turns out to be a fake, Spade confronts Bridget with evidence that it is her and not her late comrade Floyd. Thursby fired the bullet that killed Miles Archer . Despite Archer's weaknesses and Spade's personal disdain for the man, Spade remains committed to the code that demands the arrest and prosecution of his partner's killer. Explaining to an incredulous Bridget that he still thinks he loves her but cannot bring himself to trust her, he states that he is sending her to prison and may or may not be waiting for her to be released. They hug as the police arrive to take her away.

Considerably more thoughtful and resonant than Hammett's previous novels , *The Maltese Falcon* " is his undisputed masterpiece. The falcon itself, a contested piece of prey which in the novel has caused theft and murder throughout recent history and which in its present form turns out to be a fake, is without a doubt one of the strongest and most developed images in modern history.

“Heavy, what is this?

The stuff dreams are made of”

However, widespread recognition among readers came to noir detective only in 1944, when James' book was published Kane's *"Double Indemnity"* The book not only became iconic for the genre, but also secured the right of the noir detective to be called serious literature. Such detective stories were very much in tune with the spirit of the times, marked by the advent of the Second World War in the lives of ordinary Americans and the need to realize that life was very dark and cruel.

Along with Deishl Hammett , another founder of the whole trend of modern hard - boiling detective literature , was Raymond Chandler, who was of Anglo-American origin. Unlike the classic detective, who worked on the principle of a central event that needs to be untwisted, a certain thread must be created and, using the method of deduction, analytical abilities and intuition, reach the truth, which is typical for such figures as Sherlock Holmes and Hercule Poirot , the modern American hardboiled detective, is characterized by a slightly different approach. R. Chandler has the main character of his seven detective novels, Philip Marlowe , a private detective, has a strong physique, acumen, a free bachelor, lives in an

apartment like in a kennel , everything is cluttered, smokey and empty glasses. The only thing that distinguishes him from other detectives of this kind is the presence of a chessboard and chess books. He likes to analyze chess games in his free time.

Thus, the author wanted to show us that this person, in addition to everything else, also works with his brains. In his detective novels there is no more extreme analytical work of the brain; a lot is decided there by the fist and the bullet. But there is certainly a certain intrigue and investigation. But the main thing about Chandler is his amazing stylization and ability to create dialogues. They spicy How knives like sting wasps .

“A nice state of affairs when a man has to indulge his vices by proxy,” he said dryly. 'You are looking at a very dull survival of a rather gaudy life, a cripple paralyzed in both legs and with only half of his lower belly. There's very little that I can eat and my sleep is so close to waking that it is hardly worth the name. I seem to exist largely on heat, like a newborn spider, and the orchids are an excuse for the heat. Do you like orchids?'

'Not particularly,' I said.

The General half closed his eyes. 'They are nasty things. Their flesh is too much like the flesh of men. And their perfume has the rotten sweetness of a prostitute”

Marlowe became a central figure in the myth of the detective; the only comparable characters may be Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes and Hercule Agatha Christie's Poirots , although they are very different from Marlowe . Sam Spade Dashila Hammett , although well established, is developed in only one book and lacks the psychological depth of Marlowe . Marlowe took his place among the characters of American myth along with Nattie Bumppo , Captain

Ahab, Huckleberry Finn and Thomas Sutpen . There's something uniquely American about this character's self-reliance, something that goes beyond Chandler's brilliant descriptions of the parched landscape of modern California. Marlowe is an impressive work of art due to his remarkable combination of detective and more traditional American heroic types, a combination discussed in Chandler's famous essay "The Simple Art of Murder." This essay attempted to determine Chandler's intentions as a writer of crime fiction, and has since become one of the classic texts regarding the scope and purpose of crime writing. Although the main point of "The Simple Art of Murder" is Chandler's rejection of the stylized mystery and his oft-quoted tribute to Hammett - his claim that Hammett took murder "out of a Venetian vase and threw it in an alley" - the essay makes its most important point in arguing for detective fiction as a heroic form that modern readers can still believe in. Arguing that all art must contain a quality of redemption, Chandler insists, perhaps too harshly, that the detective is “the hero; he is everything.” As Marlowe Chandler tests the possibility of heroism in the modern cultural and spiritual wasteland of Southern California to see whether traditional heroic values can stand the test of a realistic portrait of modern society.

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