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Annotation

This bachelor thesis focuses on depiction of the city in the hard-boiled novels written by the most significant authors of this genre; Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett, the representatives of the American hard-boiled school. The analysis is aimed at the role of the city as a literary place and its mysterious dark side which hides many secrets and symbolic features. With the use of the examples from their most popular works, the way both authors perceived and depicted the city within their stories was revealed.

Keywords

hard-boiled school, Chandler, Hammett, city, detective

Anotace

Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na způsob zobrazení města v románech “drsné školy”, napsaných dvěma nejvýznamnějšími autory tohoto žánru; Raymondem Chandlerem a Dashielle Hammettem, představiteli tzv. americké drsné školy. Zabývá se rolí města jako literárního místa a jeho tajemnou stránkou, která skrývá spoustu tajemství, a také známky symbolismu. Demonstrací různých ukázek z jejich nejpopulárnějších děl je zobrazen způsob, jak oba autoři vnímají a popisují město ve svých příbězích.

Klíčová slova

drsná škola, Chandler, Hammett, město, detektiv

Contents

Introduction.....	8
1. Theoretical part	10
1.1 The Theory of Detective Fiction	10
1.1.2 A History of Detective Fiction.....	11
1.2 The Hard-Boiled School	12
1.2.1 The First Hard-Boiled Writers.....	14
1.2.2 The Detective Hero	14
1.3 Hard-Boiled Fiction vs. Classical Detective Fiction.....	16
1.4 Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler.....	18
1.4.1 Dashiell Hammett	18
1.4.2 Raymond Chandler	19
2. Literary Analysis	21
2.1 The City in Hard-Boiled Fiction	21
2.2 Illusions	22
2.3 Chandler's Los Angeles	24
2.3.1 Symbolism	25
2.4 Hammett's San Francisco	27
2.4.1 Symbolism	28
2.5 The High Society and Corruption	29
2.6 The Inhabitants of the Hard-Boiled Cities	32
2.6.1 The Villains.....	32
2.6.2 The Outsiders.....	33
3. Conclusion	36
Resumé.....	39
Bibliography	44

Introduction

The city, not only in modern literature but in all types of its genres, has been always very significant feature of literature. The way the city is used can be interpreted in two different ways; either writers use it as a simple place where all actions and plots take place and where is absolutely no interest in city's meaning or symbolism or the city is used in a much deeper way as a center of many secrets and hidden symbols which may not be clear at first sight and which a reader should always focused on because they provide meaning to a particular thing beyond what is actually described in the text. The city, in the almost all hard-boiled novels, should be definitely perceived according to the second way. Compared to the other detective genres, the hard-boiled detective world is incredibly corrupted, rotten and violet but in spite of this fact, the city is one of the most important features which make the hard-boiled novels so popular and interesting among many readers.

The main aim of my thesis is to analyze the city in the American hard-boiled novels. I primarily focused on the novels written by Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler, the most important and popular writers of that era. My intention is to describe the way how the city is depicted and its meaning as a particular literary place. I will also try to analyze its symbolic function because, as it was already mentioned, the city in the hard-boiled novels is full of hidden symbols and secrets.

The very first two chapters are aimed at defining detective fiction and its history. Here I introduced, with a help of secondary literature, the term *detective fiction* and also described how other authors, dealing with this issues, explain this term. The history of the hard-boiled genre is focused on the very first signs of detective fiction in literature from Edgar Allan Poe to Agatha Christie.

The last three chapters of my theoretical part of the thesis highlight the hard-boiled school and its origins where the most distinctive feature, the tough guy, compared to the other genres, is mentioned also with the first hard-boiled writers. Then I tried to compare the classical detective fiction genre with the hard-boiled world and listed many different aspects typical for each of those genres. And the last part is aimed at Dashiell Hammett, as a person who created the hard-boiled genre and Raymond Chandler as the one who significantly contributed to the popularity of this genre.

My literary analysis starts with the chapter in which the typical aspects of the mysterious hard-boiled city are described, followed by its "façade" which indicates that the city is full of lies and deceptions. The next part of the thesis deals with the cities Chandler and

Hammett are typical for; Los Angeles and San Francisco. Here I tried to depict the way both authors described and perceived their corrupted cities in the novels where I also discovered different symbolic features and explained their meaning.

A city cannot be perceived only as a place but also as a society. That is the reason why my last chapters are aimed at the high society and corruption in general where Chandler and Hammett often criticize the rich by the sarcastic depiction of their extravagant life and their residences. The chapter is followed by the different inhabitants of the hard-boiled cities where I introduced the corrupted villains and the unwanted outsiders in detail.

1. Theoretical part

1.1 The Theory of Detective Fiction

There are several ways to define detective fiction. Placing it in respect of the other types of literary genres, such as love stories, science fictions or Westerns, is according to Charles J. Rzepka one of the ways to talk about this sub-genre of crime fiction (2005, 9). John G. Cawelti (as quoted in Rzepka 2005, 9) however, groups these types into categories called “archetypes”, which are perceived as an initial distinction between “Mystery” and “Adventure” – two main types of detective fiction. Rzepka also claims that the typical formula of such a detective story is “a detective of some kind, an unsolved mystery (not always technically a crime), and an investigation by which the mystery is eventually solved.” (2005, 9)

In the essay called *The Art of the Detective Story*, R. Austin Freeman, on the other hand, sees the construction of a detective story as tending to fall into more general stages: “statement of the problem, production of the data for its solution (“clues”), the discovery, i.e., completion of the inquiry by the investigator and declaration by him of the solution, proof of the solution by an exposition of the evidence” (Haycraft 1992, 5). However, a Franco-Bulgarian essayist Tzvetan Todorov, claims that George Burton, the author of many murder mysteries, does not perceive the construction of detective fiction so complicated “all detective fiction is based on two murders of which the first, committed by the murderer, is merely the occasion for the second, in which he is victim of the pure unpunishable murder” (Todorov 1977, 44).

After defining detective fiction, Rzepka also mentions four important elements of this genre. The first three – detective, mystery and investigation appeared very early in the history but the last one called the puzzle element, “the presentation of the mystery as an ongoing problem for the reader to solve, and its power to engage the reader’s own reasoning abilities”, was absent most of the time (Rzepka 2005, 10). In other words, the reader’s own power of detection may be engaged but all depends on the presence of the puzzle element. A similar feature can be found in Freeman’s essay where he mentions the reader’s task during reading. He literally says: “the reader’s task is to collect the data, to rearrange them in their correct logical sequence and ascertain their relations, when the solution of the problem should at once become obvious” (Freeman 1924, 5). On the other hand, he does not mention anything about the element that reader’s own abilities would be dependent on.

Concerning instructions of writing a correct detective story, Todorov stated that a detective novelist named S. S. Van Dine laid down twenty rules which any author of detective fiction should obey but they were later reduced so there are now just eight important rules (1977, 44):

1. The novel must have at most one detective and one criminal, and at least one victim (a corpse).
2. The culprit must not be a professional criminal, must not be the detective, and must kill for personal reasons.
3. Love has no place in detective fiction.
4. The culprit must have a certain importance:
 - a) In life: not be a butler or a chambermaid
 - b) In the book: must be of the main characters
5. Everything must be explained rationally; the fantastic is not admitted.
6. There is no place for descriptions nor for psychological analyses.
7. With regard to information about the story, the following homology must be observed: “author : reader = criminal : detective.”
8. Banal situations and solutions must be avoided.

However, he adds that even though most of these rules refer to detective fiction in general, some of them can be rather applied to the particular genres such as the whodunit or the thriller.

In spite of the fact that detective fiction is a sub-genre of crime fiction, many authors perceive it differently. Some of them consider it as a genre consisting of many elements, some of them as a simple “murder-investigation-solution” process.

1.1.2 A History of Detective Fiction

The detective genre exists more than a century and a half. But detective fiction, as Collins on his website claims, truly began in 1841 when an American author, poet, editor and literary critic Edgar Allan Poe introduced the short story *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1841) and the first fictional investigator Monsieur C. Auguste Dupin (2005). Gaines adds that in the era of Edgar A. Poe, the word *detective* was not yet discovered and the name of his hero Dupin “suggests the English word dupe, or deception, which Dupin utilizes in order to obtain the information he requires to solve a case” (Gaines 2009). However, when this word was finally discovered, it was rather associated with the most popular and logic-using investigator called Sherlock Holmes created by Arthur. C. Doyle who, thanks to his detective stories, improved

the level of detective fiction. Gaines proves this by the statement that “If Poe was the inventor of the detective novel, it was Arthur Conan Doyle who truly cemented it as a popular literary genre,” (2009) especially because Doyle created 56 short stories and four novels featuring Sherlock Holmes compared to Poe who wrote only three stories about Dupin. Doyle was later followed by several British women. The most significant is Agatha Christie, who wrote during what is called the Golden Age, and her character Hercule Poirot, who has been considered as the only real “rival” to Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes (Rzepka 2005, 137-140).

During the twenties and the thirties of the nineteenth century, a literary critic Panek states, The Golden Age reached its peak because a number of brilliant detective novels were published. Also during this time, “the genre attained new status, new kinds of writers modified the aims and approaches of the form, and new classes of readers adopted the detective story as their own” (Panek 1987, 120). To this statement, Scaggs adds that Golden Age originated in England and its point of the origin is in the publication of *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (1916), Agatha Christie’s first novel (2005, 26).

1.2 The Hard-Boiled School

“If the golden age reflected the world's view of Britain at the time, then equally the hard-boiled novel combined all the elements that the outside world saw as American” (Collins 2004). The hard-boiled detective fiction as a popular genre developed in the early 1920s. As Škvorecký explains, by the term The American Hard-Boiled School is meant a group of authors at first publishing short stories in the *Black Mask* magazine, the most successful of so-called the pulp magazines (1998, 169). “The term *Pulp* originally referred to any type of fiction printed on the cheap pulpwood paper used for popular fiction magazines in America” (Škvorecký 1998, 147). The *Black Mask* magazine was not significant only because it promoted the hard-boiled detective fiction genre itself but it also “nurtured” probably the most important authors concerning this genre: Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler.

Black Mask, as Deutsch on his website states, was “launched in April 1920 by H. L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan to support the loss-making but prestigious literary magazine *Smart Set*.” Scaggs, on the other hand, describes it as an inexpensive, weekly publication with flamboyant cover in order to attract public attention. (2005, 56) “The ‘mask’ of the title, in this way, can be read as a reference to the tradition out of which hard-boiled

fiction developed, from the disguises of champions of the weak, such as Zorro, to the raised neckerchief of the Wild West outlaw” (Priestman in Scaggs 2005, 57). Also Charles Rzepka has his own opinion on Black Mask magazine; he sees it as “something of an orphan among pulps but with the contribution of Hammet and Chandler the situation got much better.” (Rzepka 2005, 184) As Deutsch continues, the very first tough private detective story published in the Black Mask pulp was *Three Gun Terry* by Carrol John Daly, John Scagg, however, claims that it is John Daly’s Race Williams is perceived as the first hard-boiled detective hero (2005, 55).

Škvorecký occupies with the differences between hard-boiled detective stories and so called action stories in order to distinguish these two, at first sight similar, genres. The action story contains plots which seem to be endless with very fast pace of events changing and with very short dialogs and thrilling actions. The hard-boiled story, on the other hand, contain much more violence and that is the most significant difference between these two genres (1998, 111).

Other relatively new features that the hard-boiled school brought with itself are definitely “a first person narrative” - “Because the detective was so often the narrator, it precluded much of the theoretical process and surprise deductions associated with more traditional detective fiction” (Collins 2004) and “the setting” - The swapping villages for cities Collins sees as “taking the reader on a journey through the sleazy and glamorous sides of the cities in equal measure.” Škvorecký describes the city as typical as it was in America at that time that means full of gangs, massive criminality and of course prohibition. (1998, 112) Such a social phenomenon is pointing out different society problems which is something also John Scaggs agrees with (2005, 57). He says that the portrayal of crimes was becoming part of the everyday life. The best way, on the other hand, which helps many readers to clearly imagine the hard-boiled city is the description made by Willet in Scaggs: “A wasteland devastated by drugs, violence, pollution, garbage and a decaying physical infrastructure” (2005, 70). Such description gives readers the impression that the city is incredibly dangerous, however, it is not just a simple impression, it is a fact and Raymond Chandler proves this by the statement from his essay *The Simple Art of Murder*: “But down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid” (1988, 18).

1.2.1 The First Hard-Boiled Writers

Except for Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett there were also other important contributors that helped raise the level of hard-boiled detective fiction. One of them is, already mentioned, John Daly who introduced his character called Race Williams. Scaggs claims that “Williams is a large, tough, violent man, and is clearly the prototype for many hardboiled heroes, from Raymond Chandler’s Philip Marlowe to Mickey Spillane’s Mike Hammer” (2005, 55). Similarity between the hard-boiled authors preserved also with Ross McDonald and his detective hero Lewis Archer. All Lewis Archer’s stories take place in California near Los Angeles, in other words, the same place Chandler uses in his novels. However, as Scaggs continues, not everyone followed Hammett or Chandler or the “rules” of the hard-boiled mode in general. Such a good example is W. R. Burnett’s work *Little Caesar* (1929) which he calls the “gangster story” and where “an individual from a disadvantaged background becomes rich and powerful from a life of crime, only to become a victim of the criminal world that created his success” (2005, 29). Hard-boiled detective fiction appeared also in Britain but there is one more important author in the American one yet. “Brutal, vicious, mean and literally pummeling [his] way into the American consciousness” Mike Hammer that is how Baker and Nietzel describe this fictional character created by Mickey Spillane (1985, 70).

The reason why hard-boiled detective stories appeared also in Britain is because a British writer Peter Cheyney, as Škvorecký states, followed the typical “Hammett’s style” (1998, 176). Škvorecký in his book describes Cheyney’s character Lemmy Caution as a womanizer and an alcoholic who works for FBI and talks about his stories with American slang expression (1998, 176). He even adds that because of Caution’s job and his American slang, Peter Cheyney is often perceived as an American author.

1.2.2 The Detective Hero

As it was already implied, the hard-boiled detective genre has its hero who prefers to stir a situation up rather than being patient and think everything out – compared to classical detective fiction. However, it does not necessarily mean that he is fond of fights and violence in general. Collins claims that Chandler’s Marlowe and Hammett’s Spade “tend to demonstrate their toughness not by winning fights but by taking a beating 'like a man' or by

staying 'cool' and avoiding a sticky situation” (2004). This type of a detective, as Scaggs suggests, is a loner who “exists beyond the socioeconomic order of family, friends, work and home” (2005, 59). Knight in Scaggs describes such a detective as following:

He lives alone, in rented flats or houses. He works alone, in a cheap, comfortless office. He drinks and smokes a lot: a single, masculine lifestyle. He is choosy about his work, never showing much interest in money. In general, he has dropped right out of the normal family and financial patterns of modern culture. (2005, 59-60)

It is obvious that such features are the main differences that set the hard-boiled detectives apart from those in the Golden Age. Scaggs even suggests that the term “private detective” identifies the hero of the hard-boiled school as the descendant of the Golden Age (2005, 60). Škvorecký adds that the private eye is rather emotionless because he does not show any signs of happiness or fear which is typical for a tough guy (1998, 174). Because of this feature, and as Scaggs claims, there is little or no analysis of clues and associated analytic deduction which was typical for British fictional characters like Sherlock Holmes or Hercule Poirot who have absolutely nothing in common with a tough detective. (2005, 59)

Chandler’s and Hammett’s detectives does not differ only in their personal characteristics, also their investigative methods are unusual. Direct questioning or tracking down a possible culprit are, according to Scaggs, methods that result in decentering the plot and the character of a detective becomes the center of the whole story which is later proved by Chandler’s novels where he uses first-person narration which makes the readers realize that the plot and the crime are not the center of the story anymore. (2005, 61)

Chandler’s description of the hard-boiled detective is a perfect example to sum up this part: “The detective in this kind of story must be such a man. He is the hero; he is everything. He must be a complete man and a common man and yet an unusual man. He must be, to use a rather weathered phrase, a man of honor” and he also suggests that if all detectives were like those in the hard-boiled genre, especially his Phillip Marlowe, the world would be much safer (1988, 18).

1.3 Hard-Boiled Fiction vs. Classical Detective Fiction

It is clear that the most apparent difference between these two genres is the feature of a tough guy. Compared to the Golden Age, R. D. Collins claims that “The golden age tends to celebrate the plot, its setting and the ingenuity with which it is solved. The hard boiled school, however, relies more on brute force than ingenuity to solve the crime and an unerring ability to survive against all the apparent odds“ (2004). To this statement, Škvorecký adds that the hard-boiled genre contains also many features of rough realism (1998, 170). This confirms John G. Cawelti who highlights the fact that the hard-boiled genre typically ends with conflict between detective and criminal, in classical detective fiction, on the other hand, the apprehension of some criminal is less important than the crime. He continues that concerning classical detective fiction, when any conflict appears it is solved by a simple threat or similar action, while in the hardboiled genre, almost all characters, even detectives, are victims of being punched or shot (1977, 142-143).

His face froze and he swung his arm back to slug me a third time and this time with the power behind it. His arm was still going back when I took a half step forward and kicked him in the pit of the stomach. (Chandler 1995, 708)

In other words, the detective’s role in classical detective fiction is to use logic and his intelligence in order to solve the case, the detective in the hard-boiled genre, on the other hand, intervenes where the law is unable or corrupt to achieve justice. The following quotation concerning the law and the lawyers clearly shows how Chandler perceives these two things.

Let the law enforcement people do their own dirty work. Let the lawyers work it out. They write the laws for other lawyers to dissect in front of other lawyers called judges so that other judges can say the first judges were wrong and the Supreme Court can say the second lot were wrong. Sure there's such a thing as law. We're up to our necks in it. About all it does is make business for lawyers. (Chandler in Cawelti 1977, 143)

The next thing Cawelti deals with is the introduction of stories, he claims that every story starts with the introduction of the detective, “but instead of the charming bachelor apartment of Holmes and Watson,” the hard-boiled detective has his own dusty, quiet and scruffy office, “located in a broken-down building on the margin of the city's business district” (1977, 144). However, he admits that sometimes the story “opens in a context of decadent wealth” and confirms it by the quotation from the Chandler’s book *The Big Sleep*.

The air was thick, wet, steamy and larded with the cloying smell of tropical orchids in bloom. The glass walls and roof were heavily misted and big drops of moisture splashed down on the plants. The light had an unreal greenish color, like light filtered through an aquarium tank. The plants filled the place, a forest of them, with nasty meaty leaves and stalks like the newly washed fingers of dead men. (Chandler in Cawelti 1977, 145-146)

Also many missions the detective is hired to are different compared to the classical detective stories. For example in the stories of Sherlock Holmes, he suddenly faces a crime that left behind some clues, in other words, he is involved in the crime from the very beginning. Philip Marlowe and Hammett's detectives are given a mission or a quest which initially has nothing to do with a murder. "Pursuing this mission, the detective happens upon the first of a series of murders that gradually reveal to him the true nature of his quest" (Cawelti 1977, 146) and thanks to this process, the hard-boiled investigation becomes the matter of "defining his own moral position." This can be seen in the book of Dashiell Hammett *The Maltese Falcon* where Sam Spade's mission still keeps changing. Initially he has to find the client's sister then the investigation moves to his partner's death where he realized that the real problem is the woman he fell in love with. And this is another significant aspect the hard-boiled genre is typical for, the romance.

The hard-boiled detectives sometimes become emotionally involved in the investigation process or rather the people they come across during the story. It is proved in the *The Maltese Falcon* book where Sam Spade found himself romantically affected by the murderess or in the book *The Long Goodbye* where the criminal Terry Lennox was a close friend of Philip Marlowe. Sometimes such romance makes the detective "fight" for his love. This is according to Cawelti proved in Dorothy Sayers's *Strong Poison* (1930), where Peter Whimsey falls in love with Harriet Vane that is thought to be a murderess and "the action of the story focuses on Lord Peter's successful demonstration of her innocence" (1977, 149). And because the hard-boiled criminals like Terry Lennox and Brigid O'Shaughnessy have very close to the detective himself, Rzepka highlights the fact that they play one of the main roles within the story, compared to the classical criminals that are mostly hidden behind different clues (2005, 180-182).

Probably the last significant difference between the classical criminals and those in the hard-boiled genre is, as Cawelti calls it, "the involvement with the criminal underworld." In the classical detective stories the bad guy is mostly a single individual unit with a specific motive to commit a crime but in the hard-boiled mode, the criminal is quite often involved in the larger criminal organization (1977, 152). Rzepka proves this inescapable corruption of

society, by Chandler's *The Big Sleep*, where Philip Marlowe finds out that he must deal not only with her client and her sister but also with gangsters that are somehow connected with the those sisters and their wealthy family.

1.4 Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler

As it was already mentioned, while Dashiell Hammett was the founder of what is so-called the "Private-Investigation" genre, Raymond Chandler is the one who raised its quality at the master level. As Baker and Nietzel state in their book, the main point of these two significant authors was to react to the type of a detective story created by other popular writers like S. S. Van Dine or Agatha Christie (1985, 20). Both of them replaced Van Dine's setting, which was originally a world of wealth and tradition, by their own world "in which truth and justice were determined more by money and power than some abstract principle or some immaculate ideal" (Baker, Nietzel 1985, 20). However, Škvorecký claims that their "rebellion" was not as bad as it might seem and explains that they actually broke only one of Van Dine's twenty rules for writing detective stories, number 17 – "A professional criminal must never be shouldered with the guilt of a crime in a detective story" (1998, 115). Both of them started their careers by publishing short stories in the *Black Mask* magazine, Baker and Nietzel add that it took a while since they were accepted by the literary elite and created a specific American genre – The Hard-Boiled School (1985, 20).

1.4.1 Dashiell Hammett

Hammett's experience during working for the Pinkerton detective agency, as Škvorecký claims, helped him with his writing career because the detail in his books, such as describing behavior of the detectives and the criminals were incredibly exact compared the other hard-boiled writers (1998, 87).

According to Cawelti, compared to the most hard-boiled writers including Raymond Chandler himself, Hammett's work contains one huge difference called variety because each of his novels provides a different kind of a problem or a pattern (1977, 162). It is proved in his first two full-length books *Red Harvest* (1929) and *The Dain Curse* (1929), the only thing they share is an anonymous detective known as Continental Op. "*Red Harvest* is westernlike

in its setting and in its violent and chaotic narrative of gang warfare. *The Dain Curse* resembles a gothic novel with its eerie atmosphere of family curses, drugs, strange religious cults, and twisted motives” (Cawelti 1977, 162). Another example of such variety is definitely his third novel *The Maltese Falcon* (1930) in which he created his most popular detective Sam Spade. Baker and Nietzel add that Hammett wrote this story using the third person narrative in order to give Spade added strength (1985, 26).

Hammett’s occasionally experiments with other literary types where he tried to transform those types into his own hard-boiled mode is another important thing Cawelti deals with (1977, 165). He also says that it became a standard practice in his later novels. This can be seen in *The Maltese Falcon* where it reflects stories of hidden treasure like in *Treasure Island* by Robert Luis Stevenson.

Hammett’s next novel *The Glass Key* (1931) also with *The Maltese Falcon*, is perceived as the peak of his career. While *The Glass Key* was so popular that a literary award called The Glass Key Award, as the Library Thing website explains, is given each year for the best crime novel, *The Maltese Falcon* was ranked among the 100 best novels by the Modern Library website. On the other hand, Škvorecký thinks that his worst novel is *The Thin Man* (1934) which was according to him the most “detective” story Hammett ever wrote but it contains “desire for wealth”, in other words, the typical and the most common American motive to commit a murder (1998, 94). The question whether Raymond Chandler and other hard-boiled writers were better than Dashiell Hammett is, according to Škvorecký, very hard to determine. He personally thinks that some of his novels simply do not have a good crime solution and sometimes it is even hard to understand (1998, 95).

1.4.2 Raymond Chandler

As Baker and Nietzel state, unlike Hammett, Raymond Chandler did not have such huge experience with crimes and investigative methods in his personal life and he rather relied on his memories, every time he wanted to write about some place where the events in his books were supposed to take place, he had to first visit this kind of a location and observed the details around him (1985, 40).

They highlights the fact that the very first novels Chandler wrote was based on his two previous short stories (1985, 40). While *The Big Sleep* (1939) was based on *Killer in the Rain* and *The Curtain* which, as Škvorecký adds, was the only detective novel that literary critic

Wilson enjoyed (1998, 145), the basis of his second novel *Farewell My Lovely* (1940) was *Try the Girl* also with *Mandarin's Jade*. All of these stories contain “a variety of richly assorted characters – some nice, some neurotic, and some nasty” but the best portrayal of characters is in his third novel *The High Window* (1942) (Baker and Nietzel 1985, 41). His next two important novels that have to be yet mentioned are definitely *The Little Sister* (1949) which contributed to the mania called Hollywood because of its main theme “the indistinction between [fact and fiction]” (Scaggs 2005, 68) and *The Long Goodbye* (1953) for which he was awarded an Edgar Allan Poe Award by the Mystery Writers of America (Phillips 2003, 146). Baker and Nietzel also claim that his last detective novel *Playback* (1959) was the least successful and his weakest book because Chandler had huge problems with alcoholism and depressions at that time (1985, 41). Škvorecký on the other hand, claims that Raymond Chandler, according to his letters, never perceived himself as the successful writer at all and he was ready to stop with his novels anytime and do something else for a living (1998, 104).

When some obvious difference between Hammett's and Chandler's writing style would be required, it is definitely Chandler's metaphorical style. “The killer's face has a “scraped bone look,” the gun makes a “sharp slap” and a “brittle crack in the sunlight” (Cawelti 1977, 175). Concerning the literary language of those two authors, Cawelti explains that the language that Chandler used, especially the third person narration, was meant to intensify our impression of the narrator placed to the background of the scene. The difference is also in their perception of the corruption and violence in the city, while Hammett saw it as an “inescapable human condition”, Chandler, on the other hand, criticized and blamed American materialism, so he wanted to create a detective who could stand against this corruption and protect the innocent (Cawelti 1977, 176). Škvorecký adds that the corrupted world was often the main theme of all Chandler's works where people do not care about anything but money (1998, 104).

2. Literary Analysis

2.1 The City in Hard-Boiled Fiction

One of the most important aspects of the hard-boiled stories is certainly depiction of the city and its role in a background. The famous English writer G. K. Chesterton in his article *A Defence of Detective Stories* claims that the reason for the cultural significance of the detective stories is “its poetic treatment of the city” and shows the importance of the city and celebrates its symbolism:

The first essential value of the detective story lies in this, that it is the earliest and only form of popular literature in which is expressed some sense of the poetry of modern life. Men lived among mighty mountains and eternal forests for ages before they realized that they were poetical; it may reasonably be inferred that some of our descendants may see the chimney-pots as rich a purple as the mountain-peaks, and find the lamp-posts as old and natural as the trees. (1901)

In spite of the fact that the cities in the stories about Sherlock Holmes or Hercule Poirot were full of extraordinary crimes and cruelties, they cannot be compared to the city in the hard-boiled genre. With the expansion of the classical detective fiction into the hard-boiled mode where Hammett and Chandler “reigned”, the city is depicted in the much more rough way. Its aspects are: darkness, corruption, drugs, death, and especially violence, the most apparent difference.

The bitch city is something different on Saturday night, sophisticated in black, scented and powdered, but somehow not as unassailable, shiveringly beautiful in a dazzle of blinking lights. Reds and oranges, electric blues and vibrant greens assault the eye incessantly, and the resultant turn-on is as sweet as a quick fix in a penthouse pad, a liquid cool that conjures dreams of towering glass spires and enameled minarets. (McBain in Cawelti 1977, 142)

In other words, the city in the hard-boiled detective novels is a world ruled by the rich and the criminal underworld full of dark and mysterious elements, and where the law came into conflict with disorder. Cawelti describes it as “a surface of specious and ambiguous glamour hiding depths of corruption” (1977, 156). Scaggs, on the other hand, compares it to the urban environment of T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* where the citizens of the city have been “undone” by death which is not physical but emotional (2005, 70). “They are ‘human 70 the hard-boiled mode engines’ leading empty lives without meaning or significance, trapped in a city that is both London in 1922, and all modern cities” (Scaggs 2005, 70-71). He also talks

about so called “unreality” of the city “characterized by imitation, artifice, insubstantiality, fakery and facades”, in other words pretending which is revealed as an inseparable part of the hard-boiled genre (2005, 71).

2.2 Illusions

It is precisely the “unreality” Hammett’s San Francisco and especially Chandler’s Los Angeles is typical for. That is why Babener in Scaggs describes Chandler’s Los Angeles as “a metropolis of lies” or “the kingdom of illusion” (2005, 71). This deception does not relate only to the city and its architecture but also to its inhabitants who came to Los Angeles because they perceived it as a city full of opportunities, and more importantly, of new identities enabling them to become someone else and live somewhere else. This imitation and fakery was not only in Chandler’s and Hammett’s novels, the real world of the United States was full of these aspects because of the famous film industry called Hollywood. People wanted to live and look like the popular movie stars so there is no doubt that Hollywood is one of the main contributors towards the pretending feature.

Regarding the depiction of architecture of the city, both Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett emphasize sham and especially the illusion of wealth. In Chandler’s *The Little Sister* a film star named Mavis Weld lives in an apartment house with the imitation marble foyer and a false fireplace with gas logs. Such pretense of wealth and power can be also found in his work *The High Window* where Marlowe enters the “high-class” club:

The lobby looked like a high-budget musical. A lot of light and glitter, a lot of scenery, a lot of clothes, a lot of sound, an all-star cast, and a plot with all the originality and drive of a split fingernail. Under the beautiful soft indirect lighting the walls seemed to go up forever and to be lost in soft lascivious stars that really twinkled. You could just manage to walk on the carpet without waders. (Chandler 2002, 551)

Another way of the imitation of places that Chandler uses is Cypress Club owned by Eddie Mars in *The Big Sleep* which is meant to look like an old-fashioned ballroom but the real face is different, it is just a simple gambling house. The next place in the same book is Geiger’s book store. Here the main difference, compared to the previous architectures, is that these places do not serve as pretense of wealth but are meant to be some kind of a shelter for criminal intents. “The blonde, Agnes, will admit what kind of business the store did. It’s obvious to anybody with eyes that that store is just a front for something. But the Hollywood

police allowed it to operate, for their own reasons” (Chandler 2002, 97). The Temple of the Holy Grail, in the Hammett’s book *The Dain Curse*, run by Joseph Harold, is meant to look like an institution where people, in bad emotional and mental condition, can be cured but it is just some sort of a cult which uses illusionist’s tricks to wheedle some money out of their wealthy customers. Fakery, imitation or façade appears also in *The Maltese Falcon*. It is precisely the Maltese falcon which acts as a magnet drawing many different characters where each of them hopes for the possession of this bird statue, however, after the removal of its black paint surface, it turned out to be a counterfeit. In other words, it is again a symbol of false wealth.

As it was already stated, all these features can be also applied to people in the hard-boiled novels. The city in hard-boiled fiction is occupied by many different kinds of charlatans and imposters. The first book full of lies and pretending is again Hammett’s *The Maltese Falcon*. One of the main characters named Brigid O’ Shaughnessy lies almost from the very beginning of the novel to the end. “Her eyelids drooped. 'Oh, I'm so tired,' she said tremulously, 'so tired of it all, of myself, of lying and thinking up lies, and of not knowing what is a lie and what is the truth’” (Hammett 1999, 467). These negative aspects, however, affect not only so called “bad guys” but also Sam Spade himself where he pretends to be a friend of all his enemies.

In *Farewell, My Lovely*, Phillip Marlowe meets a Native American, introduced as “Hollywood Indian”, named Second Planting who, according to Scaggs “speaks like an extra in Western” (2005, 72).

He lifted his voice and began to intone in a deep-chested sonorous boom. “He say come quick. Great white father say come quick. He say me bring you in fiery chariot. He say — “ “Yeah. Cut out the pig Latin,” I said. “I’m no schoolmarm at the snake dances.” (Chandler 2002, 316)

To sum up, artifice, facades, imitation, pretending, lies or deception, all these words can be used to describe the city and its inhabitants within the hard-boiled novels. From an ordinary mission, the private eye is hired to, becomes a quest where a world full of criminal intents and fakery is revealed. Scaggs describes these features as they would “drive a wedge between what is seen and what is known” (2005, 72).

2.3 Chandler's Los Angeles

Chandler's skill to describe and characterize the urban environment of his city is excellent. He was successful in the depiction of the city which was full of discontinuities like desert and sea or valley and mountains. However, his Los Angeles is the base of darkness, corruption and soulless civilization. Fine claims that for Chandler was even more important to depict the city than the solution of the crime (2004, 118-119). His city stretches from the coastal cities like "Bay City" to the mountainous Santa Monica with houses in the shape of a fortress occupied by high society. Such a transition, from the scenery to another, appears in his book *Farewell, My Lovely* where Chandler describes a brief trip down Sunset Boulevard, through Beverly Hills to the Pacific Ocean.

We curved through the bright mile or two of the strip, past the antique shops with famous screen names on them, past the windows full of point lace and ancient pewter, past the gleaming new night clubs with famous chefs and equally famous gambling rooms, run by polished graduates of the purple Gang, past the Georgian-Colonial vogue, now old hat, past the handsome modernistic buildings in which Hollywood flesh-peddlers never stop talking money, past a drive-in lunch which somehow didn't belong, even though the girls wore white silk blouses and drum majorettes' shakos and nothing below the hips but glazed kid Hessian boots. Past all this and down a wide smooth curve of the bridle path of Beverly Hills and lights to the south, all colors of the spectrum and crystal clear in an evening without fog, past the shadowed mansions up on the hills to the north, past Beverly Hills altogether and up into the twisting foothill boulevard and the sudden cool dusk and drift of wind from the sea. (Chandler 2002, 318-319)

This trip symbolizes a short adventure story where the detective travels from the real, dark world of Sunset Boulevard where can be found only stress and anxiety, to the calm and romantic place near the ocean. In other words, this passage serves to contrast the practical world and "dreamy" romance described as following:

I got down to Montemar Vista as the light began to fade, but there was still a fine sparkle on the water and the surf was breaking far out in long smooth curves. A group of pelicans was flying bomber formation just under the creaming lip of waves. A lonely yacht was taking in toward the yacht harbor at Bay City. Beyond it the huge emptiness of the Pacific was purple-gray. (Chandler 2002, 236)

Concerning the buildings above Los Angeles which looked like strongholds, their owners were mostly the rich from high society who wanted to be separated from ordinary people or they desired to achieve respectability. Fine claims that "status and respectability are

archived not by movement to a higher floor in the same apartment building, but by movement to a different neighborhood” (2004, 123). Separation and respectability, however, were not the only reasons for moving. People who moved or lived above Los Angeles in Chandler’s novels, wanted to be safe. And it is the matter of security why their houses looked like fortresses not allowing anyone to enter. Such safety is apparent in *Farewell, My Lovely* when Chandler tries to depict the Grayle’s mansion.

Aster Drive had a long smooth curve there and on the inland side were just nice houses, but on the canyon side they were great silent estates, with twelve foot walls and wrought-iron gates and ornamental hedges; and inside, if you could get inside, a special brand of sunshine, very quiet, put up in noise-proof containers just for the upper classes. (Chandler 2002, 298)

One of the main impacts on Raymond Chandler’s writing was the “explosion” of population of Los Angeles because between the years 1920 and 1960, the population of this city increased by 500 percent. In this case the important role play again the rich and their position in the high society because their lifestyle and their moving to different neighborhoods completely changed the face of the city. The migration became apparent in some Chandler’s novels, especially in *The Little Sister*, when he describes what the city looked like.

I used to like this town. There were trees along Wilshire Boulevard. Beverly Hills was a country town. Westwood was bare hills. [...] Hollywood was a bunch of frame houses on the interurban line. Los Angeles was just a big dry sunny place with ugly homes and no style, but goodhearted and peaceful.

Now [...] we’ve got the big money, the sharp shooters, the percentage workers, the fast-dollar boys, [...] the flash restaurants and night clubs they run, and the hotels and apartment houses they own, and the grifters and con men and female bandits that live in them. (Chandler 1995, 357)

2.3.1 Symbolism

There were already mentioned some symbolic features concerning Chandler’s Los Angeles. However, there are particular symbolic items yet which represent ideas and thoughts and which Chandler wanted to convey through his books. One of those aspects, perceived as an inseparable part of the city, is the depiction of tropical plants. Willet claims that “Chandler [...] uses vegetation to differentiate parts of the city and to function symbolically” (1996, 23).

This vegetation feature is obvious in *The Big Sleep* where General Sternwood’s greenhouse is full of orchids. Even though they are usually perceived as a symbol of beauty, here are described to have “the cloying smell” (Chandler 2002, 6). And with the description

made by General Sternwood himself: “They are nasty things. Their flesh is too much like the flesh of men. And their perfume has the rotten sweetness of a prostitute” (Chandler 2002, 8) it is obvious that they serve as a symbol of indecency within the Sternwood’s family. What can be noticed here, is again already mentioned the feature of illusion. The orchids are meant to look like an innocent and beautiful plant but under their surface the reality is completely different; they are disgusting and rotten flesh.

Together with the orchids, another symbol can be found in the same book. In the greenhouse, Phillip Marlowe is “stricken” by the heat which is unbearable and he is wrong every time he thinks that a drink will make it better. “I finished my second drink and wiped my lips and my face. The heat didn’t get any less hot with the brandy in me” (Chandler 2002, 13). The heat holds Marlowe until the end of the novel. The deeper he is in his investigation the more drinks he needs.

Probably the most visual element which appears in almost all Chandler’s books is weather of the city. There is always different kind of weather typical for each of his books, like the dry heat in *Farewell, My Lovely* or the fierce gale in *The Red Wind* (1939) which reflects tense mood among the citizens of the city. “There was a desert wind blowing that night. It was one of those hot dry Santa Anas that come down through the mountain passes and curl your hair and make your nerves jump and your skin itch” (Chandler 1946, 11). And that is exactly why weather is so important; it mirrors what is going on at a particular moment and at a particular place. It also seems that the deeper and more complicated Marlowe’s investigation is, more unpleasant weather arrives. This can be proved by the situation where Marlowe, during the heavy rain, investigates Geiger’s house in *The Big Sleep*. “I unlocked the door and stepped into the still warm darkness and stood there, dripping quietly on the floor and listening to the rain” (Chandler 2002, 35). But the next morning, when Marlowe is not surrounded by problems and troubles, the weather is bright and sunny. The next weather feature within this book is definitely thunders. Thunders, the worst part of rain, seem to be representing the worst in the real life – death. In *The Big Sleep*, Phillip Marlowe describes the thunders “grumbling” in the foothills, in other words, at the place where Rusty Regan was killed.

Thunder was crackling in the foothills now and the sky above them was purple-black. It was going to rain hard. The air had the damp foretaste of rain.

The thunder in the foothills was rumbling again. The glare of lightning was reflected on piled-up black clouds off to the south. A few tentative raindrops splashed down on the sidewalk and made spots as large as nickels. (Chandler 2002, 19-23)

2.4 Hammett's San Francisco

San Francisco, the city with the large Chinese population settled in the Chinatown and its feared Alcatraz Island, became very famous in hard-boiled fiction because it was a place whose features Dashiell Hammett reflected almost in all his popular novels. His real San Francisco has many similar features with the cities introduced in the books. The most significant features are definitely the constant fog, the hills or the bay. "San Francisco's night-fog, thin, clammy, and penetrant, blurred the street" (Hammett 1999, 399). Also the Chinese population is the necessary element and inseparable part of many Hammett's plots. Compared to Los Angeles, Willet describes San Francisco as "formed originally on steep, barren hills at the end of a spit of land, is physically more focused entity, pretty and settled, a garden city where the tides wash pollution out of the bay" (1996, 37-38).

Willet also claims that San Francisco was "turned by Hammett's novels [...] into a hard-boiled fictional counterpart of Los Angeles" (1996, 36). This statement is very nicely proved in *The Dain Curse* where The Continental Op finds out that: "They brought their cult to California because everybody does, and picked San Francisco because it held less competition than Los Angeles" (Hammett 1999, 279). It also proves that this kind of rivalry between these two cities exists for a long time.

Concerning the way Chandler's Marlowe and Hammett's Spade are talking about their cities, it is very different. Phillip Marlowe sees his Los Angeles as an ordinary city he is supposed to live in, full of crimes and there is no way of doing anything about it. In other words, he does not care about the city much and seems resigned to the fact that Los Angeles is lost. Samuel Spade or better to say Dashiell Hammett, on the other hand, perceive San Francisco as a place he knows and he is known in. It is a place he is loyal to and where he does not allow any disturbances to appear. Simply said, he loves San Francisco, this city is his home. This gives the reader a feeling that San Francisco is much safer place than Los Angeles and that Spade will "win" this game because, as it was stated before, he knows this city and knowing the place is an incredible advantage during his quests.

This is my city and my game. I could manage to land on my feet-sure- this time, but the next time I tried to put over a fast one they'd stop me so fast I'd swallow my teeth. Hell with that. You birds'll be in New York or Constantinople or some place else. I'm in business here. (Hammett 1999, 547)

Hammett used San Francisco together with its cultural background as his own writing territory. Many of the institutions introduced in novels are based on the real places. This can

be seen especially in *The Maltese Falcon* where the real names of the streets are used which functions as reference for the readers. The description of the city is incredibly exact that many of those places can be found in the map. J. O'Reilly, S.O'Reilly and Habegger claim that "the building at 130-150 Sutter [...] is where the office of Samuel Spade and Miles Archer was located" (2002, 165).

2.4.1 Symbolism

Since Dashiell Hammett was not as perfect in the depiction of the city as Raymond Chandler because he focused mainly on the atmosphere of the story, there are still some symbolic features within his novels connected to his city. As it was already stated, the city of the hard-boiled novels is full of corruption that the most of the people are affected by. However, sometimes among those people belongs also the private-eye himself. Such infection is apparent in *The Red Harvest* where the city, appropriately named "Posionville", functions as a poisonous place where an every single person is infected by the violence or corruption found inside this city. And it was the Continental Op who "tasted this poison" and who was scared that the violence together with corruption will consume him. "If I don't get away soon I'll be going blood-simple like the natives. There's been what? A dozen and a half murders since I've been here. It's this damned town. Poisonville is right. It's poisoned me" (Hammett in Cawelti 1977, 170). "Posionville" is a symbol of the exploitative society which uses corruption and chaos to solve everything. The Continental Op does not like this city from the very beginning of the story which is proved by his pessimistic description.

The result was an ugly city of forty thousand people, set in an ugly notch between two ugly mountains that had been all dirtied up by mining. Spread over this was a grimy sky that looked as if it had come out of the smelters' stacks. (Hammett 2010, 4)

Like Raymond Chandler, Hammett also uses weather within his novels as a symbolic function. But while Chandler uses a variety of the weather elements, Hammett focuses mainly on just one of them, the fog. Beside the fact, that the fog, used especially in Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Dain Curse*, sometimes reflects the pessimistic mood of the main protagonist, Skenazy in his book claims that Irving Malin, an American literary critic, believes that Hammett's fog has "a symbolic condition, reflecting the difficulty of perceiving action or motive (1995, 99). This reminds of a similar saying "to fog the mind" which exists

in the English grammar. The truth of Malin's statement can be simply proved in *The Dain Curse* where Gabrielle complains about his problems of clear thinking.

I've not ever been able to think clearly, as other people do, even the simplest thoughts. Everything is always so confused in my mind. No matter what I try to think about, there's a fog that gets between me and it, and other thoughts get between us, so I barely catch a glimpse of the thought I want before I lose it again, and have to hunt through the fog, and at last find it, only to have the same thing happen again and again and again. (Hammett 1999, 342)

2.5 The High Society and Corruption

“The High Society” and “Corruption”, these two terms are very closely connected together in the majority of the hard-boiled novels. Especially the high society has to be definitely mentioned because compared to the high society in Agatha Christie's novels which is rather rural, here the high society is urban. Raymond Chandler claims that the reason why the hard-boiled urban world is so “evil” is because of “American materialism and greed” (Cawelti 1977, 150). The rich, who lives outside the city and their dishonest intents and behavior, are incredibly criticize by Chandler's and Hammett's private detectives. According to Cawelti the private eye “demonstrates that those who have achieved wealth and status are weak, dishonorable and corrupt” (1977, 157).

From everything what was said about the high society in Chandler's and Hammett's novels it is obvious that many of those high societies have a very close relationship with already mentioned pretending, fakery and sham. It all attests the emptiness and loneliness of their life. Such a great example is the high society in *The Long Goodbye*. During parties in the Wade's house, his colleagues, in spite of the fact they are gamblers and alcoholics, pretend to be friends of Roger Wade and honest people. However, this pretending does not last forever. The moment where they get drunk reveals their real face.

It was the same old cocktail party, everybody talking too loud, nobody listening, everybody hanging on for dear life to a mug of the juice, eyes very bright, cheeks flushed or pale and sweaty according to the amount of alcohol consumed and the capacity of the individual to handle it. (Chandler 1995, 560)

But not only people around the high society in the Hammett's and Chandler's novels pretend to be someone else. Even the rich themselves are full of hidden mysteries and the private eye can never rely on the first impression. A simple prove can be found in *The Big Sleep* where General Sternwood's daughters initially seem to be nice and kind persons but the truth is

absolutely different. Carmen is portrayed as a typical single rich lady who is fond of drugs and alcohol and who looks as a young innocent girl. At the end she is revealed to be a murderess. Her sister Vivian, on the other hand, is found out to be a gambler. Chandler's depiction of how dishonest the rich high society can be is also very well described in *The High Window*. Mrs. Elizabeth Bright Murdock and her family belong to another wealthy society. And as well as in the Sternwood's family also the Murdocks are people who know sham and pretending very well. Mrs. Elizabeth Bright Murdock and Leslie, her son, are both revealed to be murderers, even though they were first perceived as victims.

The negative notion of the high society was captured by Chandler and Hammett not only in the way of criticizing its members but also in the depiction of their residences. In other words, the private detectives, almost always in a cynical way, describe the houses of the rich in order to point out their conceit, arrogance and their extravagant lifestyles.

The main hallway of the Sternwood place was two stories high. Over the entrance doors, which would have let in a troop of Indian elephants, there was a broad stained-glass panel showing a knight in dark armor rescuing a lady who was tied to a tree and didn't have any clothes on but some very long and convenient hair. [...] In the middle of the west wall there was a big empty fireplace with a brass screen in four hinged panels, and over the fireplace a marble mantel with cupids at the corners. (Chandler 2002, 3-4)

Except this critical portrayal of the high society, there is also one more feature which, almost in all cases, has to be mentioned in connection with Hammett's and Chandler's hard-boiled novels. And this feature is definitely corruption. Corruption can be found in the many of hard-boiled novels and not only written by Hammett and Chandler. It seems that it is more likely perceived as an inseparable part of this genre. Corruption, within the hard-boiled novels, is not just some corruption but it is a process of an incredibly dishonest behavior, so deep and so depraved that affects almost everyone in the city. Even Cawelti states that "the corrupt relationship between the pillars of the community and the criminal underground" is a necessary part of the hard-boiled formula (1977, 149). The best example of such relationship and corruption in general is *The Glass Key* by Dashiell Hammett. Shad O' Rory, one of the main characters in the book, is a politician and a bad guy as well and he is willing to do anything in order to solve his problems; like making up many different lies and have them print in the local newspaper to tarnish the name of his enemy. "I'll have Hinkle—he's the Observer guy—put the stuff in shape. You just give him the dope and let him write it. We can start off with the Taylor Henry thing." "Give it to Hinkle any way it comes to you. He'll put it in shape" (Hammett 1999, 661).

However, the areas where corruption breaks out most were definitely the two important cities in the hard-boiled novels. The first one is many times mentioned Personville, or better to write “Poisonville”, which appears in *Red Harvest* by Dashiell Hammett. This city is not polluted by a single problem; it is a place where everyone and everything is totally rotten and it is a kind of corruption which cannot fight with law. It is a city that needs to be restored to its original state but the Continental Op, who was hired in order to investigate violence and corruption, has big problems with this type of a job and even many dead bodies around him become usual matter during his mission. In other words, this sickness is so serious and deep that it seems there is no “cure” for this kind of a city. Corruption can be perceived as the synonym for the Personville city. The Continental Op says that “Anybody that brings any ethics to Poisonville is going to get them all rusty” (Hammett 2010, 117). There is no doubt by *Red Harvest* Dashiell Hammett wanted to show that corruption can be so deep that there is no way to get rid of it without using more violence and criminal intentions. The second city, full of corruption and deceptions, is Bay City in *Farewell, My Lovely* written by Raymond Chandler. Bay City, governed by a gambler called Laird Brunette, provides reader with a perfect image of the corrupted police and their connection with the politicians. Its “leader” uses his money almost in all situations because he knows that such spending will always bring benefits to him. “The things I do,” he mused, as if he was alone. “I run towns, I elect mayors, I corrupt police, I peddle dope, I hide out crooks, I heist old women strangled with pearls” (Chandler 2002, 422). The Bay City in *Farewell, My Lovely* is a great example of how one person, corrupted and tricky, can rule the whole city in such a way that even police and the other higher authorities have to adapt to his needs. Although it seems that this kind of city is very similar to Hammett’s Personville, dirty and rotten, Bay City is clean and has its order.

Trouble, he said, still softly, is something our little city don’t know much about, Mr. Marlowe. Our city is small but very, very clean. I look out of my western windows and I see the Pacific Ocean. Nothing cleaner than that, is there? (Chandler 2002, 381)

In other words, the relationship between Laird Brunette and the rest of the city members works very well.

To summarize, the hard-boiled novels depict its high society, full of corruption, always in a negative way. Emphasizing the high society in this way could serve as a warning that there is something wrong with the system. This could be one of the reasons why Chandler and Hammett portrayed their high societies so unfavorably or they just simply wanted to reflect their cities in the 1930s and the 1940s as they really were.

2.6 The Inhabitants of the Hard-Boiled Cities

A city cannot be perceived only as a place but also as society, a center of different kinds of population. And Chandler's Los Angeles and Hammett's San Francisco are a typical example of this city. Both Chandler and Hammett included a variety of people in their novels, from the poor homeless people to the rich millionaires. In other words, inhabitants of their cities within the novels can be distinguished into two groups the villains and the outsiders.

2.6.1 The Villains

There is no doubt that the already mentioned high societies belong to the group of the villains but there is one more unit that deserves to be in this group as well, the police members. Despite the fact they are powerful opponent of Phillip Marlowe and his investigation they give the ordinary people of Los Angeles the impression of being even their enemy. Chandler depicts the lack of safety in the city in his novel *Farewell, My Lovely*: "Folks ain't safe a minute in this town. When I come here twenty-two years ago we didn't lock our doors hardly. Now it's gangsters and crooked police and politicians fightin' each other with machine guns, so I've heard. Scandalous is what it is, young man" (Chandler 2002, 290). This proves the fact, that the police members, within Chandler's novels, are definitely not perceived as someone who is honest and who should protect the citizens of their city. Simply said, people cannot rely on them because they rather care about more important things than dignity and law, such as their money and profit. The cooperation of the politicians and the other authorities with the police is evident also in Hammett's *The Glass Key* particularly from the conversation between Shad O'Rory and Ned Beaumont. "After election I'll stake you to the finest gambling-house this state's ever seen and let you run it to suit yourself with all the protection you ever heard of" (Hammett 1999, 660).

It is possible that the reason, why both Raymond Chandler and occasionally Dashiell Hammett described the police in such a crooked way, is that they simply wanted to reflect the real character of this unit around the 1940s in the USA. This can be proved by the real incident which, according to the book *Los Angeles Police Department* by T.G. Hays and A.W. Sjoquist, happened in 1937 when Capt. Earl Kynette was sentenced to 10 years in the prison because he was involved in the attempt to commit murder (2005, 62).

The hatred of the hard-boiled novels, created by Chandler and Hammett, was not aimed only at the rich and the corrupted police but also at women because they were almost more dangerous than the police itself. Their main abilities, according to which they almost always get what they want, are their charm and seduction. Simply said, the women are able to ensnare a man and made him do things he would never do without this “magic”. The online dictionary *Merriam-Webster* describes this type of a woman as a *femme fatale*. *The Maltese Falcon* provides the reader with a prime example of the *femme fatale* in the form of its main woman protagonist Brigid O'Shaughnessy who is interested only in manipulation and lies. Hammett's description of her gives initially the impression of a young innocent lady who could not hurt a fly.

She advanced slowly, with tentative steps, looking at Spade with cobalt-blue eyes that were both shy and probing. [...] She wore two shades of blue that had been selected because of her eyes. [...] White teeth glistened in the crescent her timid smile made. [...] Her eyes were uneasy. She sat on the very edge of the chair. Her feet were flat on the floor, as if she were about to rise. Her hands in dark gloves clasped a flat dark handbag in her lap. (Hammett 1999, 391)

The *femme fatale* appears also within Chandler's novels but there is one novel which stands out among the rest *The Big Sleep*. Here the role of a dangerous woman plays a childish girl who still sucks her thumb called Carmen Sternwood. Beside the fact that she is a lunatic murderess, she also tries to enchant all the men she comes across in order to confuse them.

What has the *femme fatale* in common with the private eyes within the hard-boiled novels? This question seems to be nonsensical because these two characters are at first sight absolutely different but there is one significant contrast and that is pretending. Brigid O'Shaughnessy and Carmen Sternwood are initially in the role of an emotional and sensitive woman but later they show that they are tough and callous women. On the other hand, the private eyes are tough and dull first but during the story they prove their sensitivity as well. In other words, they seem to be the exact opposite of the private-eye.

2.6.2 The Outsiders

As it was stated before, both Chandler and Hammett included a variety of people within their books but in spite of this fact, there are absolutely no or very few different races immigrants, especially in those written by Raymond Chandler. Knight in Scaggs confirms that “collective concepts [in the novels by Raymond Chandler] such as class and race are quite absent” and suggests that it is “a personal, rather than a social, perspective” (2005, 76). So the question is:

Was Raymond Chandler or rather his private eye a racist? The signs of racism are mediated through the white private eye Philip Marlowe and his description of the blacks or rather the Negros. The conflict, between Moose Molloy and some brown youth in *Farewell My Lovely*, shows the real fact of how the blacks are here perceived.

Something sailed across the sidewalk and landed in the gutter between two parked cars. It landed on its hands and knees and made a high keening noise like a cornered rat. It got up slowly, retrieved a hat and stepped back onto the sidewalk. It was a thin, narrow-shouldered brown youth in a lilac colored suit and a carnation. (Chandler 2002, 202)

The description of the blacks by the pronoun “it” gives the reader feeling that Philip Marlowe really was a racist but there are also passages, like the one where the cop Nulty does not care about the death of the black man because of his race, where Chandler criticizes encouraging of racism. Not only in Chandler’s novels but also in Hammett’s *The Dain Curse* can be found racial slurs. “I couldn’t see the hand that was exploring my inside coat-pocket, nor the arm that came down over my shoulder; but they smelled of the kitchen, so I knew they were brown” (Hammett 1999, 372).

To sum up, the hard-boiled world which Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler describes is not politically correct but in spite of the fact that some of their novels are sometimes full of racial remarks, they were not racist at all. It rather seems that they wanted to draw people’s attention to the common prejudices of the 1930s and the 1940s. Moreover as Widdicombe claims, Raymond Chandler even protested against racism. With his short story *Noon Street Nemesis* (1936), published in the *Detective Fiction Weekly* magazine, “he may have permitted the magazine to delete references to the race of the characters” (2001, 34).

There is one more group of people which is not respected and accepted within Chandler’s and Hammett’s novels and which definitely belongs to the group of the outsiders, the homosexuals. The homosexuals, in their novels, are always objects of disdain, disrespect and sometimes even assaults. “‘Who said I had a key?’ ‘Don’t kid me, son. The fag gave you one. You’ve got a nice clean manly little room in there. He shooed you out and locked it up when he had lady visitors. He was like Caesar, a husband to women and a wife to men’” (Chandler 2002, 86). The tolerance of male sexuality seems to be omitted in the first Chandler’s and Hammett’s novels (*The Big Sleep* and *The Maltese Falcon*). When Marlowe comments on the decoration while searching Geiger’s house he claims that “all this in the daytime had a stealthy nastiness, like a fag party” (Chandler 2002, 55) or when Sam Spade does not miss a single opportunity to insult or even attack Joel Cairo, who is called “the fairy” by Spade, because of his homosexuality.

The perception of the people who have different sexual orientations, however, seems to be very contrasting between Hammett and Chandler. Widdicombe deals with the question whether Philip Marlowe was a homosexual himself because of the following passage from *Farewell, My Lovely* where Marlowe describes Red Norgaard (2001, 32-33): "I looked at him again. He had the eyes you never see, that you only read about. Violet eyes. Almost purple. Eyes like a girl, a lovely girl. His skin was as soft as silk. Lightly reddened, but it would never tan. It was too delicate" (Chandler 2002, 403). There is no doubt that such description gives the impression that Marlowe has some homosexual's feelings. On the other hand, concerning Dashiell Hammett, his aversion to the homosexuals is apparent in his *The Maltese Falcon* especially because of Spade's "attacks". "When you're slapped you'll take it and like it." He released Cairo's wrist and with a thick open hand struck the side of his face three times, savagely" (Hammett 1999, 449). Lievois and Schoentjes confirms Hammett's aversion by the fact that he did not want to change anything in his book even though he was asked to delete those homosexuals parts by his publisher. Eventually he managed to reduce the inappropriate parts by using specialized slang terms and expressions which were full of double meanings and which, compared to the publisher, a very perspicacious reader discovered (2010, 120).

3. Conclusion

The aim of my thesis was to analyze the hard-boiled city within Raymond Chandler's and Dashiell Hammett's novels. The analysis focused primarily on the depiction of the city and its meaning as a literary place and as a mysterious dark district which hides its secrets and contains symbolism.

At the very beginning of the theoretical part I tried to explain the term *detective* fiction. However, I confirmed that it is perceived in many different ways by the different authors. Some of them consider it as a genre consisting of many elements, some of them as a simple "murder-investigation-solution" process. The chapter, dealing with the history of detective fiction, introduced Edgar Allan Poe as the author who can be seen as the founder of detective fiction, especially because of his first detective Monsieur C. Auguste Dupin.

Then I described the hard-boiled school and its formation during the 1920s with a help of the *Black Mask* magazine where I explained that the moment when Chandler and Hammett started to contribute into this magazine the situation with the hard-boiled genre got incredibly improved. I also highlighted many distinct features compared to the classical detective genre such as the one called The Tough Guy which is something people did not know before and which, also with the dark depiction of the city, later made the hard-boiled novels so popular. And especially because of this feature, the hard-boiled genre clearly relies more on violence than intelligence and cleverness.

The last chapter of the theoretical part portrays Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler as the writers who created the hard-boiled genre. It is no shame to say that this genre is popular and famous especially thanks to these two writers. I pointed out that in spite of the fact that Hammett and Chandler wrote the same genre, their writing methods were absolutely different. Hammett had huge experience with crime and criminals thanks to his work at the Pinkerton agency and often tried to experiment with his works to create his own hard-boiled genre. Chandler, on the other hand, had no experience with the police work and was not so eager to write novels, he was still prepared to do something else instead of writing.

Concerning the practical part, the city, compared to the classical detective fiction, is absolutely different. The aspects of beauty, quiet and peace were replaced by darkness, violence, deceptions and pretending and it is the pretending feature which makes the hard-boiled world so unreal. Almost everyone and everything does not show the real face, especially in Chandler's novels. In other words, in the city of the hard-boiled world no one can be sure of anything. By the different quotations from either Chandler's or Hammett's

novels, I confirmed that the pretending was used primarily to hide someone's past, someone's financial state or to camouflage the real face of some building or rooms.

While analyzing Chandler's Los Angeles and Hammett's San Francisco, I found out that Hammett situated most of his stories to San Francisco or used this city as a pattern for his other cities while Chandler focused primarily on his Los Angeles. In spite of the fact that they used different cities both described them as a corrupted place full of lies and violence. In other words, the depiction of San Francisco and Los Angeles highlights their negative features; like the pretending. In order to create the negative image of those two cities, except the dark and violent description of the city, Hammett and mainly Chandler portrayed the local society the way which should serve as a reflection of the era both authors lived in. According to my quotations from their novels, it is evident that the most significant negative aspect is the depiction of corrupted society. Regarding the symbolic feature within their novels, both authors used symbolism to represent hidden ideas or thoughts within their book. I also listed many examples of the symbolism where is evident that both authors wanted to add deeper meaning to their stories. Because of the way Chandler and Hammett used the symbolism, their readers can read or understand the books at two levels; the first one is usual perception of a story without any other second meaning and the second one, when readers discover the symbolism, makes its story more adventurous and meaningful.

As it was stated in the introduction, the city cannot be perceived only as a place. That is why I focused my last chapter on the high society and the inhabitants of the hard-boiled world. By the depiction of the corrupted rich, Hammett and Chandler again reflected the era of the 1930s and the 1940s. The high society, as the city itself, is portrayed always in the negative way. The villains and the outsiders are two groups of the inhabitants of the hard-boiled world. To the first group I included the police because this is one of the most corrupted units but according to the extract from *The Big Sleep* I found out that not all police members were satisfied with their situation. The second unit is so called *femme fatale*, an incredibly dangerous woman, sometimes more dangerous than the police itself. Among the group of the outsiders I incorporated the homosexuals and the blacks. Both of these sub-groups have one thing in common within the novels; rejection. The interesting thing is that no one accepted the homosexuals and the blacks, sometimes not even the private-eye even though some critics claim that Chandler was homosexual himself. The inhabitants are portrayed more as a group rather than individuals. It is really hard to find any individual person who would not belong to any larger group.

A city in general can be depicted in two ways; it can be perceived as a reflection of the reality or it is a place which readers can see as a center of love, fear or hate. The readers of the hard-boiled novels have to decide on their own which of those ways they want to prefer. As the final conclusion can be marked the statement that the city plays very important role in the hard-boiled world, it is one of the most significant features that comprise the hard-boiled genre in spite of the fact that it is depicted so badly.

Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce analyzuje předem vybrané detektivní příběhy Dashiella Hammetta a Raymonda Chandlera, zástupců tzv. americké „drsné školy“, kde nejdůležitější aspekt analýzy je vyobrazení města v těchto příbězích jako literárního místa.

Jak již bylo zmíněno v samostatném úvodu, způsob vyobrazení města může být rozdělen na dva způsoby. Za prvé, město může být v literatuře vnímáno jako obyčejné místo, sloužící pouze jako podpora hlavní dějové linie. Jinými slovy, detailnější zobrazení tohoto druhu města není nijak důležité, hlavní aspekt je zachycení děje, který je v tomto případě mnohem důležitější než právě samotné město. Druhý způsob je vyobrazení města jako místa, které je důležitější nebo aspoň stejně tak důležité jako děj a má mnohem hlubší význam. Tento druh města rozhodně nepůsobí jako pouhá „zástěrka“ pro děj, nýbrž v sobě skrývá spoustu tajemství a symbolů, které po svém odhalení významně obohatí děj, jenž v tomto případě získá mnohem dobrodružnější a zajímavější nádech. Město v románech americké drsné školy je většinou případů vnímáno onou druhou metodou, a přestože je zkorumpované, temné a prohnilé, patří stále mezi jedny z nejdůležitějších aspektů při tvorbě těchto románů.

Teoretická část mé bakalářské práce začíná kapitolami zabývajícími se vysvětlením pojmu detektivka a stručným popisem její historie. Při definování detektivky jako samotného literárního žánru, bylo zjištěno, že existuje mnoho způsobů jak definovat právě tento pojem. Někteří autoři na něj nahlíží podrobněji a vidím v něm druh žánru, který se skládá z mnoha menších sub-žánrů a ostatních aspektů, zatímco jiní ho vnímají jako pouhý proces obsahující tři hlavní části: vražda, vyšetřování, odhalení. Historie detektivky se zabývá zejména Edgarem Allanem Poem jako zakladatele toho žánru díky jeho povídce *Vraždy v ulici Morgue* (1841), ve které představil fiktivního vyšetřovatele C. Augustua Dupina, a která patří mezi první detektivní příběhy vůbec.

Pojem americká „drsná škola“ může být označen jako sub-žánr detektivky, jehož vznik se datuje do dvacátých až třicátých let dvacátého století. Ve srovnání s klasickými detektivními příběhy se značně změnilo prostředí a dokonce i samotné postavy. Velkoměsto v dřívějších detektivkách bylo vnímáno jako bezpečné a pořádné místo, s příchodem americké drsné školy bylo ale nahrazeno druhem města, kde vládne především korupce a násilí. Dokonce i samotný vyšetřovatel, v tomto případě tzv. soukromé očko, je ovlivněn vznikem americké drsné školy, jelikož již není tím typem detektiva, který využívá tzv. „šedou kůru mozkovou“, a na kterého byli čtenáři zvyklí, nýbrž k vyřešení všech případů využívá násilí a

chaos. Nejvýznamnější představitelé tohoto žánru jsou již výše zmínění Dashiell Hammett, jenž je považován za „otce“ americké drsné školy a Raymond Chandler, který díky své tvorbě posunul tento žánr na vyšší úroveň. Jsou také představeni ostatní spisovatelé americké drsné školy, kteří rozhodně mají zásluhu na tom, jak populární a oblíbené jsou romány drsné školy dnes. I když se může zdát, že všichni tito spisovatelé mají stejné prostředí a stejného hlavního hrdinu, není to pravda. Ne všichni se řídili stylem Dashiella Hammetta či Raymonda Chandlera, např. Mickey Spilane vytvořil detektiva Mika Hammera, jednoho z nejbrutálnějších a nejagresivnějších vyšetřovatelů té doby či W. R. Burnett, který, dá se říci, se naprosto oprostil od pravidel drsné školy, jelikož vytvořil spíše gangsterský než detektivní příběh.

Srovnání detektivních příběhů z drsné školy a klasické detektivky přineslo řadu zajímavých rozdílů, které s sebou drsná škola přinesla. Kromě kompletní změny prostředí a chování postav se tento žánr může dále pyšnit naprostou nepředvídatostí. Detektiv je najat k vyřešení zpočátku snadného a obvyklého problému, který ve většině případů nemá s vraždou nic společného, nicméně v průběhu vyšetřování naráží na čím dál tím komplikovanější záhady včetně několika vražd a pravá tvář jeho mise je odhalena až později. Také samotní kriminálníci hrají v románech drsné školy jinou roli, než na kterou byli čtenáři zvyklí. Většinou mají k samotnému vyšetřovateli velmi blízko a „hrají“ si na jeho přítele, navíc zatímco v klasických detektivkách se většinou vyskytují v podobě jedince, v tomto případě jsou spojeni s rozsáhlou kriminální organizací.

Poslední kapitola teoretické části se podrobně věnuje tvorbě a stylu dvou nejvýznamnějších představitelů americké drsné školy: Dashiellu Hammettovi a Raymondu Chandlerovi. I přesto, že oba spisovatelé patří do stejného žánru literatury, jejich styl psaní je velmi odlišný. Dashiellu Hammettovi při jeho tvorbě významně pomohla zkušenost s kriminálníky v době kdy pracoval u Pinkertonovy agentury. Navíc jeho příběhy byly velice rozdílné a pokaždé měly jinou zápletku či lépe řečeno jiný vzor, na druhou stranu romány Raymonda Chandlera byly vesměs vypracovány podle podobné předlohy. Chandler dále neměl s kriminálníky či policejními metodami absolutně žádnou zkušenost a vše co popsal ve svých příbězích, získal pozorováním dění kolem sebe ve skutečném životě. Co se týče stylu psaní, kritici tvrdí, že především Chandlerovo užití metafor je to, co napomáhá čtenářům v jejich představivosti a tím pádem získu lepšího zážitku ze čtení.

Praktická část začíná analýzou města v románech drsné školy a jeho tzv. nereálností. Jak již bylo řečeno, město je zde vyobrazeno jako temné, záhadné a prohnité místo, kde vládne chaos, korupce a násilí. Jedna vlastnost tohoto typu města je ale mnohem výraznější

než ostatní, a to je již zmíněná nereálnost či lépe řečeno předstírání. Kromě onoho násilí a korupce, i tato vlastnost musí být považována za typickou pro romány drsné školy. Předstírání se ale nemusí týkat jen samotného města, ale i jeho obyvatel. K tomuto typu chování výrazně přispěl filmový průmysl jménem Hollywood, který ovlivnil myšlení lidí a vyvolal v nich chtíč být slavným, jinými slovy, být někým jiným.

Při popisování architektury města, především residence bohatých lidí, Hammett i Chandler používali spíše cynický či sarkastický tón, jelikož vlastnosti jako nereálnost či předstírání vládly právě v těchto kruzích. V jejich románech byli bohatí pokaždé zachyceni jako ti, kteří velice rádi předstírají, že jsou někým jiným a hlavně, že žijí v přepychovém sídle. Za pomoci krátkých ukázek z děl obou autorů jsem dokázal, že v jejich domech se vyskytuje mnoho věcí, které jsou podvrh, a které mají sloužit pouze jako matoucí obraz bohatství. Takovým případem je např. falešný krb v díle *Sestřička* (1949) od Raymonda Chandlera či samotný klub gangstera Eddiho Marse v díle *Hluboký Spánek* (1939), který měl působit jako taneční sál, jeho pravá tvář je ale úplně jiná. Také Dashiell Hammett využíval tuto vlastnost ve svých dílech, *Maltézský sokol* (1930) zachycuje stejnojmennou sošku, která je později odhalena jako podvrh. Je jasné, že takové zobrazení majetku bohatých slouží hlavně jako kritika nakládání s penězi a zároveň také extravagantního stylu života. Netýká se to ale jen architektury města, ale i lidí samotných. Vynikajícím příkladem je žena jménem Brigid O`Shaughnessy, která se objevuje v díle *Maltézský sokol*, a která lže od začátku knihy až do konce.

Následující kapitola zachycuje města, které jsou typické jak pro Chandlera, tak i pro Hammetta. V Chandlerově případě je to druhé největší město USA zvané Los Angeles. Jeho město je plné různorodostí, v jedné knize dokáže perfektně zachytit takové odlišnosti, jako jsou moře a poušť. I přesto, že Los Angeles je typické město drsné školy, tudíž temné a prohnilé, ukázkou výletu Philipa Marlowa z Chandlerova díla *Sbohem bud', láska má*, jsem ukázal, že i přes tento fakt, Chandler dokáže přejít z ponuré atmosféry do místa, kde vládne romantika a klid. Další aspekt jeho města jsou budovy postavené nad Los Angeles, které patří pochopitelně bohatým, jako je např. rodina Generála Sternwooda v díle *Hluboký spánek* a důvody proč tam žijí, jsou ty, že chtějí být v bezpečí a nechtějí bydlet na místě, kde bydlí obyčejní lidé. Několika ukázkami z Chandlerových děl jsem také dokázal, že se v nich nachází i hluboká symbolika. Perfektním příkladem je skleník Generala Sternwooda, který je plný orchidejí, i přesto, že orchideje jsou obecně krásné, v tomto případě bohužel slouží jako symbol neslušného chování a zároveň také jako již zmíněné předstírání. Avšak nejviditelnějším symbolem v jeho románech je počasí, které odráží jak náladu obyvatel města,

tak také to co se zrovna v daný moment děje, čím hlubší a komplikovanější se Marlowovo vyšetřování zdá, tím horší je počasí.

V případě Dashiella Hammetta je klíčové město San Francisco, které mu posloužilo jako místo, kam mohl situovat své romány. Nicméně ne všechny jeho příběhy se odehrávají v San Franciscu, některé probíhají v tzv. fiktivně vytvořeném městě, které ale nápadně připomíná právě San Francisco, tudíž je jasné, že toto město Hammettovi sloužilo i jako předloha pro jiná města. Mezi nejvýraznější vlastnosti Hammettova San Franciscu patří jednoznačně neustálá mlha, která se vyskytuje ve většině jeho příběhů. Pokud by byl vyžadován rozdíl mezi San Franciscem a Los Angeles v románech drsné školy, je to jednoznačně způsob vnímání těchto dvou měst skrze jednotlivé detektivy. Zatímco Philip Marlowe působí velmi rezignovaně a především smířeně se situací v jeho zkorumpovaném a prohnilém městě, Sam Spade město vnímá jako místo, ve kterém nehodlá připustit jakékoliv nepokoje, a kterému je naprosto oddaný. Podle kritiků Hammett nebyl tak talentovaný ve vyobrazení města jako Chandler a spíše se soustředil na jeho atmosféru, nicméně i on občas využíval ve svých dílech symboliku. Nejjasnějším případem je město, příhodně nazýváno „Poisonville“ (*poison* je anglický výraz pro jed). Tento typ města v díle *Rudá zeň* (1929) „nakazí“ svou korupcí a kriminálními úmysly všechny své obyvatelé a Hammett ho vyobrazuje jako společnost, která za pomoci korupce a peněz řeší všechny své problémy. Druhým příkladem je již zmíněná mlha prostupující celým San Franciscem, která především odráží pesimistickou náladu detektiva a také „zahaluje“ mysl, přičemž má onen detektiv následně značné problémy odhalit motiv či samotného vraha.

Poslední dvě kapitoly se věnují vyšší společnosti a obyvatel jak San Franciscu, tak Los Angeles, jelikož město by nemělo být vnímáno jen jako místo, ale i jako společnost. Vyšší společnost je ve většině případů vyobrazena v negativním slova smyslu, Chandler i Hammett používají spíše cynický tón, díky kterému kritizují jak život bohatých lidí, tak jejich přepychová sídla, plná zbytečností a padělků. Oba autoři se snažili vylíčit vyšší společnost takový způsobem, aby co nejvíce zachytili vyšší společnost, jaká opravdu byla v 30. a 40. letech. Obyvatelé měst jsem rozdělil na dvě skupiny, které je nejvíce vystihují v románech drsné školy, a to tzv. padouši a outsideři. Do skupiny padouchů patří jednoznačně policisté, především díky své zkorumpovanosti, nicméně krátkou ukázkou z díla *Hluboký spánek* jsem prokázal, že ne všichni policisté jsou spokojeni se svými metodami. Druhým členem této skupiny je tzv. *femme fatale*, druh ženy, která díky svému šarmu a svádění dokáže dostat jakéhokoli muže do problému. Své místo ve skupině outsiderů si jednoznačně zaslouží homosexuálové a černoši. Oba tyto druhy lidí mají jednu společnou vlastnost, a to je jejich

odmítání či nepřijetí do společnosti a jsou vyobrazeni velmi negativně ve většině Hammettových a Chandlerových románech. V díle *Sbohem bud', láska má* jsou černoši dokonce popisováni anglickým zájmenem „it“, což je jednoznačně jeden z nejošklivějších a nejurážlivějších popisů těchto lidí. Podstatným důvodem rozdělení všech těchto obyvatel na dvě skupiny je také to, že obyvatelé měst je velmi těžké vnímat v těchto románech jako jedince, jelikož jsou vnímáni spíše jako skupiny.

I přes fakt, že město v románech americké drsné školy je temné, záhadné a především je to místo kde vládne korupce a násilí, je to jeden z nejdůležitějších elementů, na který se autoři soustředili při tvorbě příběhů z tohoto prostředí. Hammett a Chandler také perfektně využili symboliku skrytou ve svých městech, pomocí které dodali svým příběhům hlubší význam. Město je zde dokonce tak významný aspekt, že díky němu a také díky lidem situovaným do tohoto místa se americká drsná škola stala tak populární. Z oblasti lidí je to především nový typ soukromého vyšetřovatele, který sám používá násilí k vyřešení případů.

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