



**UiT** The Arctic University of Norway

Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education

**Expressions of Mood in Cinematic Adaptations of Patricia Highsmith's novels *The Price of Salt* and *The Talented Mr. Ripley***

Maria Jakobsen

Master's thesis in English Literature ENG-3992 September 2021



## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Justin Parks, for constructive feedback during my thesis writing. My gratitude also goes to the Department of Language and Culture, for allowing me to further explore my childhood passion for stories and the inspiring world of English literature. I am very glad to have met so many fun and inspiring people at the Department throughout my many years as a student there. I would especially like to thank my family for their support while I have been writing this thesis.

## **Abstract**

The thesis sets out to explore the ways that mood is adapted from Highsmith's novels *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1955) and *The Price of Salt* (1952) to Anthony Minghella's *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1999) and Todd Haynes's *Carol* (2015), respectively. The aim is to show the diverging ways in which the novels and the films express the quintessential Highsmith story through mood, and to show how these diverging forms of representation affect the overall experience of the stories. The discussion on the relationship between novels and their film adaptations reveals a traditionally ingrained expectation that film adaptations must fulfill a certain degree of fidelity to the novel. This view holds that film adaptation, as an interpreter, is in a form of artistic commitment to literature as the original source. The main goal of the film is then to pass on the literary work into new artistic territory while preserving the core idea and 'essence' of the original work. The thesis aims to shift the course of the discussion of adaptation away from the criterion of fidelity toward a discussion of the ways that these two art forms may in fact complement each other by being a part of a dialogical process between a representation and its source material. I argue in my thesis that the concept of mood, as a technique in literature and stylistic device in cinema, is essential in conveying the feeling of a distinct literary and cinematic world in Highsmith's stories. Secondly, I argue that the aesthetic dimension of the films emphasizes an expression of moods through which the characters and audience can intuitively navigate the films' meaning and emotional communication.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Adaptation Theory and The Notion of Mood.....	10
1.1 Introduction.....	10
1.2 Robert Stam and Adaptation Criticism.....	10
1.3 Linda Hutcheon and Adaptation as Product and Process.....	15
1.4 Mary Snyder’s Methods for Adaptation Analysis.....	19
1.5 Robert Sinnerbrink and The Aesthetics of Mood in Cinema.....	20
1.6 Carl Plantinga and The Notion of Affect in Cinema.....	21
Chapter 2: Translations of Mood from <i>The Price of Salt</i> to <i>Carol</i> .....	24
2.1 Introduction.....	24
2.2 Expressions of Mood in <i>The Price of Salt</i> .....	26
2.3 Anxiety.....	26
2.4 Encounters between Carol and Therese.....	31
2.5 Journeying.....	33
2.6 Patriarchal Society.....	35
2.7 Mother-Daughter Relationship.....	35
2.8 Expressions of Mood in <i>Carol</i> .....	36
2.9 Episodic Moods.....	36
2.10 Disclosive Moods.....	40
2.11 Transitional Moods.....	47
2.12 Comparative Analysis.....	50
Chapter 3: Translations of Mood from novel til film: <i>The Talented Mr. Ripley</i> .....	52
3.1 Introduction.....	52
3.2 Expressions of Mood in Highsmith’s <i>Ripley</i> .....	53
3.3 The Settings of New York and Italy.....	53
3.4 The Relationship between Ripley and Dickie.....	55
3.5 Freddie Miles.....	59

3.6 Expressions of Mood in Minghella's <i>Ripley</i> .....	61
3.7 Music.....	61
3.8 The Settings of New York and Italy.....	63
3.9 The Characters of Ripley and Dickie.....	65
3.10 Freddie Miles.....	67
3.11 Peter Smith-Kingsley and Silvana.....	70
3.12 The Ending.....	72
3.13 Comparative Analysis.....	73
Conclusion.....	77
Works Cited.....	80

## Introduction

The discussion on the relationship between novels and their film adaptations reveals a traditionally ingrained expectation that film adaptations must fulfill a certain degree of fidelity to the novels. This view holds that film adaptation, as an interpreter, is in a form of artistic commitment to literature as the original source. The main goal of the film is then to transfer the literary work into new artistic territory while preserving the core idea and ‘essence’ of the original work. If the film fails to adequately translate the novel according to the criterion of fidelity, it is seen to disrupt the original idea suggested by the novel. This view assumes a hierarchical structure between literature and film, and takes the assumption that literature is a higher art form than film due to its historical seniority. The assumption is that the adapted source is in eternal ownership of the core idea it proposes, which entails a simultaneous rejection of the idea that film adaptation is an independent artistic process in which change is a necessary condition. This thesis aims to shift the course of the discussion of adaptation away from the criterion of fidelity toward a discussion of the ways that these two art forms may in fact complement each other by being part of a dialogical process that develops naturally between a representation and its source material.

I have chosen to examine two Patricia Highsmith novels: *The Price of Salt* (1952) and *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1955), and their subsequent adaptations into Todd Haynes’s *Carol* (2015) and Anthony Minghella’s *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1999). Specifically, I will examine the way mood is translated from the novels to the films. The mood of a work can be described as a distinct feeling or atmosphere which frames the narrative emotionally. Mood is often connected to genres that represent distinct worlds that tend to elicit specific feelings and themes. Examples are thrillers, crime, horrors, romance, and tragedies. Highsmith’s novels are known for their moods of suspense, tension, and thrill. Characteristically, there is often a sense of unease amid any seemingly blissful moment in her novels, and things never remain stable; there is always a factor at play that disrupts the apparent order of things. The themes of her stories include murder, obsession, duality, performativity, sexuality, and alienation. Travel is another significant theme, and her novels often examine the simultaneous danger and appeal of exotic new places and strangers. Her characters are often thieves, outsiders, psychopaths, and murderers, but they are also charming and charismatic. In this way, the settings and characters

of her novels represent a sense of duality which keeps readers and audiences in a thrilling state of suspense; we know that if there is good, there is bad, if there is love, there is hate, and if there is beauty, tranquillity, and bliss, there is also disgust, disintegration, and chaos. As an exceptional writer of crime fiction, psychological thrillers, and romance, Highsmith creates a distinct feeling and mood in her stories that continue to inspire a growing number of adaptations of her novels. Mood is an essential part of her stories and permeates the works I am analysing in my thesis.

*Ripley* was adapted by Minghella in 1999. Minghella's extensive filmography reveals a close acquaintanceship with the process of adaptation; his list includes the award-winning adaptations *The English Patient* (1996), *Cold Mountain* (2003), *The Reader* (2008), and the TV series *Inspector Morse* (1990). In his adaptation of *Ripley*, Minghella has changed the plot structure significantly in order to add a greater sense of thrill to the story. Minghella has claimed that the novel's plot is far from being as gripping and engaging as the main character: "Tom Ripley is a fascinating, complex, Camus-like character. But what I didn't respond to in the novel is its seeming lack of dramatic structure" (*Interviews* 76). As a result, Minghella has modified the story by changing existing characters and adding new ones, as well as adding new scenes that introduce new thrilling twists and turns in the overall narrative. Minghella's *Ripley* has often been compared to its French precursor *Plein Soleil/Purple Noon* (René Clément 1960), a film known for its visual aesthetics, expressed through its setting as well as the actors and characters. Likewise, Minghella's version offers a visually stunning representation of characters, and of 1950s Italy. Unsurprisingly, the cinematography of the film was inspired by classic films and photos of 1950s Italy, inspiring associations of holiday, freedom, romance, and escapism. The visual aesthetics of the film has two important purposes. Firstly, it attracts us to the characters and their way of life. The warm and clear colours of the setting, together with the perfectly matched colours in clothing and in makeup, make the characters fit perfectly in each and every context in which they appear. We are drawn to the blond and suntanned characters that are bathing, enjoying drinks or strolling along the beach and cobbled streets of the Italian village. As audience members, we are placed in Ripley's shoes and can clearly emphasize with his wish to adopt Dickie's lifestyle. However, as in *Plein Soleil*, the attention to the visual beauty of landscape and characters in *Ripley* functions as a way to mask the underlying psychological games of the characters. Whereas characters may seem to fit perfectly



into their fantastic lives, the threat of disintegration looms beneath the surface. Secondly, the aesthetics serves as a way for us as audiences to visually recognize Ripley's psychological transformation. From being a character who initially stands out from the rest of the crowd, Ripley transfigures into a centre point of attention, an eerie physical imitation of Dickie. Whereas Ripley initially is clearly a tourist in Italy, an outsider who has not been near a beach for years, his looks develop to become increasingly similar to Dickie's. In fact, the more obsessed and dangerous he becomes, the less he stands out from the crowd visually.

Clement's portrayal of Ripley in *Plein Soleil* is that of a cold and calculating character, in accordance with Highsmith's own version of the character. Minghella, however, has chosen to explore the theme of moral conscience in *Ripley*, digging further into the main character's moral foundations. Unlike Highsmith's portrayal of a primarily cold and calculating Ripley, Minghella portrays Ripley as a murderer with a guilty conscience: "I was charmed by the idea of a central character who could commit murder and get away with it. It's not that I enjoy the amorality of that. I wanted to say that getting away with it is his punishment" (*Interviews* 76). Minghella adds the element of tragedy to the tale, emphasizing the devastating consequences of Ripley's actions on his soul: "I have this notion of it being a tragedy, purgatorial and about descent. We unravel this person, I hope with a certain amount of compassion, but it's a bruising event" (*Interviews* 77) The bruising unravelment and moral fall of Ripley makes the character more humane than in Highsmith's novel. In contrast to the novel, the audience gains insight into Ripley's psychological makeup and guilty conscience. In the novel, Ripley's defining character trait, along with his talent for imitation, is his unaffectedness. In the film, however, Ripley is deeply affected by the irrevocable consequences of his actions. Not only does he experience a strong sense of guilt, he also realizes that his actions in fact further isolate him, rather than liberate him. Significantly, the changes made to Ripley's character, as well as alterations made to the plot, create an overall different mood in the film from the mood in the novel.

The relationship between polished surfaces and the characters' hidden desires is also explored in director Todd Haynes's adaptation of *The Price of Salt*. Haynes is perhaps most famous for his films *Far From Heaven* (2002) and *I'm not there* (2007), as well as the TV series *Mildred Pierce* (2011), an adaptation of the book *Mildred Pierce* (1941) by James M. Cain, and

*Wonderstruck* (2017), an adaptation of Brian Selznick's novel *Wonderstruck* (2011). Haynes is connected to the New Queer Cinema movement and explores themes of queer culture, homosexuality, eroticism, identity, and alienation. *Carol* (2015) is the director's first film adaptation and is considered by many "the best Patricia Highsmith adaptation to date" (Patterson). A characteristic of Haynes's filmography and artistic style is his attention to expressions of non-verbal communication by the use of visual elements: "The mark of Haynes's movies is that they do what films are *supposed* to do: express complex thoughts with images, not words" (Watercutter). This idea emphasizes Haynes's ability to create mood by communicating non-verbally. Highsmith often portrays artful, cunning, and complex characters. There are loners, murderers, artists and con artists, psychopaths, stalkers, and playboys, all of which are deeply adept at playing dangerous games with other characters. *The Price of Salt* is in this respect an exception. Her main characters are lovers, not murderers. However, as film critic John Patterson comments of the novel: "There is no murder and none of its characters are tortured Dostoyevskian doppelgangers but there is plenty of the anxiety you find in her thrillers" (Patterson). The alterations made to both the characters and the plot of the adaptation make the film appear romanticized, and perhaps more easily consumable, yet anxiety still drives much of the underlying emotional current of the film. Both *Ripley* and *The Price of Salt/Carol* explore the themes of identity, existentialism, morality, sexuality, and forbidden desires are evident in both works. The main characters of both novels are outsiders living lives based on a false idea of themselves. The characters reach towards the unknown, and the unattainable, and towards relationships which, in separate ways, involve emotional struggles. Whereas Ripley in the end struggles to connect with Dickie, Therese and Carol struggle to be allowed to connect with each other.

Highsmith's novels have been adapted into over twenty films, and more adaptations are in the making, showing the cinematic appeal of Highsmith's stories. Examples in addition to the works analyzed in this thesis are Alfred Hitchcock's classic *Strangers on a Train* (1951), Hossein Amini's *The Two Faces of January* (2014), and Wim Wenders's *The American Friend* (1977), as well as the previously mentioned *Plein Soleil* and the upcoming adaptation of Highsmith's novel *Deep Water* (Adrian Lyne, 2022). Guy Lodge of *The Guardian* comments on the never-ending popularity of Highsmith adaptations: "Cinema's love affair with Highsmith's thrillers was immediate, and shows no signs of cooling off" (Lodge). Lodge further

comments on the visual quality of Highsmith's stories: "In cinema, even medium Highsmith has its appeal" (Lodge). Likewise, both good and bad reviews of Highsmith adaptations illuminate the cinematic appeal of the author's work. For instance, Donald Clarke of the *Irish Times* notes of Highsmith's world on film: "Cinema loves those pretty locations and lovely vintage 'things'" (Clarke). Hugh Montgomery of the BBC illuminates the audio and visual characteristics that make Minghella's adaptation of *Ripley* so aesthetically captivating: "there's the sheer luxuriant style of the thing: from the fractured, Saul Bass-indebted opening credits to the Riviera chic costuming and the spine-tingling soundtrack" (Montgomery). The importance of capturing the visual style of a Highsmith story is also manifest in reviews of films that are deemed failed adaptations. Roger Spottiswoode's adaptation *Ripley Under Ground* (2005) is repeatedly criticized for, amongst other things, its lack of "complexity and aesthetic beauty of the better adaptations" (Cwik). Likewise, Robert Sparr's *Once You Kiss A Stranger* (1969) has been criticized for being "as visually deft as a radio broadcast" (Cwik). The reviews shed light on the significance of the image as a way to develop a distinct Highsmith feeling, or mood, in the adaptations. Audiences are not only concerned with what kind of characters, plot, and themes are translated to the adaptations, but also how these characters, plots, and themes make them feel, and how these features are aesthetically expressed.

As many reviews show, audiences and critics expect a certain aesthetic expression and feeling in a Highsmith adaptation. This is an expression and a feeling which, along with the dark themes and narrative, creates a distinct cinematic Highsmith universe. The many Highsmith adaptations have inspired an increasing number of reviews debating which versions of Highsmith's stories are the best: the book or the novel? Likewise, many reviews compare the many adapted versions of the same novel in order to examine which adaptations can best translate and convey the source material. Generally, many Highsmith fans are interested in whether the story 'survived' or 'made it' to the film version. The question is whether the adaptations achieve the same feeling and mood that a quintessential Highsmith novel embodies. Of course, not all cinematic adaptations can translate and emit that characteristic Highsmith feeling satisfactorily in cinema. A relevant question in this regard is whether an adaptation of Highsmith is deemed bad by its failure to fully capture and adapt its source material, or whether it is deemed bad because it is simply a bad film. Assuming that audiences and readers of Highsmith are more than anything attempting to reconnect with a distinct mood or feeling they

have experienced in the novel when viewing its adaptation, the following question can be asked: when a Highsmith adaptation is deemed successful, does its success rely on its ability to truthfully translate the exact quintessential mood or feeling that the novel projects? Is it really the same feeling we are experiencing, or even looking for? Or does the adaptation, through the stylistic devices of film, capture something else, something that we as audiences nonetheless appreciate and wish to associate with Highsmith?

The films analyzed in this thesis have repeatedly been reviewed as successful adaptations. The reason for this, I would argue, is not solely their ability to truthfully translate defining features of the novels, such as the style of characters, the setting, or the development of plot. Rather, their success lies in the way they collect a distinct mood from the novels and emphasize and transform this mood artistically through film. Highsmith's novels are filled with tension, desire and suspense, and the audiovisual format of film function exceptionally well for the purposes of communicating the characters' conflicting emotions, hidden desires and repressed feelings. The adaptations communicate moods through visual landscape, soundscape, as well as the appearances and gestures of the characters. These are stylistic devices which are unique to film, and which allow for a different experience of the story as represented in the novels.

Mood is examined here as the atmosphere and feeling of a story that are defined by the way the various elements of the story are put together, such as the narrative, the theme, the characters, and the setting. Importantly, mood is expressed differently through novels and films. In literature, mood is created by a combination of various literary devices such as diction, tone, narrative style, characters, setting, plot, and theme. These features express atmosphere and mood in film as well. Unique to film, however, are the additional possibilities of music, sound, performance, color, light, camera angles, frames, and props. Film has the potential to develop mood through non-verbal strategies that express and emphasize thematic issues, characters' relationships, and interior worlds. The expressive use of the image can convey mood through, for instance, strategic placement of objects, the gestures and facial expressions of the actors, and a focus on the composition of the visual surroundings. Likewise, the use of sound, musical score, color palette, and camera angles are essential in the expression of mood and the atmosphere which distinguishes one cinematic world from another. The immediate impact of the audiovisual elements of film is a significant difference from the novel, in which the

development of mood unfolds more slowly. Film theorist Robert Stam notes how this immediate impact comes into play in the audiovisual medium of film:

In the sound film, we do not only hear the words, with their accent and intonation, but we also witness the facial or corporeal expression that accompanies the words – the bodily posture of arrogance or resignation, the sceptically raised eyebrows, the look of distrust, the ironic glances – that modify the ostensible meaning. (19)

For my analysis of mood in film, I will be applying philosopher Robert Sinnerbrink's notion of mood as a tool for revealing a "fictional cinematic world" (157), while also playing a vital role in "the composition, emotional dynamics and dramatic tempo of narrative film" (157). The ambiguous concept of mood has caused a reluctance to acknowledge the term as a valuable analytical tool in film theory. In his definition of mood, Sinnerbrink states that moods "are not merely diffuse and variable subjective states, something vague 'within us' with only an arbitrary relationship to the world" (154). Drawing on the notion of *Stimmung*, which Sinnerbrink defines as "the power of the image to evoke atmosphere or mood, whether through action, gesture or facial expressiveness" (150), Sinnerbrink contends that cinema evokes mood through the non-verbal expressive nature of the visual image. There are multiple representational possibilities of mood within the medium of film which are not found in literature. Likewise, the representational strategies unique to literature, such as lengthy descriptions of characters' thoughts, are impossible to unite with the time-pressured medium of film. This is evident in the way characters are translated. Stam claims that "Although filmic characters in adaptations lose some of the slowly evolving textured verbal complexity developed in a novel, they also gain an automatic 'thickness' on the screen through bodily presence, posture, dress and facial expression" (22). Although there are possibilities within film for a translation of the narrative voice found in literature, such a representation in film does little to celebrate the purposes and possibilities of the film medium.

For my methodological framework, I have chosen to apply two of Mary Snyder's methods for adaptation analysis from novel to film: The Infidelity/Fidelity Analysis and The Specificity Analysis. The Infidelity/Fidelity Analysis aims to compare similarities between the novel and the film. Snyder underlines that in contrast to the traditional aim of fidelity analysis, the goal with this analysis is not to judge the degree to which the adaptation matches up in truthfulness to its source material. Rather, the point is to examine how the changes that were made contribute

in making the film unique and original in its representation of the story, and to find how the adaptation can contribute in terms of conveying the story. The Specificity Analysis sheds light on the ways in which specific stylistic devices unique to the novel and the film respectively are applied in order to tell the story. Examples of such techniques in film are the use of close-ups, camera angles, music, speed, sounds, and color. For novels, such techniques may be the use of written letters, notes, diaries, and descriptions of characters' thoughts. For the purposes of my thesis, the aim of this analysis is to find out which techniques were applied in the novel and the film respectively to bring out a specific kind of mood characteristic of Highsmith. This will then be connected to the overall purpose of the thesis, which is to find how the various expressions of mood in the novel and the film affect our overall sense of the stories.

In her example analysis, Snyder includes some relevant questions that can be applied as helpful tools in any adaptation analysis. I will therefore incorporate these into my own analysis by connecting these questions to the way mood is adapted into film. In connection with fidelity analysis, Snyder poses the following questions: How does a director's style compare and contrast with the author's style? More specifically, how and why does a director create a specific effect in the film? How does a specific style affect the feel of the movie? Importantly, does it challenge the feel of the book? For a specificity analysis, Snyder proposes to examine the effect of the different techniques applied to bring out setting. In her example analysis, Snyder proposes to take a closer look at why the setting of a film may have a more dominating presence than the setting of the novel.

Snyder's analytical method is fruitful for my analysis for two main reasons. Firstly, her questions illuminate the wide variety of possibilities within the process of film adaptation. In this way, Snyder's method supports the idea that the goal of film adaptation is not to merely copy its source inspiration, but to explore, transform, and develop the story through new and other methods of expression. The process of adaptation is a multifaceted process, one which gains from applying a whole array of ways of approaching its source of inspiration. By applying Snyder's questions to my analysis, the thesis will shed light on the specific ways the films analysed approach their source inspirations, the novels. Secondly, her method makes room for a view that allows a balanced and dialogical relationship between the novels and the films, in which their diverging representations may inspire and enlighten each other.

Furthermore, my methodological framework includes an examination of Sinnerbrink's notion of three distinct set of moods that often unfold in cinema. These are: episodic moods, transitional moods, and disclosive moods. Episodic moods are sequences of moods that are repeated through either music, gestures, or actions to reinforce certain moods of the film. Transitional mood function as an interruption in the narrative and as a necessary pause to underscore a transition in the narrative, or a transition from one mood sequence to another. Finally, Sinnerbrink discusses disclosive moods, which pervade the cinematic world. He defines disclosive mood as the prevailing and 'grounding' mood of the film "which attunes us to the various tonal qualities of the narrative, its characters, its generic aspects, and so on" (155). Directors often display and emphasize these moods in the beginning of films to illustrate the kind of cinematic world the characters inhabit.

Finally, in my methodology I have also chosen to include aspects of Stam's suggestion for a comparative narratology of adaptation. According to Stam, "The important issue for adaptation studies is what principle guides the processes of selection or 'triage' when one is adapting a novel? What is the 'drift' of these changes and alterations? What principles orient the choices?" (34). For my analysis I will examine the choices behind changes, eliminations and additions of characters and events which affect the expressions of mood.

In the first chapter, I will outline adaptation theory and the concept of mood. This chapter aims to provide insight into the theoretical framework behind the process of adaptation from novel to film, as well as an overview of the concept of mood. In the second chapter, I begin my adaptation analysis by providing a comparative analysis of the ways that mood is established in *The Price of Salt* and its cinematic adaptation, *Carol*. The adaptation analysis continues in the third chapter, in which I will compare the ways that mood is established in Highsmith's *Ripley* and in its cinematic adaptation, with a specific focus on the moods of tension and suspense. The concluding chapter will discuss the effect of the different ways that mood is established in the two adaptations of Highsmith's works.

# **Chapter 1: Adaptation Theory and The Notion of Mood**

## **1.1 Introduction**

The thesis aims to turn the discussion of film adaptation away from the idea of film as a copy of the novel, to a discussion of the ways that film can supplement the novel. Therefore, this chapter will represent the views of adaptation criticism, as well as proposals for ways of viewing film adaptation as an equivalent art form to the novel. The thesis also aims to show how film's ability to establish mood through audiovisual devices serves as a way to supplement the novel. The chapter will therefore also represent a part of the discussion of the effect of mood in film.

## **1.1 Robert Stam and Adaptation Criticism**

A widely discussed subject in adaptation theory, specifically regarding literature-to-film reworkings, is the very definition of adaptation. A question frequently asked is: what is the aim of adaptation? As mentioned in the introduction, adaptation criticism maintains that the primary goal of the adaptation is to remain as faithful as possible to the novel in the translation of the story into a new format. From this point of view, the film translation must include a certain degree of distinctive and recognizable characteristics from the novel to be measured as an adequate adaptation. However, the methodological framework for a comparative analysis based on the criterion of faithfulness, or, fidelity, is tricky to apply. The reason for this is the problematic issue of pinning down exactly what a "faithful" adaptation should entail. A question that arises in this regard is therefore: To what degree should a film adaptation be faithful to its source novel in order to be deemed as successful, according to adaptation criticism? Furthermore: if such a defined degree of fidelity exists, is it transferable as a measurable device that can be categorically applied to all film adaptations?

The expectation of a certain degree of faithfulness in film adaptation quickly overlooks and undermines the creative quality of cinema. As an avid proponent of the fidelity criteria, film theorist Robert Stam points out the inherent vagueness of the concept of being "faithful" in relation to the adaptation process:

The question of fidelity also ignores the wider question of fidelity to what? Is the filmmaker to be faithful to the plot in its every detail? That might mean a thirty-hour



version of *War and Peace*. Should one be faithful to the physical descriptions of characters? What if that is then a mediocre actor? Or is one to be faithful to the author's intentions? But what might they be, and how are they to be determined? (15)

Stam claims that the criterion demanding faithfulness to the novel is specifically pointed towards reworkings into film: "A fundamental unfairness plagues 'fidelity' discourse...It is adaptation in the cinema, particularly of novels, that has been especially castigated and held to an absurdly rigorous standard of 'fidelity'" (15). The expectations of film adaptations to meticulously follow the rules of the fidelity criteria reflect a resistant attitude towards the overall idea of the translation of novels into films.

This is evident in the language applied by opponents of the fidelity criterion to describe the transition from novel to film. In his article "The Theory and Practice of Adaptation" (2005), Stam lists moralistic terms such as infidelity, betrayal, violation, deformation, and vulgarization (15), all of which are indicative of the reader's personal investment and sense of ownership over the novel and the process of its adaptation. Although these may be simplistic and unfair descriptions that undermine the creative aspect of filmmaking, they also reflect readers' emotional involvement in what may be considered a beloved novel and the wish to protect their own ideas and images of the characters, the story, the setting, and other elements of the novel. Another reason for readers' wishes to protect the novel, Stam claims, is the fact that many film adaptations "*are* mediocre or misguided" (4). The knowledge of this possible outcome of the translation process creates a reluctance among readers in terms of viewing cinema as art. Unfortunately, there is truth to this observation. The power and demands of the film industry make this issue highly relevant, as many directors overrun vital aspects of the novel in the adaptation due to economic- or time-related motives. For instance, they may select actors that secure economic income to the film, but which fail to deliver a credible, in-depth performance.

Furthermore, Stam claims that the moralistic terms reflect a biased view on the relationship between literature and film, in which the process of adapting the novel to film causes a disintegration of the novel: "the standard rhetoric has often deployed an elegiac discourse of loss, lamenting what has been 'lost' in the transition from novel to film, while ignoring what has been 'gained'" (3). The focus on losses rather than gains in the adaptation process reflects the way that adaptation criticism perceives cinema as a non-artistic format unable to supplement

and develop the adapted source. Stam raises an important issue by claiming that this view assumes that there exists an inherent core, or “extractable essence” (15) in the novel, a central meaning or message that a film adaptation is expected to preserve. Expecting the film to only act as a re-presentation of the unchangeable root of the novel prevents the possibility and liberty of reinterpretation. This in turn affects the possibility of a dialogical or synergetic relationship between the two mediums. Considering the plethora of ways in which a work to be adapted may be interpreted, Stam shows that there is no such single and fixed ‘core’ and message of the novel (15). The many interpretations show how the novel’s central theme or idea is approachable from a variety of different socio-cultural perspectives and may be understood through different forms of expression. They can further develop and suggest new ways of interpreting traditionally ingrained ideas proposed by the work. Regardless of how and why the literary work is adapted, the adaptations reinforce the significance of the novel, by commenting on other ways of interpreting and expressing the major feelings and moods elicited in the novel. In turn, the novel reveals its manifold nature by its ability to lend itself to various expressions and interpretations. Criticism only arises once an adaptation is expected to somehow fulfill the fidelity criteria. This is why this way of analyzing an adaptation becomes judgmental and unfair.

Stam identifies several reasons for the prejudiced view of cinema as a medium for adaptation. Firstly, one of the reasons lies in the assumption that older art forms develop prestige over time and are therefore superior to the younger art form of film (4). Stam points to a difference in the cultural status of cinema as adaptation compared to the cultural status of other, similar forms of arts and performances as adaptations. For example, ballet, modern dance, theatre, and other stage performances often assume a higher status as adaptations than film. Stam notes: “In the theatre, conceptual reinterpretation and performative innovation...are seen as normal, even prized” (15). In fact, older art forms are often praised for their experimental and neoteric forms of adapting canonical works of literature, whose unfolding of plot, setting, characters, and narrative are so recognized throughout history that the works seem nearly unapproachable. New and modernized performative interpretations of literary canons are commended because they offer new insight into these works, through an emphasis on the affective experience projected by them. Often, these interpretations play with the emotional aspect of these works through, for

instance, the movement of dancers or the creation of a minimalistic setting on stage to evoke and display the mood of the work.

Cinema is based on a combination of three historically old art forms: photography, theatre, and music. It is strange, then, and unfounded, that film should receive such a low status as an art form, and to be devalued in terms of its ability to adapt a novel. In many respects, film resembles the novel more than many other artistic forms. Whereas the theatre, for instance, often applies dramatic techniques to magnify feelings and moods, film has the capacity to utilize subtle techniques to achieve the same feelings and moods. In this way, film resembles real-life scenarios to a higher degree.

Stam argues that another problematic issue of what he terms the “seniority bias” is the fact that cinematic adaptations that function as constructive and beneficial contributions to novels are not taken into consideration: “They denounce the Joseph Strick version of Joyce’s *Ulysses* but forget to laud Hitchcock’s innovative transmogrification of du Maurier’s story ‘The Birds,’” (4). This then leaves an unfair way of perceiving cinema in relation to literature. A second reason for the prejudiced view of film is based on what Stam terms ‘dichotomous’ thinking. This entails the underlying assumption of a rivalry between the novel and the film. The relationship between author and director is competitive, with the two pulling the story in opposite directions, rather than consisting of a dialogue in which the diverse interpretations are considered as mutually beneficial. Thirdly, Stam points to the historical prejudice against the visual arts, a prejudice he terms ‘iconophobia.’ This bias is based on the historical view of images as a threat to literature on account of their ability to trigger passions and present “delusional fiction” (Stam 5). The visual arts thereby function as a corruption of literature (Stam 5). From this perspective, applying visual image and sounds as ways to create an affective impact functions as a way in which the cinema lures the audience emotionally, and has given film an undeserved status as a “low” form of art. Related to iconophobia is logophilia, a fourth prejudiced view that regards the written word as a “privileged medium of communication” (Stam 6). A fifth preconceived idea about cinema is the critical view towards the involvement of the body, specifically, the viewer’s body and the performer’s body. In addition, the body of the film is made up of the movement of images and sound effects, which are more directly felt in the viewer’s body in contrast to literature. Cinema’s evocation of emotions through bodily

reactions is misjudged as a sneaky way of bringing out the emotional reactions of the audience. By way of its very form, cinema is judged as a superficial medium (Stam 7). A final prejudiced view of adaptation is what Stam terms “parasitism,” in which films are viewed as parasites entering the ‘body’ of the novel, stealing its materials. This view reinforces the idea that adaptations are entirely dependent on their source material to evolve and to become fruitful contributions to the novel, yet the demands of an adaptation’s success are unsound and unattainable: “A faithful film is seen as uncreative, but an “unfaithful” film is a shameful portrayal of the original” (Stam 8). The expectations of film adaptation to achieve a certain degree of fidelity whilst not ‘stealing’ form the novel, and simultaneously not being creative on its own terms, make the task of film adaptation near impossible. In this way, the prejudiced view of adaptation criticism functions as an obstruction towards a fruitful discussion of how the film supplements and evolves the novel.

One of the ways to change the discussion into a more productive direction which respects the creative aspect of the adaptation process is to explore the way communication is expressed in cinema. Stam emphasizes film’s capacity to explore the various dimensions of language by claiming:

the sound film is remarkably adept at the mise-en-scene of actual speech situations, at the visual and aural contextualization of speech. It can render those phenomena that lie on the border of the verbal and the non-verbal, the spoken and the non-spoken. (19)

Stam’s point offers a relevant direction towards a discussion of film adaptation as a complementary contribution to the novel. His point highlights how the technical devices of cinema can translate aspects of the novel in which the novel, through its techniques, is unable to project to the same effect. For instance, whereas Highsmith conveys characters’ emotional thoughts through descriptions and letters, the adaptations express these aspects differently, for example through the actors’ demeanour or through a setting that elicits a distinct mood that reflects the emotional status of characters’ interior worlds. In this way, the adaptation may act as a comment on the significance of the variety of ways to convey the underlying moods of relationships in the novel. Furthermore, by emphasizing these in-between phenomena of language, cinema not only comments on specific ideas suggested by the novel in question, but on the overall concept of language, and the ways that meaning and emotions are subconsciously revealed. Consequently, film strengthens the relevance of the novel. These phenomena of non-

verbal communication are a characteristic and intriguing aspect of the adaptations of Highsmith's novels, particularly the ways in which they achieve mood by accentuating characters' hidden desires, intentions, and insecurities.

To transform the conventional focus on fidelity in the discussion of adaptation, Stam proposes new ways of looking at the adaptation process:

Instead of denigrating terms for adaptation, such as "betrayal" and "infidelity", one might speak of a "Pygmalion" model, where the adaptation brings the novel "to life", or of a "ventriloqual" model, where the film "lends voice" to the mute characters of the novel, or of an "alchemical" model, where the adaptation turns verbal dross into filmic gold. (24)

By bringing 'life' and lending 'voice' to the story, these models reflect the performative and audiovisual aspects of film. The pygmalion and ventriloqual model entails a view on adaptation that divides between the idea of the novel as a 'static' representation of characters and events and the film as dynamic performance. From this point of view, an issue with adaptation criticism is the resistance towards the idea of physical movement and audio display of every aspect of the novel's story: its mood, characters, settings, and so on. There is a resistance towards the overall performative aspect of film and the way the performative aspect brings out feelings and mood, and, consequently, the way mood functions as a foundation for the telling of the story.

## **1.2 Linda Hutcheon and Adaptation as Product and Process**

Another paramount contribution to adaptation theory is Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* (1996). Hutcheon explores adaptation through a range of mediums such as film, video games, musical performances, and theme parks. In her work, Hutcheon examines adaptation through its status as both process and product. Mainly, Hutcheon argues that adaptation viewed as a product produces a formal definition: *an adaptation*, which identifies it as a product belonging to another, the adapted work. Adaptation as a process, however, allows for the consideration of the creative aspects of adaptation (15-16).

Furthermore, Hutcheon identifies a doubleness in the reception of film adaptations as products. On the one hand, fidelity criticism shows that there exists a discomfort in the adaptations of

novels to film. On the other hand, the growing number of adaptations into film shows simultaneous popularity and demand for film reinterpretations of novels. Hutcheon argues that the appeal of adaptations lies in their very nature of being adaptations. Although film adaptations are autonomous works and “aesthetic objects in their own right” (6), their increasing popularity suggests the idea of adaptations as a distinct genre, a view that unfortunately promotes the inferiority view of adaptations: “To deal with adaptations *as adaptations* is to think of them as...works...haunted at all times by their adapted texts” (6). Despite their popularity, film interpretations of novels are often considered to lack originality and are “put down as secondary, derivative” (2). As an example, Hutcheon comments on how Shakespeare’s play *Romeo and Juliet* gains acceptance in art forms considered to be superior to film, such as ballet and the opera, whereas Baz Luhrmann’s film version of the story, *William Shakespeare’s Romeo + Juliet* (1996), is criticized for its overall modern and updated film interpretation.

Hutcheon further claims that one obvious reason for the superior view of the source novel compared to its adaptation is “the (post-) Romantic valuing of the original creation and of the originating creative genius” (3-4). Described by Stam as the ‘seniority’ view, the idea of an ‘original’ source as a noble art connected to prestige, and the film as an uninventive and parasitical ‘copy,’ is a firmly ingrained belief within adaptation criticism. Hutcheon criticizes the assumption that the aim of adaptations is simply to reproduce the adapted text, and states that while adaptations do repeat, they do not replicate (7). Furthermore, Hutcheon calls attention to the longstanding history of adaptations and thereby acknowledges their status as a senior art form: “Shakespeare transferred his culture’s stories from page to stage and made them available to a whole new audience. Aeschylus and Racine and Goethe and da Ponte also retold familiar stories in new forms” (2). As a fundamental part of literary history, adaptations both reinforce and develop a story: “Adaptations are so much a part of Western culture that they appear to affirm Walter Benjamin’s insight that ‘storytelling is always the art of repeating stories’ (1992: 90)” (2). Benjamin’s quote highlights the repetition of stories as an art form and expresses the necessity of repetition for the development of storytelling. Furthermore, with references to T. S. Eliot and Northrop Frye, Hutcheon represents the idea that “art is derived from other art; stories are born of other stories” (2). From this point of view, Hutcheon repositions adaptation from the notion of being exploitative and parasitical into being a necessary and fundamental part of the developmental process of art. Furthermore, she parallels

the adaptation process to Aristotle's concept of *mimesis*, meaning imitation. Hutcheon states that the notion of imitation is rooted in humans' instinctive behavior and is linked to the development of our creative processes (20). As with *mimesis*, Hutcheon claims, the process of adaptation is one in which the creativity of the adapter is essential: "In both, the novelty is what one *does with* the other text" (20). Consequently, she further suggests that a bad adaptation is not bad because it fails in its attempt to be adequately faithful to the adapted source. Rather, it is bad because of the adapter's lack of creativity, and the subsequent lack of autonomy and originality in the adaptation.

Furthermore, Hutcheon draws attention to Virginia Woolf's quote concerning the film medium, in which Woolf acknowledges the advantages of cinema: "'cinema has within its grasp innumerable symbols for emotions that have so far failed to find expression' in words" (3). This is a significant point of view, as it deems film adaptations as valuable contributions to the novel. Film adaptations show that emotional experiences may be expressed and understood pre-verbally or non-verbally, and, as will be shown in my analysis, via the development of mood primarily. Moreover, Woolf's quote shows that film adaptations are not only valuable as another way of expressing emotions. They also point to the overall concept of emotional expressions and language as well. This is not to say that the novels adapted are unable to fully express the intended content. Rather, the point is that these novels include ideas and emotional experiences that influence and inspire their adaptations. The adaptations collect ideas suggested by the novel, and either enhance them or develop new ideas from them. The difference is one between telling a story and showing a story. Hutcheon states that although a shown story will never be able to capture "the verbal play of told poetry or the interlinking of description, narration, and explanation that is so easy for prose narrative to accomplish" (23), the advantages of showing a story are many:

The performance mode teaches us that language is not the only way to express meaning or to relate stories. Visual and gestural representations are rich in complex associations; music offers aural "equivalents" for characters' emotions, and, in turn, provokes affective responses in the audience; sound, in general, can enhance, reinforce, or even contradict the visual and verbal respects. (23)

Hutcheon shows that medium-specific devices of film adaptations are not only relevant as new and creative ways to generate alternative experiences of known stories. The audio-visual

qualities of film are also relevant as ways to capture and evoke aspects that are only insinuated through the textual experience of the novel. The result is an interpretation that preserves the story of the novel while recreating it at the same time. It is a representation of the same story, yet not entirely the same.

Furthermore, Hutcheon proposes viewing adaptations as transpositions, rather than copies or simply repetitions. Hutcheon proposes that this expanded view of adaptation allows for a variety of ways in which the view of adaptation may develop. For instance, identified as transpositions, adaptations may be a shift of medium, or genre, or narrative frame. They may also involve ontological shifts, exemplified by Hutcheon as shifts from the real to the imaginary. As transpositions, adaptation is a process that both preserves the story, and at the same time (re-)interprets and (re-)creates the story (8). Finally, Hutcheon suggests that depending on the adaptations' reception, adaptation is a form of extended intertextuality (8). This entails that our experience of the story in the adaptation is influenced by the way it has previously appeared to us. A film adaptation may be based on a novel, a theatre play, or a video game, or it might be based on a novel that has already been adapted into a musical or a cartoon. In the latter case, our experience of the adaptation will be influenced by the way the story has been reinterpreted and recreated previously through various mediums. An adaptation may also be based on another adaptation within the same medium. In this way, adaptation exists in an intertextual relationship between two or several representational interpretations and are, as such, affected by these. This continuous dialogical process between the same or various modes of representation shows that the adaptations shape the experience of each other. Whereas Alfred Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train* (1951) naturally affects our perception of Highsmith's novel, the novel may also develop in a second reading after the experience of the film. The many adaptations of Highsmith's novels show this intertextuality and dialogical relationship between a variety of adaptations. The dialogical relationship between novel and adaptation, or between adaptations of the same novel, functions in such a way that it develops the image of what is perceived as a quintessential "Highsmith-story". It alters the expectations of the contents, and, importantly, the feeling we get from a Highsmith story. The ways in which various modes of reinterpretation affect one another reveal the value of adaptation.



### **1.3 Mary Snyder's Methods for Adaptation Analysis**

In her work on adaptation analysis, Mary H. Snyder examines various ways to perform an unbiased analysis of adaptations from literature to film. Snyder claims that the problematic issue with the fidelity model of analysis is that it traditionally culminates in highly subjective conclusions (251). The focus is on whether the adaptation managed to fulfill a normative idea of the way in which the adaptation should unfold, according to the fidelity criterion. Snyder states that subjective evaluations of film adaptations “seem a staple of this discipline” (251) and generate “rather dull” (251) conclusions based on a lack of interest and exploration into the director’s choices to alter specific elements of the story. This lack of interest undermines the overall process behind the translation from novel to film. As a way to further and alter the discussion on fidelity analysis, Snyder proposes a new way of looking at this kind of analysis. Her proposal follows the traditional form of comparing similarities and differences between novel and film, yet she proposes to additionally examine why the similarities and differences are there in the first place. That is, why the director made specific choices in the adaptation process which led to an alteration from the novel. These are decisions related to the directors’ artistic vision, rather than choices based on aspects such as the limited time frame, the economic aspect of the project, and mass audience popularity and expectations. As mentioned in the introduction, this kind of analysis will be applied as a part of the methodology in the thesis, and is termed the Fidelity/Infidelity view. It aims to explain why the filmmaker chose to make the changes that were made, and generally “why the film was made the way it was, and why the filmmaker adapted the novel the way they did” (Snyder 251). Snyder underlines that, in contrast to the traditional aim of fidelity analysis, the goal in the updated version of the analysis is not to judge the degree to which the adaptation matches up in quality and truthfulness to its source material. The point is to find out how the changes that were made contribute to making the film unique and original in its representation of the story and to find out how the adaptation can contribute in terms of our understanding of the story. Snyder points out the importance of examining why the filmmaker has chosen to either include or exclude scenes from novel to film:

...fidelity/infidelity analysis can illuminate why certain scenes might have been used in the film, but weren't in the book, or why certain scenes were retained in the film and some almost “as is.” When an important scene in the book is dropped, it's valuable to consider, based on an understanding one has come to

about both the book and the film, what the reasoning might be behind losing the scene as well as why one might be added, or kept. (Snyder 251)

As mentioned in the introduction, Snyder also proposes Specificity Analysis, which aims to find which techniques were applied in the novel and the film respectively to bring out specific aspects of the story (251). It involves an exploration of the ways that similar or different techniques in each medium are applied to achieve the same effects or purposefully different effects. For the purposes of this thesis, this analysis is applied to examine the ways in which mood is achieved in each medium through medium-specific devices. In the following, the thesis will explore the concept of mood in cinema.

#### **1.4 Robert Sinnerbrink and The Aesthetics of Mood in Cinema**

According to Robert Sinnerbrink, mood is an “essential dimension of cinema” (148), as it discloses the fictional world of a film and evokes emotional responses in viewers. Sinnerbrink claims that mood determines “how the particular film-world is aesthetically revealed and how we are affectively attuned to that world” (155). As a stylistic device in cinema, mood is significant as an aesthetic and emotional guide towards the meaning and intent of the film. For instance, the aesthetic presentation of a scene can convey a sad mood with the intent of placing the viewer in a similarly sad mood. Sinnerbrink connects the notion of mood with the concept of *Stimmung*, a German term applied to describe the expressive aspects of the image in silent films of the 1920s (149). He defines *Stimmung* as “the power of the image to evoke atmosphere or mood, whether through action, gestures, or facial expressiveness” (150). However, although it forms an essential contribution to the affective experience of film, the notion of mood has been neglected in film theory. The reason for this, Sinnerbrink claims, is the ambiguous and abstract notion of the term. While Sinnerbrink values the significance of mood, he also acknowledges the complexity and difficulty in establishing an adequate definition of the term, claiming that moods “are not merely diffuse and variable subjective states, something vague ‘within us’ with only an arbitrary relationship to the world” (155). Instead, Sinnerbrink proposes that moods have a concrete goal within film, which is to disclose ‘cinematic worlds’:

Mood is one of those elements of cinema whose obviousness, like that of the everyday, is deeply mysterious. It is not simply a subjective experience or a private state of mind; it describes, rather, how a (fictional) world is expressed or disclosed via a shared affective attunement orienting the spectator within that world. (1)

In this way, mood is essential in its function as a guide towards the cinematic world we are experiencing, as well as the characters that inhabit this world. Therefore, Sinnerbrink states that the composition of the cinematic world is significant to our “aesthetic and emotional engagement” (149) with the film experience. The mood of the visual landscape, as well as the audio landscape, is significant as ways to help us obtain the characters’ perspective and the themes of the story.

Furthermore, Sinnerbrink suggests that our attention to the way the cinematic world is aesthetically expressed, as well as our affective response to that cinematic world, should precede our focus on narrative development, character, and action, in order to engage emotionally with the film. Moreover, he claims that the aesthetic effect of films depends on “the sensuous–affective background or encompassing ‘mood’ against which our complex flow of emotional responsiveness becomes manifest: the background against which we are able to recognize, align and ally ourselves with particular characters within specific narrative scenarios” (152). In this way, Sinnerbrink establishes mood as a technique to gain emotional insight into characters’ internal and emotional worlds. The ways these moods are displayed are therefore significant. Sinnerbrink identifies three kinds of moods displayed in film. One of these is episodic moods. These are moods that are repeated through either music, gestures, or actions to reinforce certain moods of the film. Another kind of mood is transitional mood, which functions as an interruption in the narrative and as a necessary pause to underscore a transition in the narrative. Finally, Sinnerbrink discusses disclosive moods, which pervade the cinematic world. He defines disclosive mood as the prevailing and ‘grounding’ mood of the film “which attunes us to the various tonal qualities of the narrative, its characters, its generic aspects, and so on” (155). Directors often emphasize these moods in the beginning of films to illustrate the kind of cinematic world the characters inhabit.

### **1.5 Carl Plantinga and the Notion of Affect in Cinema**

In *Moving Viewers: American Film and the Spectator’s Experience* (2009), Carl Plantinga discusses his theory on the ways that film, particularly American mainstream films, express and evoke affects and emotions. Plantinga argues that the representation of affects and emotions in film equals the elements that constitute our everyday experiences:

a film is not only a way of seeing, but also a way of hearing, feeling, thinking, and responding. It presents not just a mental universe (of perception and cognition), but a

holistic experience connected to the emotions, affects, and the body. It offers a particular experience of what it displays, of the fictional world presented. This way of experiencing mimics the phenomenological contours of conscious experience generally, and thus is complex and multifaceted. (49)

Plantinga's holistic view on the experience of film aims to transcend the preconceived assumption of adaptation criticism that film viewing is a passive act. In contrast to adaptation criticism, Plantinga suggests that film viewing triggers the audience's physical, mental and emotional involvement in the development of the film experience. Plantinga's holistic view is also relevant as a way to understand the ways that film adaptations represent the complex nature of experience, and, as discussed previously, of language as a way to channel those experiences.

Plantinga further claims that there generally has been little attention to the significance of affects and emotions in film studies. The reason for this, he suggests, is the traditional idea of a separation between reason and emotions, which involves a parallel assumption of a separation between the rational and the irrational. This involves the idea that emotions act as an "obstacle" to reason (3). The assumption is that the aspect of emotions as irrational also makes them unreliable. As unreliable sources of information, they are disqualified as tools that may independently approach the meaning of the film.

Plantinga claims that the affective experience of film is relevant in terms of acknowledging the qualities of film in the discussion of adaptation criticism. Furthermore, he asserts that affects are important to movie viewing for three reasons. First, affects and emotions develop and shape the aesthetics of film. Plantinga states that "The aesthetic excellence of a film...is partly determined by its ability to elicit emotion and affect appropriate to its narrative focus and concerns" (6). In other words, the role of affects and emotions adds a broader perspective to the narrative focus. Our bodily sensations that develop as spectators of film are significant in our understanding of the narrative and thematic focus. Second, Plantinga notes that affects and emotions contribute to making "ideas and images salient and memorable" (6), and as such, they impact "both cultural and individual memory" (6). Third, affects and emotions guide our thinking and behavior, and thereby make film viewing a powerful experience. In short, the power of affects and emotions in film lies in the way they develop and broaden our experiencing and understanding of the film by forming the film aesthetics, by imprinting the film experience

in our memory, and finally, by generating certain thought processes and behavioral patterns as represented in the film.

In summary, adaptation criticism holds that film adaptations are copies and repetitions of the original source novel. The aim of adaptation is therefore to fulfill a certain degree of fidelity to the novel in order to preserve the essence of the novel. The contrary view promotes the idea that the goal of adaptation is to contribute with a re-creation of the novel through a new and changed format, while also bringing attention back to the novel. The idea is to develop a mutually beneficial relationship between the novel and its adaptation, with the aim of developing and expanding the ways that the audience views the story as represented in both the novel and the film. Moreover, this view elevates film adaptation from the traditional view of film as secondary and inferior by exploring the plethora of possible ways of representing the story. This view regards the director more as an artist, or auteur, and therefore considers the artistic intention of the director in the viewing of the film. As Stam proposes, one way to change the view of adaptation is by considering various models that emphasize the way the film supplements the novel. Another way, as proposed by Hutcheon, is by looking at the effect of adaptation as a process of transposition, rather than a product of copying and repetition. This view takes into account the complexity of the adaptation process by looking at the many possible features that a film may adapt. Finally, as Snyder suggests, by looking more thoroughly at the process of adaptation into film, it is possible to develop a more in-depth comparison of the novel and its adaptation. As an essential part of cinema, the notion of mood communicates non-verbal aspects related to setting and characters. In addition, the moods of film communicate the overall idea that thoughts, language, and relationships develop through complex levels of communication. The following chapter will explore the ways in which mood is expressed in *The Price of Salt* and *Carol*.

## Chapter 2: Translations of Mood from *The Price of Salt* to *Carol*

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter will be a comparative analysis of the ways that mood is established in *Salt* and its cinematic adaptation, *Carol*. My analysis of the two works is divided into three parts. Firstly, I will briefly provide a general analysis of the ways the novel and the film diverge in their representation of mood. The reason for this general overview is that whereas some techniques may be more fruitfully examined separately in terms of their function in the expression of mood—for instance, setting—other techniques are applied in various combinations, and their affective impact on the development of the overall mood of the film depends on their recurrence throughout the film. The second part consists of an analysis of the way that mood is established in *Salt*, with a focus on encounters between Carol and Therese, and the themes of anxiety, journeying, patriarchal society, and the women's mother-daughter relationship. The third part is an analysis of way mood is established in *Carol*, with a focus on Sinnerbrink's notion of episodic moods, disclosive moods and transitional moods. Finally, I will discuss my findings in my analysis of the novel and the adaptation.

My analysis shows that by focusing on the stylistic techniques of film, such as narrow space, close-ups, diffusion of images, sounds, and ambient light, Haynes explores the notion of intimacy and the character's emotional experiences of desiring and of being desired. While both the novel and the film establish moods of anxiety, entrapment, and desire, Haynes's focus on the characters' intimacy establishes a dreamy and passionate mood which emphasizes how the women's feelings guide them towards each other.

Highsmith's novel *The Price of Salt* and Haynes adaptation *Carol* both portray the story of lesbian love between young Therese and the older Carol in the homophobic society of New York in the 1950s. *Salt* was first published in 1952 under the pseudonym Claire Morgan, and was republished as *Carol* in 1990, then under Highsmith's real name. During the Postwar era in America, society saw a need to stabilize and nourish the foundations of family and home. The family was considered society's most important cultural value. This involved the development of gender norms in which men were expected to be the breadwinners, whereas a woman's role was confined within the boundaries of home. The image promoted of American women portrayed delicate and feminine women, whose main goal was to marry, have children,

and take care of the home. Homosexuality was not only considered as a deviation from society's expectations of gender roles, it was also considered as 'obscene'. During the McCarthy era, homosexuality was even considered a threat to society. In his biography on Highsmith, Andrew Wilson rephrases the 1950s perception of homosexuality from a Senate sub-committee report from the period: "Homosexuality...was considered 'so contrary to the normal accepted standards of social behavior that persons who engage in such activity are looked upon as outcasts by society in general'" (164). The strict view of homosexuality as a social ill influenced the publication of lesbian literature; lesbian romance novels were expected to conclude with a tragic ending in line with the norms at the time to avoid censorship.

The catchline on the front cover of the 1953 edition of *Salt* read: "The novel of a love society forbids" (Wilson 172). The line reflects the strict view of lesbianism at the time, as well as the psychological appeal behind the notion of the 'forbidden'. In this sense, the publication of the novel acts as a challenge towards society's norms regarding correct and deviant behavior at the time. Society's gender norms were not only intended to promote correct behavior, but also to produce guilt in anyone who would deviate from this behavior. The idea of guilt is unfortunately also evident today, a testimony to the long-term consequences of prejudiced ideas about homosexuality. In the development of the screenplay for *Carol*, screenwriter Phyllis Nagy had to work surprisingly hard in order to establish the idea that Carol and Therese feel no guilt about being lesbian:

The only thing I ever had to 'fight' for in terms of preserving the integrity of the novel's intent is the idea quite a few people had early on (different team of producers, etc.) that Carol and Therese should suffer, psychologically, as a result of their sexuality. The thought being that, surely, these women would doubt the wisdom of being lesbians at some point—would feel guilt or regret about it. The lack of this kind of doubt in the novel is what sets it apart from other fiction of its kind in its era. ("Queen of Guilt" 276)

Originally, Highsmith intended to follow traditional expectations of lesbian literature by publishing the novel with an unhappy ending. Luckily, her agent convinced her otherwise (Wilson 163). In fact, Highsmith's novel is regarded as one of the first lesbian romance novels with a happy ending that suggests a continuation of the romantic relationship. This means that her story is focused on the themes of desire, identity, and human connection, rather than being

viewed as either lesbian pulp fiction or a cautionary morality tale from a homophobic view of lesbian love.

The story revolves around two female protagonists, young Therese Belivet and the older, more sophisticated upper-class woman Carol Aird, who fall in love and develop an affair. While Therese is in her early twenties, an aspiring stage designer, and half-heartedly invested in her relationship with Richard, Carol is in her early thirties, and in the middle of a divorce from Harge, with whom she has a little daughter. Carol has also had previous relationships with other women, while Therese's encounter with Carol is the first time she experiences female attraction and falls in love with a woman. As the women become closer, they decide to travel west, where they become more intimately acquainted. However, their trip is truncated when they discover that they have been tailed by a private detective hired by Harge to spy on them and provide evidence that can be applied in the custody battle over Carol and Harge's daughter, Rindy. The discovery leads to Carol's return home, while Therese is left behind waiting at a motel. The women plan to meet again quickly, but Carol continuously delays their meeting due to the custody hearing, leaving Therese feeling frustrated and alone. After some time, the women finally meet again, and it is strongly suggested in the end that they continue their relationship.

## **2.2 Expressions of Mood in *The Price of Salt***

The novel explores the themes of anxiety, entrapment, desire, and identity. Highsmith slowly establishes mood through descriptions of the characters' interior worlds, diction, and vocabulary. The following will explore the way the moods of anxiety and entrapment are conveyed in the novel.

## **2.3 Anxiety**

In the opening chapter of the novel, Highsmith carefully crafts a physical and emotional landscape that emits Therese's sense of imprisonment, loneliness, and monotony in life. We become aware of her conflicting issues of attempting to develop her creativity as a stage designer on the one hand, and of having to work at Frankenberg's to financially support herself on the other hand. The job of selling dolls at the department store deflates her sense of creativity and imparts feelings of isolation and imprisonment: "The store was organized so much like a prison, it frightened her now and then to realize she was a part of it" (1). Highsmith's depiction



of the confined space of the cafeteria at Frankenberg's, a narrow and industrial area, furthers the feeling of entrapment. There is "no room left at any of the long tables" (1), and "People...wandered about the tables in search of a spot they could squeeze into or a place that somebody was about to leave, but there was no place" (1). To create the feelings of confinement, Highsmith chooses cold and short words such as "squeeze", "no room left", "a spot", "machine", "prison" and "frightened" that evoke the sense of existing in a narrow and imposing world. The setting imparts an industrial feeling, which is emphasized as Therese looks into a pamphlet that reads "Are You Frankenberg Material?" (1). This is the "motivational" motto of Frankenberg's, intended to push employees to greater production and a sense of achievement at work, while simultaneously inflicting a feeling of emotional disconnection and estrangement from each other through the use of the word "material". The word completely disconnects from the humane aspect of the meaning behind work and personal achievement. In addition, the long wait for a holiday, with eleven years of work granting a holiday of three weeks, also emphasizes Therese's feeling of pointlessness in life. Highsmith incorporates a diction that evokes the atmosphere of everyday monotony with words such as "time-clock queue", "regular employees", "same faces day after day", "waste actions" and "meaningless chores", as well as the words "anxious" and "loneliness". The words promote the idea of stagnation and disintegration of the self. In this way, Highsmith develops mood through a setting that reflects society's imposing rules and norms, and that expresses Therese's sense of entrapment in life generally.

Therese's thoughts show us that she is creative and that she feels disconnected from the monotone world of Frankenberg's:

The great square window across the room looked like a painting by – Who was it? Mondrian. The little square section of window in the corner to open to a white sky. And no bird to fly in or out. What kind of a set would one make for a play that took place in a department store? (2)

The use of the word "bird" reflects Therese's innocence and youthfulness, as well as her internal sense of being imprisoned by a society that imposes strict social and cultural norms on women. Highsmith also develops the idea that Therese's life is in a form of standstill while she is searching for a truer and deeper meaning. This idea comes forth by the depiction of the way the store:

intensified things that had always bothered her... the waste actions, the meaningless chores that seemed to keep her from doing what she wanted to do, might have done - ...the sense that everyone was incommunicado with everyone else and living on an entirely wrong plane, so that the meaning, the message, the love, or whatever it was that each life contained, never could find its expression. It reminded her of conversations at tables, on sofas, with people whose words seemed to hover over dead, unshirring things, who never touched a string that played. (2-3)

Therese's sense of disconnection from the other people working at Frankenberg's is significant, as it mirrors Therese's anxiety and sense of detachment from herself. She conflicts with herself partly because she identifies with herself through others. This becomes apparent when Therese meets the elderly Mrs. Robichek, who has been working at Frankenberg's for many years, and thus comes to represent the typical "Frankenberg employee". Although their encounter in the novel is brief relative to the entire story, it is significant, as it highlights Therese's sense of self-worth.

The representation of Mrs. Robichek's apartment, as well as Mrs. Robichek's body, serves to illustrate Therese's anxiety and sense of alienation. Mrs. Robichek is in every respect kind to Therese. She tells Therese to come by her store if she has any questions, invites Therese to her apartment, and lends Therese dresses to wear. Therese, on the other hand, sees Mrs. Robichek in conflicting ways. On the one hand, she identifies with Mrs. Robichek primarily through her position as a typical worker at Frankenberg's, whose looks and behavior are inseparable from those of anybody else working there. As an employee at Frankenberg's, this is a position that Therese unwillingly identifies with and fears becoming. She compares Mrs. Robichek's face with

all the fifty-year-old faces of women who worked at Frankenberg's, stricken with an ever-lasting exhaustion and terror, the eyes distorted behind glasses that enlarged or made smaller, the cheeks splotched with rouge that did not brighten the grayness underneath. Therese could not look. (4)

However, when Mrs. Robichek comes close and gives Therese attention, Therese sees her as a warm and empathetic person. At one point, Mrs. Robichek sits across from Therese in the cafeteria and tells her to come to visit her in the sweater shop if she wants to ask her anything, and Therese sees her as sympathetic and gentle: "suddenly the woman's ugliness disappeared

because her reddish brown eyes behind the glasses were gentle, and interested in her. Therese could feel her heart beating, as if it had come to life” (5). Through her gentle ways and interest in Therese, Mrs. Robichek affects her emotionally and stands out from the rest of the crowd working at Frankenberg’s.

Therese’s lack of a sense of home and safe haven within herself is what brings her to Mrs. Robichek’s apartment in the first place. Highsmith crafts a setting at Mrs. Robichek’s rundown apartment which reflects Therese’s fears and stands in contrast to society’s ideal view of the home and domestic life. Descriptions of the apartment, and Mrs. Robichek, bear a close resemblance to the mood elicited in gothic fiction. The apartment is made of brownstone, has “no lights” (9), is dirty, and “much darker and gloomier” (9) than Therese’s house. Working at Frankenberg’s and living in dark and gloomy places become two points of similarity between Therese and Mrs. Robichek. Through Therese’s view of Mrs. Robichek, we see that she is clearly uncomfortable with these similar traits. Mrs. Robichek represents a darker and gloomier version of herself, with an outcome of life that Therese fears. Furthermore, the way Therese views Mrs. Robichek’s body also represents Therese’s sense of detachment from her own body. As Therese watches Mrs. Robichek’s body, she finds it to be “grotesque” (9) and “ugly” (9). Therese’s view of Mrs. Robichek’s body seems to be based on society’s expectation of the ideal female figure. However, as an elderly, ungraceful, and unmarried woman, Mrs. Robichek represents both physically and socially the failed and flawed female figure of the 1950s. Her ‘ugly’ figure also represents freedom to Therese, as it liberates Mrs. Robichek from societal expectations of the ideal woman. Having become established in her ways, Mrs. Robichek is no longer under the pressure of being expected to behave delicately and dress elegantly, to marry, have children, and to create the all-around happy “American family” together with a clean and stable home. As a woman at the beginning of her twenties, Therese is on the other end of life and strongly feels the societal pressure on women. The freedom that Mrs. Robichek represents is one that Therese both longs for and fears.

In her article on desire in *Salt* and *Carol*, Alison L. McKee argues that anxiety permeates the novel as a result of societal expectations of women’s appearances: “anxiety suffuses the tenor of the novel, concerned as it is with two women who find themselves at odds with cultural heteronormative definitions of what the domestic realm, including lovers, spouses, and

families, should look like” (142). The relationship between what things should look like and what they actually look like is an important aspect of the novel, as it represents a conflict of identity that underlies Therese’s anxiety. Therese’s lack of a sense of ownership of herself is expressed when Therese is urged to try on dresses that Mrs. Robichek used to sell in her previous job. Although Therese finds some of the dresses beautiful, she is “repelled by the thought of trying one on” (10). However, she still unwillingly does: “obediently Therese got up, as if she had no will of her own” (10). The dresses serve as a symbol of the conformity of society’s norms for women. As she undresses, Therese feels exposed: “Therese pulled off her sweater and felt completely naked. She gripped her arms above the elbow, and her flesh there felt cold and sensationless” (10). The fact that Therese feels “completely naked” in the process of undressing reveals her vulnerability. The description of Therese’s sense of her own skin as cold and sensationless illustrates the detached relationship she has with not only her physical body, but with her inner self. The dresses symbolize Therese’s entrapment in the female role. Therese puts on a dress she initially adores but is disturbed as she watches herself in the mirror wearing it. Observing herself in the mirror makes her feel disconnected from herself and initiates an existential crisis as she begins to question the value and purpose of her life in comparison to the life she could have had:

And at the point of the vortex where her mind was, she knew it was the hopelessness that terrified her and nothing else. It was the hopelessness of Mrs. Robichek’s ailing body and her job at the store, of her stack of dresses in the trunk, of her ugliness, the hopelessness of which the end of her life was entirely composed, the hopelessness of herself, of ever being the person she wanted to be and of doing the things that person would do. Had all her life been nothing but a dream, and was this real? It was the terror of this hopelessness that made her want to shed the dress and flee before it was too late, before the chains fell around her and locked. (12)

As a metaphor for chains, the dress embodies and promotes societal expectations of women’s gender role as housewives in the 1950s. To Therese, the dress represents the 1950s conformity with traditional gender roles, a view which conflicts with her sexuality and sense of identity. Her existential crisis, which finally lands her stricken in Mrs. Robichek’s chair, springs out of her feeling of being trapped between societal expectations and her true self. In this way, Highsmith depicts how physical objects come to affect and express the characters’ sense of entrapment. Therese’s sense of identity and entrapment emerges not only through the way the

dress makes her feel, but also through the way Mrs. Robichek's apartment, personal history, body, and overall demeanor make her feel. Together, these features of the first chapter create a dark mood that evokes feelings of existential angst, fear of the unknown, and entrapment.

## **2.4 Encounters between Carol and Therese**

The effect of the different narrative point of view of the novel and the film thematizes the moods of desire and anxiety in different ways. In the novel, it is predominantly Therese's subjective experience of desire that is emphasized through a third-person narrator. This involves her own desire for Carol, as well as her experience of Carol's desire for her. In this respect, Carol comes forth as the desired object. McKee states that the novel is about "the nature of desire itself" (142). McKee argues that the focus on Therese's point of view on desire is significant, as it emphasizes "the experience of self in relation to desire rather than to any prolonged interaction with the desired other" (141). The main focus of the development of desire in the novel lies within Therese's own experience of desire, personified by Carol. Highsmith depicts Carol as a tremendous emotional force in Therese's life. She affects her deeply by her looks, her movements, her vocabulary, and overall sensual and mature presence. One way in which Highsmith underscores Therese's internal experience of herself as a desirous person, is through the portrayal of Carol from a distanced point of view, although the women are physically close. For instance, in Therese's first meeting with Carol, Carol is represented as an alluring, slightly distant, and near mythical figure. Their first meeting is depicted in the novel as a sudden, intense, and quiet pause amid a busy and stressful day in the department store where Therese works. Highsmith intensifies the mood of the scene by creating a stressful build-up to the meeting between the two women. There is a "press of people at the counter" (25) and Therese's leg is struck by the metal corner of a shipping cart, and she begins to bleed: "pain began to blossom there, like a slow explosion" (26). Highsmith establishes a sense of emergency in the paragraphs before Therese meets Carol through the use of sentences such as "Blood was running", "the red kept coming", and words like "chaos", "torn" (26), and "confusion", "sanitary napkin", "cotton" and "gauze"(27). The fact that Therese is wounded before she is "caught" (27) by the "dominant" (27) eyes of Carol makes Therese appear vulnerable, and thereby accentuates the significant impact of her meeting with Carol. From the descriptions of Therese in the previous chapter, we know that Therese is emotionally wounded and feels entrapped. In contrast to the feeling of urgency and chaos created in the build-up to their

meeting, the diction used in their actual meeting creates a deep pause with elegantly crafted sentences and words that evokes a sense of mystery and desire. Carol is depicted as a goddess: “She was tall and fair, her long figure graceful in the loose fur coat that she held open with a hand on her waist” (27). She appears decisive, sensual, and graceful, with “calm gray eyes” (27) that are nonetheless “dominant like light or fire” (27). Furthermore, Carol has a “quiet slow voice that made a pool of silence in the tumult around them” (29). Her voice is “like her coat, rich and supple, and somehow full of secrets” (27).

Carol’s body movements are depicted as feminine, decisive, and inviting. She leans on the counter to create an intimate space between her and Therese, and her approach is depicted as a passionate and powerful experience to Therese: “Then Therese saw her walk slowly toward the counter, heard her heart stumble to catch up with the moment it had let pass, and felt her face grow hot as the woman came nearer and nearer” (27). Carol’s slow movements create an uncontrollable excitement in Therese. Likewise, Carol’s departure is depicted as a significant emotional event to Therese and defines the mood of the scene: “Then the woman picked up her gloves from the counter, and turned, and slowly went away, and Therese watched the distance widen and widen” (28). Carol’s paramount effect on Therese is also evident in the inadequacy Therese feels in light of Carol. She is “abashed by her (own) appearance, the old blue skirt, the cotton blouse – and the humiliating flat shoes. And the horrible bandage through which the blood was probably showing again” (29). Therese’s self-deprecating image of herself serves to underscore Carol’s tremendous effect of her presence in Therese’s life. The lack of awareness of Carol’s thoughts and feelings about Therese serves to underscore this effect as well. Carol’s intentions remain veiled and mysterious in the beginning of the novel until they begin to slowly unfold throughout the novel. This is a feature that contributes to the development of mood in the novel. We are drawn to Carol because of her demeanor, as well as our constant wish to gain insight into the character.

The mood of repressed desire in the novel is also strongly evinced in the women’s second meeting. In the novel, Therese’s second meeting with Carol is in a “miraculously quiet” (35) and intimate space, in a wooden booth in a restaurant. Therese struggles to look at Carol because she is unable to confront the strong desire she feels for her. This is exemplified in descriptions that focus on Carol’s mouth and the image of fire: “She wanted to look at the woman’s mouth, but the gray eyes so close drove her away, flickering over her like fire” (36). Therese is deeply affected by Carol, whose presence is both comforting, as well as “terrifying” (36) to her.

Highsmith establishes a feeling of intimacy through the detailed description of the women's small and constant physical encounters across the dining table. In one example, Therese leans forward so that Carol may light her cigarette as she observes Carol's "slim hand with the oval red nails and a sprinkling of freckles on its back" (36). In another example, their hands touch each other: "Once the backs of their hands brushed on the table, and Therese's skin there felt separately alive now, and rather burning" (38). Highsmith also establishes a sense of intimacy by depicting a moment of silence at the lunch: "In the silence, Therese felt they both waited for the other to speak, yet the silence was not an awkward one" (38). The unawkward pause suggests that Therese eventually becomes less terrified by Carol's presence.

## **2.5 Journeying**

A common theme that creates the mood in Highsmith's novels is the concept of journey and travel. Although *Salt* distinguishes itself by being the only Highsmith novel about lesbian love, and without a murder, it continues the traditional exploration of journeying in Highsmith's stories. The adaptation is no exception to this tradition. The significance of the theme in the film is evident already in the opening credits of the film in which Haynes applies the sound of a train. The sound evokes a sense of calmness and traveling and alludes to a decisive forward motion. Patricia White states that the story's exploration of travel accentuates this sense of mystique and fantasy: "Its characters are ciphers and its dialogue sparse, and the couple's journey through a succession of diners and hotel rooms constitutes a flight without apparent cause or meaningful direction" (11). Moreover, the apparent aimless transportation from one motel to another acknowledges the unestablished status of their relationship, along with the constant confrontation with the possibility of change in the direction of their pathways. The uncertainty of the aim of their journey connects them more intimately as they can never be sure when their common journey will end. There are many motifs in both the novel and the film that express the significance of travel to the story; Carol's car, the suitcase she gives to Therese, the toy train in the department store, and the Lincoln Tunnel through which they drive on their first trip together to Carol's house.

The role of the toy train at the department store serves as a contrast to Therese's feeling of entanglement in life through her job at Frankenberg's. In the novel, the train seems to be alive: "there was a fury in its tiny pumping pistons that the bigger trains did not possess. Its wrath and

frustration on the closed oval track held Therese spellbound” (5). Words such as “pumping pistons”, “possess”, “wrath”, “frustration” and “spellbound” reflect Therese’s search for a fulfilling life. Furthermore, everything that happens on the train’s journey is repeated; the train comes around a corner, the man comes out of his door, and the journey continues. Therefore, the train is interesting not only as an expression of Therese’s desire and entrapment, but also as a portrayal of the repetitiveness of her life. In the film, the motif of the toy train has been emphasized greatly. In contrast to the novel, in which Carol orders the delivery of a doll from the department store, the toy train is in the package that is delivered to Carol in the film. In this way, the toy train travels both physically and metaphorically to Carol’s house and acts as a symbol of the emotional connection between the women. The sound of the train under the credits at the start of the movie emphasizes the importance of this connection and the notion of travel and journey in general.

In both the novel and the film, the Lincoln Tunnel is symbolic of the intimate space between the women. They travel through the tunnel in Carol’s car on their first trip together, heading to Carol’s house. The enclosed space of the tunnel has two important effects: it excludes the external world while emphasizing the women’s desire for each other. The scene elicits moods of desire and longing in both the novel and the film. In the novel, the moment is mainly depicted from Therese’s point of view: “They roared into the Lincoln Tunnel. A wild, inexplicable excitement mounted in Therese as she stared through the windshield” (47). Not unlike the train at the toy department that travels with a fury, the experience of driving into the tunnel expresses Therese’s sense of release from her everyday life and the excitement of having met Carol. The scene serves as an awakening for Therese: finally, she has found profound meaning in a relationship with someone. Highsmith depicts the car as radiating a similar kind of elegance as Carol: “The car was warm inside, a long dark-green car with dark-green leather upholstery” (46). Furthermore, the car is portrayed as a geologic force: “It was like riding inside a rolling mountain that could sweep anything before it, yet was absolutely obedient to Carol.” (46) The depiction of the car also highlights Carol’s emotional power over Therese, who becomes deeply captivated by Carol.



## **2.6 Patriarchal Society**

Although women take the leading role in *Salt* and *Carol*, men also dominate the space of Highsmith's story. The portrayal of the patriarchal society creates a mood in the scenes in the novel that elicit feelings of entrapment, powerlessness, and loss of agency. The men's presence is mainly invasive. Acting both as a physical hindrance and as an imposing pressure on the women, the men exist in every corner of the overall story. Men act as the governing moral power of society, exemplified by Carol's attorney and Harge's detective, both of which are male. In the novel, Therese's relationship with Richard is distant and disconnected, affecting her bodily experience: "She was cold, and felt rather miserable in general. It was the half dangling, half-centered relationship with Richard, she knew. They saw more and more of each other, without actually growing closer. She still wasn't in love with him, not after ten months, and maybe she never could be" (21). Therese is unable to experience love with Richard in the way she expects love to unfold emotionally: "Sometimes she thought she was in love with him...But the feeling bore no resemblance to what she had read about love. Love was supposed to be a kind of blissful insanity" (22). Therese's experience of love with Richard, lukewarm and unfulfilling, reflects her sexual identity as a lesbian. It may also be argued that Richard, a sensible young man, fails to live up to Therese's need for love that is experienced as a 'blissful insanity'. Haynes uses ordinary, earth-colored costumes to emphasize the ordinariness and lack of desire that Richard represents, a quality that makes Therese unable to imagine the idea of a life with him in France: "It didn't seem real either that she might be in Europe with Richard next summer, sitting with him in sidewalk cafès, walking with him in Arles, finding the places Van Gogh had painted, she and Richard choosing towns to stop in for a while and paint" (2). In contrast, her experience with Carol outshines Therese's everyday life and appeals to her imagination and sense of growth: "A world was born around her, like a bright forest with a million shimmering leaves" (59). Clearly, Therese expands emotionally with Carol.

## **2.7 Mother-Daughter-Relationship**

Finally, a significant theme developed through mood in the novel, which is not translated to the film, is the way Carol and Therese's relationship is explored through a mother-daughter framework. In many respects, Highsmith's portrayal of the women's first meeting in the department store is reminiscent of a motherly figure who comes looking for her child. This comparison is evident when we see her from the perspective of Therese, whose attentive eyes

are fixed firmly on Carol's every move like a child who instinctively recognizes its mother. This accentuates the pause and space that Carol creates in Therese's life simply by her very presence. Carol's eyes, too, seem fixated on Therese the moment she sees her for the first time. The idea of the mother-daughter symbolism is emphasized as well in a pivotal and awkward moment when Therese visits Carol. They eat lunch and Therese plays the piano. Carol kisses her on the forehead like a mother, before she puts Therese to bed and brings her some hot milk. The moment is written down in Highsmith's first sketch of the plot, in which Carol is named Mrs. Sean: "(At Carol's house), the two women kiss, before Mrs. Sean puts her to bed like a child and gives her a cup of hot milk" (Wilson 153). The milk can be interpreted as emotional nourishment symbolizing motherly love. As Therese drinks the milk, she tells Carol about her past. Carol sits patiently and listens, "resting her chin in her hand, her eyes fixed on Therese, smiling" (54). Moreover, the effect of the milk may also represent a metamorphosis: "Therese drank it down, as people in fairy tales drink the potion that will transform, or the unsuspecting warrior the cup that will kill" (53). Although Carol does not primarily feel a motherly love for Therese, the symbolism is significant, as the novel explores the notion of love on an overall level. The love they feel between them involves several versions of love: motherly, flirtatious, friendly, and sexual. Moreover, while Therese, like Highsmith herself, has lost contact with her mother, Carol ends up losing her daughter in the custody battle. The mother-daughter symbolism is therefore expressed through an underlying story of connection and disconnection, which finally comes full circle.

## **2.8 Expressions of Mood in *Carol***

Haynes translates the moods of the novel through a combination of stylistic devices of film such as diffusion of color, light, sound, music, camera angles, and the overall look of the film, as well as the actors' countenance and overall performance. White claims that along with the main focus on the details of the setting, the "drifting mood and sketchy plot" (11) invites the viewer to indulge themselves in the cinematic universe of *Carol*.

## **2.9 Episodic Moods**

As discussed in the theory chapter, many films contain what Sinnerbrink refers to as 'episodic moods'. These are moods that occurs recurringly or episodically throughout the film by the use of stylistic devices. The repetition of mood sequences evokes and sustain specific moods of the

film. The section below will look at the ways that some of the stylistic devices of *Carol* are displayed in order to evoke the moods of desire and longing.

An examination of the techniques applied generally throughout the film to express mood shows that the film often achieves mood through the use of facial expressions, little dialogue in combination with an emphasis on characters' facial expressions and overall visage. White describes Haynes's attention to expressions of mood in the film, specifically the variety of ways in which the moods of desire and anxiety are evinced: "Now along comes Todd Haynes's atmospheric film adaptation, *Carol*, to revive the frisson with twilight images of mid-century lust and anxiety, coded gestures, longing glances, and few, well-chosen words" (White). Significantly, Haynes's choice to reduce dialogue places prominence on characters' physical features and gestures as ways to express moods and ulterior motives. In comparison to the novel, in which the emotional mood and tension unfold slowly, the image and visual language of the film effectively develops an instantaneous feeling of tension and chemistry between Carol and Therese. Through the use of close-ups, long camera shots, and soft lighting that illuminates the characters' facial features and expressions, Haynes includes the audience in the characters' intimate space. As an expression of the characters' interior world, the face becomes important as a visual way of displaying mood in the film. An example of this is in the restaurant scene at the very end of the novel, a scene which takes place at the very beginning of the film, in which Carol and Therese finally reconnect after their long separation following their journeying West. Uncertainty hangs in the air, as neither the women nor the audience knows how well they will connect with each other. Haynes uses close-up shots to highlight this sense of uncertainty through facial expressions that communicate feelings of both insecurity and desire between the women.

Another stylistic device in the film recurringly applied to develop episodic moods is the use of light and colors. For instance, Haynes applies bright light to express the powerful first encounter between the women. As a striking contrast to the ambient light and style of many pivotal scenes in the film, the scene of their initial meeting is filmed in an open and brightly lit room. The setting is brightly lit not only to highlight the store's main function—to emphasize the products on display—but as a visual metaphor of the emotional clarity that the meeting between the women creates. In contrast, we see throughout the film that in moments of

uncertainty, frustration, and anger, the women are surrounded by obstructions in the form of blurred windows, dark walls, corners, and closed doors. The lack of any visual obstructions in the department store reflects the emotionally open path between the women, in which the light serves as a way to guide the women towards each other. Furthermore, the brightness of the department store also highlights Carol's role as a symbol of light in Therese's life. This is further emphasized with Carol's blonde hair and bright fur coat. In this way, light is used on both the setting and the characters as a way to establish the mood of the scene. In other scenes, Haynes applies dark and cold colors with dim lighting to form shadows and create dark corners in the setting to parallel the characters' emotional states and hidden feelings. For instance, in a scene where we see Carol's ex-husband Harge join Carol and their daughter in Carol's bedroom, we see a shadow framing half of Carol's face as she turns around to greet Harge. Together with Carol's downhearted expression, the shadow hiding one side of her face reflects her emotional withdrawal from Harge. As he enters the room, she begins to fade away both emotionally and physically.

A third medium-specific device applied to develop episodic mood throughout the film is a focus on the characters' countenance, and specifically their gaze. The women's facial expressions are therefore particularly highlighted in all scenes, through the use of makeup and costumes, as well as the use of light. Therese and Carol either observe each other secretly with fascination, desire, and longing, or their glances meet directly. On the one hand, the gaze is applied as a way to insinuate feelings that remain unspoken between the characters. The gaze develops throughout the movie to express feelings including curiosity, fascination, desire, sadness, innocence, and maturity. Therese's gaze, for instance, develops throughout the film from being young, innocent and doe-eyed, to bearing the quality of firmness, decisiveness, and equanimity. On the other hand, at their first meeting, the gaze can evince a strong sense of mood even though it does not pinpoint a specific feeling or circumstance. This is exemplified at the women's first encounter at the department store. The women are clearly drawn to each other, and their glances subtly reflect their immediate attraction to each other. However, in the closure of their meeting, Therese's continued gaze after Carol suggests that something more than attraction has occurred in their encounter—something which is not ready to be revealed yet for either the audience or the women at this early stage of their acquaintance. In this way, the gaze communicates the fact that the women's first experience of each other initiates strong feelings that transcend the

capacity of words. The insinuation hanging in the air intensifies the mood of the scene, as it leaves the audience feeling something quite strongly, yet unable to locate how they have come to feel that way.

A fourth film technique applied to develop episodic mood throughout the film is the use of the actors' voices, as well as sounds and music. The actors' voices are emphasized through a reduction of the surrounding sounds of people and traffic, as well as the actors' placement within a setting inside; they are often inside cars, homes, cafès, or the department store. Their voices are also forcefully expressed through the performances of the actors. The actor Cate Blanchett, who plays Carol, develops a deep, ambient, and low-key voice that speaks with a slow and calm quality, to express maturity and sensuality. Therese's voice, on the other hand, is young and speaks more inwardly. The voice of Therese, therefore, underscores her vulnerability.

The use of sounds in the film to convey mood is exemplified in the opening scene of the film as it begins with the emotional impact of the sound of a traveling train, which is continued as it floats into Carter Burwell's beautiful opening theme song consisting of piano, clarinet, harp, and a string quintet, with each instrument communicating different emotional states that are working together through different intervals. The regular interval of the two main components of the piano and the strings creates the sense of a steady and powerful forward motion which accentuates the association of a train. The light musical steps of the harp introduce an element of innocence and beauty, while the contrasting dark note of the clarinet in the background enhances the thematic idea of things that are forbidden and secret.

Finally, Haynes develops episodic mood throughout the film by creating narrow settings with visual obstructions. In this way, he creates an enclosed space to emphasize the characters' sense of entrapment. The characters are often seen behind windows, reflected in front of mirrors, through narrow doorways, and crunched into the side of the screen, to emphasize their exclusion from society as lesbian lovers. This is exemplified in the scene where Therese is arguing with her boyfriend in their narrow apartment. Components of the apartment obstruct the view and intensify the feeling of being stuck inside a confined space. Similarly, as Carol visits Therese to give her a suitcase, most of the screenshot is covered by a wall.

## **2.10 Disclosive Moods**

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Haynes applies film techniques to unfold the film's disclosive mood that evokes a romantic and melancholic mood. One such technique is the use of narrative point of view. In contrast to the beginning of the novel, which emphasizes Therese's point of view, Haynes turns around the narrative structure by beginning the film with the ending of the novel, and thereby connects Carol and Therese from the very start. In this way, Haynes highlights the women's connection, and emphasizes the change of narrative perspective in the adaptation. The camera functions as an omniscient narrator who initially observes the women silently from outside, and who eventually partakes in the intimate space of their conversation. By using music, light, and movement of characters in the introductory shots of the film, Haynes allows us to feel the emotional language and atmosphere between Carol and Therese even before the characters are introduced visually. Haynes expresses the mood through a set that consists of a dark Manhattan street in the evening with the ambient buzz of people in the street, all of whom are heading to unknown destinations. By using slow camera movements, the introductory shots follow people coming up from the subway, crossing the street, greeting each other on the pavement, driving cars, and buying newspapers. The simultaneous movement of people in various directions generates a sense of motion and stir and symbolizes the emotional motion and stir between Carol and Therese. Moreover, the floating movements appear to be synchronized with the theme of the soundtrack, as if the movements have been orchestrated to generate a form of a slow dance between people. The movements accentuate the emotional 'dance' between Carol and Therese. Together with the ambient sound of voices speaking to each other, the slow movement of the camera creates an atmosphere of ease. Finally, the costumes portraying 1950s America, with hats shadowing people's faces and long floating coats, impart a feeling of secrecy, which connects to the theme of hidden desire. In this way, Haynes shows us the affective power of the non-verbal language of cinema. In contrast to the possibilities of elaborate descriptions of characters' thoughts and feelings in literature, the time frame of the film forces expressions of thoughts and feelings through non-verbal means as well. By evoking the emotional atmosphere between Carol and Therese before the characters utter any words in the film, Haynes places a focus on the very experience of feelings. That is, the experience of feelings which at a stage where they are only felt, not yet transferred into words. The choice to begin the film with a tense scene from the novel in which all emotions are collected and confronted, places emphasis on the way strong

feelings and interpersonal relationships are characteristic and defining of the overall story, and, of Highsmith's style as an author.

Two significant scenes that Haynes has translated to the film, and which also elicit a disclosive mood, are the first two meetings between Carol and Therese. Both scenes not only establish the romantic status of the relationship between Carol and Therese. As discussed, the narrative point of view in both the novel and the film emphasizes Therese's perspective. At the same time, the narrative point of view in the film alternates between the two women

The alternating point of view in the film is expressed through scenes that are added to allow for an emphasis on Carol. An example of this is a scene in the film in which Therese and Carol's previous lover are discussing Therese while Carol and Therese are separated from each other. On the one hand, this allows for a focus on the relationship itself, as both of the women's care and longing for each other are displayed. On the other hand, our insight into Carol's perspective while the women keep their distance demystifies Carol as the Goddess figure she appears as in their first meeting in the film, and as portrayed throughout the novel. The powerful effect she has on Therese's life in the novel is slightly undermined in the film by our knowledge of her thoughts and whereabouts during their separation. Overall, Highsmith's exploration of desire in relation to self, conveyed through the narrative point of view, makes Therese come through as a many-faceted and complex character in the novel, providing a fuller psychological depth to her character than the film allows.

Haynes has translated the mood of this scene, through Therese's point of view, to the adaptation. In the film, however, Haynes places focus on visual motifs, lights, and camera movements to evince the emotional impact of Carol through moods of excitement, curiosity, and desire. For instance, Therese's facial expression when she meets Carol resembles the look of a child, emphasized by the characters' blue and wide-open eyes and a Santa's hat. The focus on her open gaze also emphasizes her role as an observer and as the main narrator. Moreover, her position behind the desk amid a world of dolls carrying the static expression of happiness, with a similar kind of open gaze, alludes to the idea that she is trapped in a society that expects her to conform to the idea of a forced and fake happiness. The collection of dolls in the store reflects the way society wishes to see women.

In the middle of the doll store, there is a boyish toy, a train station. Haynes has chosen to emphasize the role of the train station by integrating it into the story as Therese's favorite toy

as a child. It is evident that she is deeply interested in toy trains: “there’s a new model, just in last week. Hand-built with hand-painted cars – it’s a limited edition of five thousand, with the most sophisticated electric switching system” (*Carol* 11:15/1:46)). However, the expectations of society confine her. This is demonstrated physically by her regulated position behind the desk, which makes her unable to show Carol the train: “I would show you, but I’m sort of confined to this desk” (*Carol* 11:23/1:46). The fact that she is working in a toy department selling dolls also highlights this aspect. In contrast to Therese’s childlike looks, Carol, on the other hand, seems mature with her fur coat, cigarette, and red nails, carrying with her a picture of her daughter. The difference between the women is evident when Carol shows Therese a photo of her daughter, and we see a close-up of the women’s hands together, holding the photo. Therese’s hands appear innocent and clean without nail color, imparting the associations with childhood, while Carol’s red nails impart the association of femininity, sensuality, and maturity. Another technique applied in the scene to express mood is the movement of the camera. The camera movements of the scene bring out the emotional significance of the meeting between the two women and emphasize Therese’s point of view. First, the women’s polite conversation over the desk is filmed with a still camera that frames the women at eye level. The static position of the camera enables a full focus on the conversation, rather than the underlying feelings of the meeting. However, when Carol leaves the store, the camera starts to move slowly sideways while zooming in on Therese as she observes Carol leave. The camera then zooms slowly in on Carol as she leaves, reflecting Therese’s perspective. The movement and zooming of the camera reflect the affective experience of the meeting. The movement of the camera zooming in on Carol as she leaves illustrates Therese’s wish to follow Carol, both physically and psychologically. The movement also functions as an imitation of Therese’s gaze, which, according to the screenplay, “watches (Carol’s) every move” (*Carol Screenplay* 11). In addition, the silence after the end of the dialogue, along with an accentuation of the store’s soundtrack, playing lightly in the background, emphasizes the emotional content of the scene, as the world just continues in its ordinary fashion while Therese’s world has been set on fire. The mood projected in the film comes through in Carol’s powerful energy, expressed through her overall calm demeanor, voice, look, and elegant attire.

Haynes’s translation of the women’s second encounter involves a very similar development of the women’s conversation as in the novel, portrayed with an ambient mood by using shadows



and sound. Together with low background sounds of people chattering, Haynes emphasizes the setting of the booth by creating surrounding darkness that envelops the women and creates a space of intimacy. The effect is that the women's faces come into focus, and their words seem to resonate more strongly, as they appear to be alone in the world. The emotional status in the novel is strongly insinuated in the scene through the characters' facial expressions. The women's eyes are particularly highlighted as means of communication. They constantly look at each other and only look away when they feel modest. The mood elicited in the scene reveals the women's interest in each other and the fact that this interest goes beyond friendship.

As in the novel, the settings of the film are applied to convey mood. However, Haynes has entirely omitted the character of Mrs. Robichek from the story and provides only a brief portrayal of the cafeteria at Frankenberg's. The scene in the cafeteria in the film picks up significant motifs from the novel such as the Frankenberg pamphlet that reads: "Are You Frankenberg Material?" (*Carol* 7:54/1:50) and a brief close-up of the face of a woman who serves as a close representation of Mrs. Robichek. In addition, Haynes evokes a cold atmosphere of forced order and entrapment through a signpost that enforces societal rules and regulations by stating: "Keep this room orderly" (*Carol* 7:33/1:50), and by portraying Therese's boss pointing and snapping at her: "Miss Belivet! You're needed upstairs. Make it snappy!" (*Carol* 7:59/1:50). There is also the intruding sound of a squeaky voice through speakers to underscore the overall industrial mood of the place. Haynes makes it clear in this brief scene that Therese dislikes the feeling that emanates from the cafeteria. At the same time, analyzed by itself, the setting of the cafeteria in the film does not elicit a mood which in and of its own imparts feelings of anxiety, as in the novel. The cafeteria reflects the overall monotone feeling and atmosphere projected by any other cafeteria and does not primarily function as a way to reflect Therese's interior world. Therese's feelings of anxiety are only subtly suggested in the translation of this particular scene from the novel.

However, Haynes conveys a confined mood and sense of narrow space in Frankenberg's through other scenes that do not occur in the novel. For instance, in a scene where Therese and Richard enter Frankenberg's along with the rest of the employees, they are given Santa Claus hats by a security guard whose job it is to serve a never-ending repetition of the phrase "Compliments of the season from the management" (*Carol* 7:12/1:51) to each person that enters

the small doorway. The forced politeness of the repetitive phrase evokes the discouragement that Therese feels about working there. In addition, a description in the screenplay of the queue of workers outside of Frankenberg's elicits the dull and monotonous mood that permeates Frankenberg's: "Everyone looks exactly the same: a lot cold, a little Soviet-factory-worker glum" (5). The description evokes the industrial coldness of the place and reflects the movie's limited light and color in this scene.

Overall, the omission of events, thoughts, and developments depicted in the scene in Frankenberg's canteen, as well as in the chapter with Mrs. Robichek, generates a significant change in depth of the character of Therese from the novel to the film. By removing the physically and psychologically darker and uglier aspects of the novel, we lose insight into the extent of Therese's anxiety and existential struggles. Importantly, these aspects are displayed at the very beginning of the novel, before Therese's encounter with Carol. Our insight into Therese's history and psychological wounds before she meets Carol shows that not all of her struggles are instigated by her relationship with Carol. Consequently, with an insight into the character's anxiety and existential struggles, Therese appears more independent in the novel than in the film. Although Haynes applies film effects to underscore a strong sense of anxiety, such as close-ups of Therese's face behind blurred or rainy surfaces, or of nervous gestures, the film's focus on the aesthetic beauty of these visual moments overruns the courage and strength of Therese's character as portrayed in the novel. Through medium-specific devices, Haynes evokes a mood that makes Therese's anxiety clearly discernable in the adaptation, and through the film's mood, we are brought closer to the character's emotional experience of the world. However, our knowledge of the character never moves beyond feelings and insinuations. Through mood, we can certainly detect and recognize Therese's underlying anxiety as a character, yet her complexity is always seen in light of her feelings for Carol. In this way, the character becomes dependent on Carol for her own development to unfold. For instance, Therese's repulsion towards working at Frankenberg's is represented through a response to Carol. In the scene of the women's first meeting, Carol expresses her feelings of discomfort while in the department store: "Shopping makes me nervous" (*Carol* 10:50/1:47), to which Therese agrees: "That's okay. Working here makes me nervous" (*Carol* 10:51/1:47). In addition, Therese's muted expression underscores the sense of a character that lacks agency.

As in the novel, Haynes uses the scene of the women's first encounter to establish a strong connection between them and to develop the mood of desire. However, an even stronger connection is expressed through a scene that displays transitional moods in the adapted version, in which Therese retrospectively reflects on Carol's impact on her. Haynes carefully crafts Therese's first memory of Carol through a scene with a transitional mood that expresses the moods of her emotional state. Therese is temporally placed between past and present as she delves into the memory of her first encounter with Carol. The scene occurs after the first scene with Therese and Carol. As Jack leaves the restaurant where Carol and Therese have met, he puts his hand on Therese's shoulder and tells her that he will be "Back in a flash" (*Carol Screenplay* 5). The camera zooms in on the back of Therese's head before she quickly turns around, looking towards the direction Carol left. The sound of the surroundings starts to fade, and the sound of her breath is accentuated. The next scene shows us that Jack's phrase is a foreshadowing of that scene, which is indeed a flashback. The flashback happens in a pivotal moment of the film, in which Therese decides to return to Carol to be with her, thus connecting the two important moments, past and present. We see a close-up of Therese's face through the dewy window of a taxi. The camera angle is at eye level, portraying her entire emotional reaction after having met with Carol. The eye-level angle of the camera invites us to connect emotionally with Therese, as we are up-close and on the same level as Therese, allowing us to come up close to her experience. We are looking directly at her face, yet part of her face is obscured through the dewy window, leaving only half her face visible and the other part hidden in shadow. By hiding half of Therese's face in shadow, Haynes suggests the emptiness Therese feels without Carol and her need for Carol to feel complete. This idea is further exemplified by the first scene of the film at the hotel with both women. As Jack walks towards their table, he yells "Therese? Is that you?" (*Carol* 3:12/1:55). Interestingly, Therese is seated with her back towards Jack. We only see the enlightened face of Carol, who responds quickly and directly with her eyes looking right up at Jack. In our initial meeting with the women, it will undoubtedly seem as though Carol is Therese. This connecting of identities is an important technique to advance our understanding of the women's strong sense of belonging to each other.

The cinematographer of *Carol*, Edward Lachman, explains how he applied the ideas and techniques of photographer Saul Leiter to portray the characters' emotional state and development through visual obstruction:

By using Leiter's approach, we are not only creating a representational view of the world, but a psychological one. The characters are hidden, but we still see them through sensual textures of reflections, weather and foggy car windows. For example, by seeing Therese (Rooney Mara) in doorways, partially viewed through windows and reflections, it's like she's just coming into focus on her own identity and her ability to form a relationship out of love. It's a visual way of showing her amorous mind – a way of letting us into her interior world. (Lachman)

Although filled with emotions, Therese's facial expression is completely still. The connection between Therese's enclosed face and the misty window functions in two important ways: it reveals Therese's hidden emotions, and it symbolizes society's homophobic view in the 1950s, forcing Therese to hide her feelings. The dewy window through which we see her, therefore, functions as an expression of Therese's mood; the raindrops symbolize her tears, and the dew symbolizes her unclear and indecisive mind. The fact that her feelings are expressed through elements of nature, such as rain and dew, is also a symbol of the truthfulness of her feelings; she is experiencing love, unfettered by societal norms and expectations. In this way, the use of shadow and the window function to create a layered mask through which Therese's real emotions are revealed.

The window also functions symbolically as a window to her soul, through which we see what is on her mind; we are shown intervals of film noir-esque images with darkness and city lights, boys running along the street, couples walking, and finally a Carol lookalike together with a man. This image is interesting as it shows us the two ways that Therese sees Carol, as both a wife and mother, as well as a lover. Haynes's use of a woman imitating Carol also underlines Therese's idea of Carol through the way she observes her; all of the woman's small movements and gestures in the brief image show us Therese's expectation of how the real Carol would look and behave. All of the characters in the street are seen in slow motion, floating before our eyes, and the images are accompanied by a piano tune that leaves an echo. In this way, Haynes creates a dreamlike state that lulls us into Therese's memory of her first encounter with Carol. We see the erratic toy train running its round on the tracks in the toy department where Therese worked, reflecting Therese's emotions, and then an eye-level camera angle of Carol slowly entering the department store. She is filmed from afar, and amid a blur. We see Therese standing behind the desk with her eyes wide open as she observes Carol. We are taken back to the moment she first

saw the person who would come to mean so much to her. By using camera angles, close-ups, blurred windows, and scenes with a dreamy quality, Haynes creates a mood that underscores Carol's emotional impact on Therese.

### **2.11 Transitional Moods**

In the film, the scene in the Lincoln Tunnel has been greatly emphasized and elicits a transitional mood. Haynes translates the moment into a dreamlike state, through the use of motion blur, double exposures, and fusion of tunnel lights. On first viewing, the scene is certainly emotional, yet it might appear to offer little in terms of content: the scene is brief, the women simply drive through a tunnel, there are a few glances here and there, some images are blurred, and the conversation is muted. The viewer might understandably conclude that something of great emotional significance is developing while still not being able to pinpoint exactly why this feeling comes through in an otherwise brief and ordinary scene. However, this is why this scene is an excellent example of the mood of the film: it speaks directly to our emotional and intuitive understanding of the characters' relationship. Audiences are expected to use their emotional intuition to understand the workings of the characters' interior worlds. The sense of something emotionally paramount developing overrides our need for specific plot development in the scene. Haynes's techniques of blurring and fusion of images function in two important ways. On the one hand, such techniques invite us into the intimate and private communication of the characters. Another view is that the surrounding physical and psychological environment is entirely disintegrated in light of the women's desire. Haynes allows us to feel the women's desire for each other by isolating them as they pass through the tunnel. In comparison to the novel, the scene in the tunnel communicates more effectively the women's desire for each other. Although Carol is still observed from a distance, much due to the muting of speech, and thus keeping the narrator's perspective from Therese as in the novel, their emotional dialogue is much more evident and obvious in the film. In this way, the film creates a mood to elaborate and strengthen the bond between the women in the scene.

The tunnel acts as a significant symbol of the secret and intimate connection and desire between Carol and Therese and creates the image of a disintegrated external world, one which no longer exists. Haynes also applies double exposure to fuse images, to accentuate the women's emotional movement towards each other. The scene is an exceptionally good example of the

development of mood in the film, as it manages to capture and manifest the intangible communication between the women. White argues that the women's desire is communicated between them through the film's exploration of fantasy as "unconscious script or "mise-en-scène of desire"" (11). White's idea is that as the women go through the enclosed tunnel, they unlock and display their feelings for each other. Therefore, the setting, or *mise-en-scène*, not only situates the characters in a physical time and place; Haynes primarily situates characters in a psychological and emotional space as well. In this way, he creates a strong sense of mood by emphasizing this particular scene as one which displays an emotional journey. The *mise-en-scène* of desire underscores the notion of desire as repressed. The tunnel functions as a state of suspension as well, in which time and space seem frozen, and which exposes the growing desire that exists between the characters.

Through this method, Haynes reflects the women's connection in both fantasy and reality, present and memory, and their interior world versus the exterior world. Another technique applied to enhance the mood of the scene is Haynes's use of enhanced sound of music and a simultaneous lowering of speech. In this way, the women's conversation becomes irrelevant in light of the feelings that linger between them. The focus is turned inwards, towards the intangible parts of their relationship and desire. Another technique applied to create this mood is the use of close-up shots of the women, which reflect their intimacy. Significantly, Haynes has applied a shallow focus to the images, an effect that highlights important elements of an image while creating motion blur to the surrounding environment. The external world is blurred, as well as the direction that the women are taking. One example is a close-up of the arm of Carol's fur jacket, which brings forth the image of Carol as a lioness. This image corresponds with Highsmith's depiction of the women entering the tunnel with a 'roar'. Furthermore, there are close-ups of Carol's mouth, emphasizing the sensuality she expresses, and that Therese observes in her. In this way, the effect creates a focus that turns inwards. The cinematographer Edward Lachman notes: "Our approach to the look was to incorporate a subjective viewpoint of the amorous mind — the mind of someone falling in love when you read every sign and symbol of the other person" (Lachman). Through the fusion of images and sounds, Lachman and Haynes develop a dreamlike world that visually blends reality and fantasy. An image of the scene in the taxi with Therese looking through the taxi window, looking down before flipping her eyes up, turns up in this sequence. We then see a close-up of Carol's eyes, repeating the same gesture. The mixture of images from past and present

underscores the significance of the experience in the tunnel as both a physical and real event happening in the present, as well as the coming memory of that event.

In the film, the techniques applied to translate and express feelings of invasion are the use of shadows and body language. Haynes applies shadow on the women's faces and in the setting as an imposing feature surrounding their private space to portray the men's invasive presence. In this way, Haynes applies light, shadow, and body language to emphasize the pain, anger, and imprisonment the men bring forth in their relationship with the women. An example is when Therese's card arrives at Carol's mansion with the mail delivery. We see Carol in a mirror image, her face enlightened as she looks lovingly at her daughter while combing her daughter's hair. As Harge enters, Carol turns around towards the camera and looks up at Harge. A shadow on her face tells us that Harge is not the love of her life. The shadow functions as a symbol of the divorce they are going through. Darkness also surrounds Carol each time Harge comes to visit. Moreover, it is evident through Carol's body language that she feels pressured and uneasy with his presence. As Harge visits her, we see Carol walking back and forth hurriedly in the kitchen, and standing in the shadow of a doorway with her head tilted and eye looking down as Harge asks Therese where they met. Harge's frustration with Carol's betrayal becomes not only an expression of his personal feelings, but one which illustrates the pressures of societal expectations of patriarchal marriage and happy family life. Set in 1950s America, Carol's betrayal is not only a betrayal of her relationship with Harge, but also a betrayal of society's expectations of women as happy home-makers. The pressure of society's ideal notion of gender roles, sexuality, and a happy family home is also felt by the men, who come to perceive themselves as failures in light of the disintegration of their family.

Although the ending of the film shows the promise of Carol and Therese's future together, its abrupt transition into a black screen seems almost like an ominous disturbance in what is otherwise an intense, almost delirious, desirous gaze between the women. As White comments: "In this film's ending, the seductive tilt of Carol's head, a bit like Rita Hayworth's Gilda, brings eroticism to the fore, while the hard sound and image cut leaves the pair physically separated" (17). The lovers seem forcibly separated by the black image, an effect which is often applied in cinema as a means to instill a sense of confusion and a lack of conclusion to the plot. However, the abruptness of the cut also enforces the impact of the final gaze shared between the women.

Carol's final gaze at Therese almost transcends through the screen. The moment, and the memory of the moment, seem more deeply ingrained in light of its abrupt loss. The effect creates a feeling of being pulled out of the moment. In this way, the effect in turn serves to reflect the emotional depth we have invested in the moment, in the gazes shared between the lovers. As the film ends with a long shot of Carol's gaze looking almost directly into the camera, we become truly aware of Therese's obsession with Carol, through the effect that Carol's deep, sensual gaze has on us as audiences.

## **2.12 Comparative Analysis**

Both the novel and the adaptation explore the themes of desire, sexuality, anxiety, and identity. The themes are manifested in both works through similar devices such as mood, setting, narrative structure, characters, and the plot. However, an examination of the way mood develops throughout the film shows that Haynes's style diverges from Highsmith's novel in significant ways. One of the techniques applied to achieve mood in both the novel and the film is the setting. Highsmith and Haynes thematize feelings of anxiety, entrapment, and desire by using medium-specific techniques to represent the setting. The different methods used to bring out the setting result in different expressions of mood, which, in turn, changes the overall feel of the film compared to the novel. Whereas Highsmith's depiction of a dark and cold setting at the beginning of the novel projects a mood of entrapment, Haynes's use of techniques such as floating camera movements accompanied by captivating music at the beginning of the film evokes a romantic and melancholic mood. Furthermore, Haynes's portrayal of Carol's beauty, brightness, and almost mythical figure permeate the film stylistically by generating a world that appears visually brighter and more colorful than in the novel.

My analysis of *Salt* and *Carol* shows that Highsmith and Haynes develop moods that emphasize different aspects of the story of Carol and Therese. In *Salt*, Highsmith explores Therese's anxiety through an industrial and desolate setting. Frankenberg's emphasize Therese's feelings of entrapment and existential crisis. In addition, the novel explores Therese's sense of detachment from herself through her meeting with Mrs. Robichek. This is exemplified by her disconnected experience of her cold body as she tries on dresses, and through Mrs. Robichek's body and dark apartment.



Through a focus on the visual aesthetics of the cinematography, Haynes creates an ambient mood in the film, one which translates and emphasizes the desire and romantic mood of the novel. Whereas Highsmith's words reveal characters' thoughts and feelings, the mood of the film remains suggestive in that thoughts and feelings are insinuated, albeit strongly so. This is a feature of the film that intensifies the mystery of the characters and their shared experience of desire. Furthermore, whereas Highsmith creates mood by diving into the complexity of her characters, portraying their fears, anxiety, and vulnerability, Haynes focuses on the emotional atmosphere between them, in which subtle cues transferred between them signal feelings of desire and love. While Haynes's emphasis on visual aesthetics as expressions of mood might initially appear a superficial focus, this focus gives attention to the way the atmosphere of a room, of a landscape, or between people, affects us, and may 'speak' to us by resonating with our emotional world. In this way, what might appear as a superficial approach to the story can instead be understood as a way to guide us towards the characters' underlying emotional world.

## Chapter 3 Translations of Mood from novel to film: *The Talented Mr. Ripley*

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter will explore the ways in which mood is established in the two different versions of *Ripley*, the novel and its cinematic adaptation. Specifically, the chapter will be a comparative analysis of the way that mood is achieved by using specific techniques. In the first part, I will analyse the ways mood is established in Highsmith's examination of the setting of New York and Italy, and the characterizations of Ripley, Dickie, and Freddie. In the second part, I will analyse the development of mood in Minghella's *Ripley*, with a focus on music, setting, the main characters, and the added characters of Peter, Silvana and Meredith. In addition, I will examine the establishment of mood in the ending of the film. Finally, I will do a comparative analysis based on Snyder's concept of fidelity/infidelity analysis and specificity analysis. My analysis shows that both the novel and the film establish moods of alienation and suspense through depictions of setting and the main characters. However, by exploring the themes of guilt, remorse, tragedy, and unconditional love, Minghella creates a story with conflicting moods, reflecting the conflicting and disoriented identity of Ripley. The mood is harmonious and loving in some scenes, while also chaotic and tragic in other scenes. The contrasting moods emphasize the suspenseful mood of Highsmith's novel, while also exploring Ripley as a more complex character than in the novel.

Both the novel and the adaptation are mainly set in mid-twentieth century Italy. In the novel, the story unfolds from Tom Ripley's point of view by a third-person omniscient narrator. Likewise, the adaptation narrates the story mainly from Ripley's point of view through the perspective of an omniscient camera. Both the novel and the film begin with the meeting between the wealthy Herbert Greenleaf and Tom Ripley, in which Mr. Greenleaf comes with the proposal of paying Ripley to travel to the coast of Italy to convince his son Dickie, the heir of his shipbuilding company, to return home to America. Ripley gladly accepts the offer and travels to Mongibello, Italy, where he finds Dickie and Marge Sherwood. Quickly, Ripley develops a close friendship with Dickie, yet the relationship becomes increasingly intense and dangerous, as Ripley develops an obsession with Dickie and Dickie's luxurious and carefree lifestyle. Ripley soon begins to fantasize about becoming Dickie, and finally murders him on a

boat off the Italian coast before he assumes Dickie's identity. From here on, the story takes a new turn, as we follow Ripley's uncanny yet excellent skills in impersonating, forging signatures, and lying in his new identity as Dickie. He also continues to murder, assuring us that the murder of Dickie was not coincidental. Ripley's skills finally enable him to get away from Dickie's friends, the police, and the detective investigating the murders.

### **3.2 Expressions of Mood in Highsmith's *Ripley***

The establishment of mood in Highsmith's *Ripley* is evident in the settings of New York and Italy, two contrasting places. Whereas New York, represented as a dark and gloomy place, promotes notions of an impersonal world of industry, production, buildings and bars. Italy, on the other hand, promotes feelings of freedom, jazz, and the exploration of self. The novel's mood is also established in the strained relationship between Ripley and Dickie, and in the bad chemistry between Ripley and Freddie Miles.

### **3.3 The Setting of New York and Italy**

Highsmith's story begins in 1950s New York and primarily unfolds in the fictional town of Mongibello on the Amalfi coast. In New York, Ripley lives in a rundown apartment with roommate Bob Delancey, who is barely an acquaintance. The environment of the apartment reflects Ripley's sociocultural status. Highsmith develops a dark and decaying mood by depicting a malodorous place crammed with objects:

the smelly john down the hall that didn't lock, that grimy single room that looked as if it had been lived in by a thousand different people who had left behind their particular kind of filth and never lifted a hand to clean it, those slithering stacks of *Vogue* and *Harpers' Bazaar* and those big chi-chi smoked-glass bowls all over the place, filled with tangles of string and pencils and cigarette butts and decaying fruit! (8).

By using words such as "smelly", "grimy" and "filth", Highsmith portrays a gloomy and unwelcoming place. The overflow of objects that occupies the apartment creates a sense of disintegration and chaos. This is not a home, or in any way a safe haven. Ripley lives with Bob primarily because he lacks a place to stay. The apartment is one of many places in which Ripley temporarily resides throughout the novel as he never settles down and creates a home for himself. The homes he enters during the novel are never his own. Ripley stays in hotels, boat

cabins, and other people's apartments. The apartment he finds towards the end of the novel in Venice is under Dickie's name and is in this way also another person's place. The places he stays in serve to mirror his shifting identities and lack of a home within. His homelessness is reflected in Highsmith's portrayal of the urban atmosphere of New York as Ripley prepares to travel to Italy:

The atmosphere of the city became stranger as the days went on. It was as if something had gone out of New York – the realness or the importance of it – and the city was putting on a show just for him, a colossal show with its buses, taxis, and hurrying people on the sidewalks, its television shows in all the Third Avenue bars, its movie marquee lighted up in broad daylight, and its sound effects of thousands of honking horns and human voices, talking for no purpose whatsoever. (20)

The passage shows Ripley as an outcast, observing the city from an external point of view. The portrayal of the city shows Dickie's feelings of separateness in the transitional phase between his departure from it, and the entrance to another country of belonging. By portraying New York as a "show" of neon lights, hurrying people, and bars, a modern place in which human voices compete with honking horns, Highsmith establishes a restless and impersonal mood. The mood of the city reflects Ripley's sense of alienation.

The setting in the novel reveals other important aspects of Ripley as well. For instance, Ripley fears water as a result of his parents' drowning in Boston Harbour. Ripley approaches water several times throughout the novel. He travels by boat to Italy and finally to Greece, he and Dickie go on a fatal boat trip, and he reluctantly enters the ocean when he meets Dickie and Marge at the beach. Water initially evokes an anxious and terrified mood. Highsmith depicts how Ripley's travel to Italy is affected by this fear:

It gave Tom a sick, empty feeling at the pit of his stomach to think that in less a week he would have water below him miles deep, and that undoubtedly he would have to look at it most of the time, because people on ocean liners spent most of their time on the deck. (21)

Water is also relevant in the murder scene of Dickie, which happens at sea. Highsmith depicts Ripley's overwhelming sense of fear of the water as he and Dickie are on the fateful boat trip: "Tom nodded, letting his understanding smile speak for him. Actually, he was terrified. God only knew how deep the water was here" (90). Ripley's relationship with water is twofold. On

the one hand, his parents' drowning affects him to the extent that he struggles to be near water, even from inside a cabin on an ocean liner. On the other hand, he still chooses to kill Dickie at sea in a small motorboat, risking the possibility of himself falling into the water. In this sense, the water reflects Ripley's detached relationship with himself. His tremendous fear of water does not prevent him from going on a boat trip in his adamant decision to kill Dickie. By crossing his greatest fear in order to kill Dickie, Ripley appears cold and calculating. This impression is emphasized by the shift of focus in the scene, from Dickie's murder to an action-filled sequence in which Ripley loses control of the boat and is thrown into the water, having to confront his fear of water and fight for his life.

As with New York, Ripley's disconnected relationship with himself is reflected in the setting of Italy, through his perception of Mongibello. Writing from Ripley's point of view, Highsmith depicts the Italian landscape and culture with little insight into Ripley's affective experience of the magnificent surroundings. For instance, when Ripley travels on a bus along the cliffs of the Italian shore, the landscape is depicted from an objective point of view:

From Sorrento, the road was a narrow ridge cut into the side of the rock cliffs that Tom had seen in the photographs at the Greenleafs'. Now and then he caught glimpses of little villages down at the water's edge, houses like white crumbs of bread, specks that were the heads of people swimming near the shore. (36)

The third-person narrator depicts the scenery objectively, without Ripley's affective involvement. It thereby lacks the tremendous affective impact of the setting that the adaptation achieves. The setting of Italy does not overwhelm Ripley, nor does it overwhelm the reader. However, the effect of the objective portrayal reflects Ripley's detachment to the world and to himself. Although Ripley becomes obsessed with Dickie's life, it is not a genuine affection for Dickie's life in Italy, particularly, that he feels. It is a genuine desire for and obsession with Dickie.

### **3.4 The Relationship between Ripley and Dickie**

Another way that Highsmith establishes mood in her novel is through characters and their relationships. Ripley is unable to preserve his relationships with others. At some point, the relationship comes to an end. For instance, the strained relationship between Ripley and Dickie manifests the overarching mood of the story. As their relationship develops, it becomes

increasingly disharmonic. The more Dickie turns to Marge, the more desperately Ripley attempts to gain Dickie's approval. Ripley is both dependent on Dickie and develops a hatred for him as he begins to feel like a failure. The mood between them is imbalanced and uncomfortable. The imbalance between them is established in their first encounter, in which Highsmith creates a subtle feeling of discord in their relationship by portraying the way the setting of the beach affects them differently. Highsmith depicts Ripley's discomfort at being there: "He felt mortified at the big brown shoes on his feet and at his ghost-white skin. He had not been to a beach all summer. He hated beaches" (38). Dickie, on the other hand, is portrayed flatteringly, with his body "burnt a dark brown" (38) and with "crinkly blond hair" (38). In addition, he is described as an excellent swimmer. Furthermore, Highsmith creates a subtle feeling of immediate rejection through Dickie's non-spoken disapproval of Ripley: "Dickie was looking him over, not entirely with approval, Tom felt. Dickie's arms were folded, his lean brown feet planted in the hot sand that didn't seem to bother him at all" (39). Ripley's feeling of inferiority is evident in Highsmith's portrayal of Dickie's critical look, and firm position in the sand. It is also evident by Highsmith's emphasis on Ripley's point of view. By placing the words "Tom felt" at the end of the sentence, Highsmith underscores Ripley's need for approval from Dickie. Furthermore, Highsmith creates an anxious mood by depicting Ripley's feeling of embarrassment and rejection as Dickie suddenly stops talking to Ripley: "Dickie said nothing. He had reseated himself on the big towel beside the girl, and Tom felt that he was waiting for him to say good-bye and move on. Tom stood there, feeling pale and naked as the day he was born. He hated bathing suits. This one was very revealing" (39). Highsmith's use of few words as she describes Dickie's sudden silence creates a hard tone in the excerpt. The tone reflects the abruptness of Dickie's withdrawal, as well as Ripley's feeling of being disapproved of by him. Moreover, Highsmith's depiction of Ripley's emotional comparison to himself as a baby reveals his vulnerability. The discomforting bathing suit that Ripley hates to wear emphasizes the overarching mood of Ripley's humiliation in the beach scene. Ripley's constant need for Dickie's approval is a significant theme that continues throughout the novel, and which contributes to the establishment of an imbalanced mood in their relationship.

The narrative point of view emphasizes this imbalance. Our impression of Dickie is mainly a result of Ripley's constant observations and imitations of him. We never gain direct insight into Dickie's thoughts about Ripley. Dickie therefore appears more distant, both to the reader and

to Ripley. As a consequence, Dickie appears more cryptic and harder to read. His changing moods provide an added strain to the relationship, as Ripley is never quite sure where he has Dickie. This creates a pressured atmosphere between the characters, as Ripley desperately needs to read Dickie in order to come closer to him. Whereas Ripley's main goal is to come closer to Dickie, Dickie's main goal becomes to maintain his flirtatious friendship with Marge.

Ripley's feelings for Dickie are based on the unstable foundations of a repressed desire and obsession, in addition to Ripley's extreme jealousy of Marge. This is exemplified when Ripley is horrified and aggravated when he sees Dickie kissing Marge in her apartment. Furious, Ripley returns home and starts acting out his frustrations through violent behaviour. In an eerie scene, he imitates Dickie, as he pretends to murder Marge:

The suit fitted him. He re-parted his hair and put the part a little more to one side, the way Dickie wore his. "Marge, you must understand that I don't *love* you," Tom said into the mirror in Dickie's voice, with Dickie's higher pitch on the emphasized words, with the little growl in his throat at the end of the phrase that could be pleasant or unpleasant, intimate or cool, according to Dickie's mood. "Marge, stop it!" Tom turned suddenly and made a grab in the air as if he were seizing Marge's throat. (67-68)

The excerpt exemplifies Highsmith's establishment of a chilling mood in the novel. The scene shows us how intimately Ripley has examined Dickie's behaviour, in his portrayal of Dickie's pitch of voice and the growl in his throat.

In addition, the incident is uncanny because of the prior incident, in which Ripley's violent mind is displayed by his choice to throw Dickie's things out of the window. The scene takes on a of absurdity: "He ran out on the terrace with an idea of jumping on to the parapet and doing a dance or standing on his head, but the empty space on the other side of the parapet stopped him" (67). Both scenes show Ripley's disintegration and lack of control. His imitation of Dickie seems to force itself out of Ripley's feeling of inferiority and powerlessness to Dickie. Ripley realizes that his adamant attempt to adapt to Dickie's life has been futile. His imitation is a desperate attempt to gain control of what has become a chaotic situation.

Ripley's increasing sense of frustration and failure with Dickie, which leads to the idea of killing him, is established prior to the murder scene in both works. However, in the novel, the murder is pre-planned by Ripley. Highsmith depicts how Ripley develops a hatred for Dickie, on the grounds of Dickie's inconsiderate behaviour towards him:

He hated Dickie, because, however he looked at what had happened, his failing had not been his own fault, not due to anything he had done, but due to Dickie's inhuman stubbornness. And his blatant rudeness! He had offered Dickie friendship, companionship, and respect, everything he had to offer, and Dickie had replied with ingratitude and now hostility. Dickie was just shoving him out in the cold. (87)

Feeling devoted to Dickie, yet receiving little in return, Ripley begins to feel fundamentally disrespected. At the same time, Ripley feels lonely and excluded. His feelings of hurt, loneliness, and anger, as well as his idealized version of himself in his relationship with Dickie results in his plan to kill Dickie and assume his identity. Ripley considers killing Dickie either by drowning him or by pushing him off a cliff. A chilling aspect of Highsmith's version of Ripley is that Ripley's idea shows up in his mind as any other random thought. There are no contemplations on guilt or morality. Rather, Ripley only considers his feelings of being a victim of Dickie's rude behaviour.

The pre-planning of the murder affects the mood of the murder-scene of Dickie. The scene occurs in a little motorboat on the Mediterranean and is the most brutal event in the novel and the film. Highsmith establishes a foreboding feeling in the setting, through the depiction of a "chilly and rather gloomy morning" (89). The weather is heavy and seems to loom over the characters: "Dickie looked out at the Mediterranean, which was slightly hazy though not with a presage of rain. This was the kind of greyness that would not disappear all day, and there would be no sun" (89). The weather reflects Ripley's emotional state and frames the mood of the scene. Highsmith creates an anxious mood by describing how Ripley is sweating, and how he is terrified of Dickie, as well as offended by Dickie's insulting laughter. Our knowledge of Ripley's gruesome intentions creates a nerve-wracking build-up to the murder, which is intensified by Dickie's smiling and complete unawareness of the fatal turn of events: "A wall of white spray rose up on Tom's left, then gradually fell to show the empty horizon. They were streaking across the empty water again, towards nothing. Dickie was trying the speed, smiling, his blue eyes smiling at the emptiness" (90). Dickie's moment of joy is uncanny because it is



also, unbeknownst to him, a moment of staring into the emptiness of his fate. Highsmith depicts the murder calmly:

Tom glanced at the land. San Remo was a blur of chalky white and pink. He picked up the oar, as casually as if he were playing with it between his knees, and when Dickie was shoving his trousers down, Tom lifted the oar and came down with it on the top of Dickie's head. (91)

Highsmith's objective description of the murder emphasizes the image of Ripley as emotionally detached. This detachment is emphasized by the fact that the greater parts of the murder scene involve Ripley's struggle to get out of the water and into the motorboat after he has thrown Dickie in the water. Highsmith creates an action-filled sequence in which Ripley must fight against the boat that begins to spin in the water. The sense of detachment is also emphasized by Highsmith's previous descriptions of Ripley, which provide readers with an intimate insight into Ripley's thoughts and feelings. As readers, we have been aware of Ripley's strong feelings of desire and of being a failure. By using objective descriptions, without any insight into Ripley's inner world, Highsmith detaches readers from Ripley.

### **3.5 Freddie Miles**

Freddie Miles is a significant character in both the novel and the film. In the novel, Highsmith introduces him as "a young man with red hair and a loud sports shirt, an American" (54). The depiction of Freddie's "red" hair and "loud" shirt, as well as the cultural and social associations connected to the notion of "an American," portray Freddie as someone clearly visible in the social group. In the novel, Freddie is portrayed from Ripley's point of view, unveiling Ripley's distaste for him:

Tom thought he was hideous. Tom hated red hair, especially this kind of carrot-red hair with white skin and freckles. Freddie had large red-brown eyes that seemed to wobble in his head as if he were cockeyed, or perhaps he was only one of those people who never looked at anyone they were talking to. He was also overweight. (54-55)

Freddie is a playwright, the owner of a villa in Cagnes-sur-Mer, and the son of a wealthy hotel chain owner. Significantly, Freddie appears only once in passing prior to his murder, as Dickie and Ripley are about to board the bus to Rome. His minor appearance in the novel affects the degree to which readers become emotionally invested in the character, which, in turn, affects the reader's emotional involvement in the murder of him. The consequence of Freddie's minor appearance is that his murder primarily serves to reflect Ripley, and his ability to get away with

murder. Consequently, Freddie's role in the novel is mainly as a pawn in Ripley's murderous game.

The murder scene of Freddie Miles unfolds similarly in the novel and the film. As the second murder of the story, after Dickie's murder, the scene offers an insight into Ripley which reveals his malevolent intentions. It shows us that Ripley is not only willing to murder in a fit of provoked anger, but for strategic purposes as well. The affective experience generated by the scene arguably serves as a primary example of how the overall mood of fear and suspense is established in the two works. In both works, Freddie comes to visit Dickie in Rome after not having heard from him in a while and is surprised to find Ripley there, wearing Dickie's clothes and rings. Freddie asks Ripley about Dickie, only to receive unsatisfying answers from Ripley. Freddie's suspicion begins to grow, yet he unwillingly follows Ripley's suggestion to see if he can find Dickie at Otello's and leaves the apartment. However, after meeting Signora Buffi in the stairway, a meeting that confirms his suspicions, Freddie returns to the apartment, where Ripley kills him upon his entrance.

In the novel, Highsmith creates a high degree of suspense in the murder scene by the combination of Freddie's strong physical presence and simultaneous reservedness and the fact that we are unaware of his thoughts when he leaves the apartment. Highsmith focuses on Freddie's constant gaze and tone of voice to build up a mood of suspense. Freddie either looks surprised, frowns, or stares at Ripley and replies "grimly" (125) and "unpleasantly" (125) to Ripley's questions. Highsmith's depiction of the subtle changes in Freddie's gestures and facial expressions as he becomes increasingly suspicious of Ripley creates moods of suspense and fear. For instance, Freddie's discovery of Dickie's identification bracelet on Ripley's wrist is depicted without any dialogue between the characters: "Freddie was looking at him now with a different expression, with a little surprise. Tom knew what Freddie was thinking. He stiffened, sensing danger. You're not out of the woods yet, he told himself. You're not out of the house yet" (124). Freddie's thoughts are never revealed in the scene. However, Highsmith's portrayal of his suspicions of Ripley is brought forth by the depiction of Ripley's fear of being caught. In addition, Freddie's body is depicted as a threat to Ripley:

He could feel the belligerence growing in Freddie Miles as surely as if his huge body were generating a heat that he could feel across the room. Freddie was the kind of ox

who might beat up somebody he thought was a pansy, especially if the conditions were as propitious as these. Tom was afraid of his eyes. (125)

Freddie provokes a sense of discomfort and eventually poses a threat to Ripley as he either pays no attention to him or pays too close attention to him. Now that Freddie is looking at him, Ripley becomes afraid of what Freddie might see.

### **3.6 Expressions of Mood in Minghella's *Ripley***

As mentioned, Minghella's *Ripley* conveys a suspenseful mood. In addition, the film conveys moods which reflect the depth of the character in the film in contrast to the character of the novel. The exploration of Ripley as a multifaceted character is evident already in the title of the film which is shown in the beginning, where we see adjectives such as: yearning, lonely, troubled, confused, sensitive, haunted, passionate, and sad. Ripley's feelings of guilt and remorse shows his capacity to reflect upon his willingness and capacity to murder in order to obtain a particular life and identity. In addition, the character falls in love with Peter, showing us both his capacity of true love and his willingness to accept and explore his homosexuality. In addition to new themes, Minghella establishes mood by adding the characters of Peter and Silvana. Whereas Peter emphasizes a loving and harmonious mood, Silvana emphasizes a foreboding and tragic mood. Furthermore, Minghella applies music to establish the various moods of the film. The next section will explore the way music conveys mood in the film.

### **3.7 Music**

As noted in the previous chapter, Sinnerbrink identifies three kinds of moods often applied in the film. I will mention two of them here: disclosive moods and episodic moods. Disclosive moods reveal the cinematic world and are often emphasized at the start of a film. Episodic moods are recurrent sequences which display a particular kind of mood throughout the film.

Music is a stylistic device and narrative tool that is heavily applied to develop both disclosive and episodic moods in the film. Sinnerbrink claims that music in film provides "structure and shape while also modulating mood overall" (157). Moreover, he claims that "Many films feature musical/performance interludes that vary the mood or shift the emotional dynamics of the narrative. Such interludes can work as a recurring feature of the film's visual and dramatic development" (157). The soundtrack achieves mood by expressing the cinematic world as well as the characters' feelings. Jazz, specifically, pervades the cinematic world of *Ripley*, and is a

paramount contribution to the overall aesthetic expression of the film. Music not only creates the moods of the cinematic world, it is also an important part of the plot. The characters love to talk about jazz, go to jazz nightclubs, and play jazz instruments. Dickie plays the saxophone, and Ripley plays the piano and imitates the singing of Chet Baker. In this way, music functions as a way to connect characters and to highlight Ripley's talent for imitation. This is also exemplified at the beginning of the film when we observe Ripley memorize various jazz and blues musicians as a way to impress and connect with Dickie. When they are in Mongibello, it is his collection of jazz records that truly attracts Dickie's attention. There are also other genres of music applied to convey the emotional atmosphere of scenes and relationships between characters. Local Italian traditional songs, for instance, are being sung in the scene in which Ripley enters Mongibello for the first time, and at the local festival of the Madonna, in which Silvana is found dead in the water. The traditional songs evoke the sense of historical roots and religion, local norms and tradition.

Finally, music is applied to connect Ripley and his lover Peter Smith-Kingsley and to convey a sense of gravity to the film. Their first encounter at the opera shows their common interest in classical music. In addition, Ripley visits Peter at a church in Venice during one of his practices as the conductor of the church orchestra. As Ripley enters the church, there is a paramount moment in which he looks up towards Peter as though Peter is the light of his life. The key moment emphasizes Peter's role as a possible saviour in Ripley's life. The scenes these two characters share involve episodic moods defined by classical music. This shows that music connects them emotionally. Peter's passion and commitment for music shows us his level of passion and commitment to Ripley. Minghella's choice to impart a passion for music to the character of Peter contributes to create a common interest between the two lovers, as both Ripley and Peter are talented piano players. They are connected via music and use music to communicate with each other. For instance, while visiting Peter, Ripley plays Vivaldi's *Stabat Mater* on the piano, emphasizing the dark theme of their dialogue about Ripley's loneliness and dark secrets. Peter replies optimistically by claiming, "Now that's the music talking" (*Talented* 1:42/2:13). The line underscores the significance of music as a means of communicating emotions in the film.

Overall, the various musical genres of the film, from modern jazz to classical music and local traditional songs, thematize the characters' complexities and search for connection and identity. The genre of jazz evokes a vibrant atmosphere, reflecting the characters' sense of freedom and youth and escape from the rules and regulations of home. The use of classical music, which is particularly present in scenes between Ripley and Peter, conveys a sense of gravity and profoundness, which thematizes the characters deep and intimate connection while also illuminating Ripley's darkness.

### **3.8 The Settings of New York and Italy**

In the film, the setting has an expressive significance to the story. In addition to conveying time, place, class and culture, it conveys Ripley's homelessness in the world. As in the novel, Minghella begins the story in New York and follows Ripley to Mongibello, Italy. The scenes from New York initially reveal a high-class culture to which Ripley wants to belong, but to which he is clearly an outsider. In this way, the scenes emphasize Ripley's lack of a place in the world. The first scene of New York is filmed from a bird's eye view and portrays a garden party at a rooftop overlooking the city. Ripley entertains the audience by accompanying Fran, an opera singer, on the piano. The camera films the upper-class audience listening attentively to the opera singer, providing the viewers with a feeling of wealth and prosperity. This is an upper-class environment, in which Ripley initially seems to perfectly fit with his borrowed Princeton jacket, his glasses, and overall nice and polite behaviour. However, in the following scenes, we see how Ripley is neither a part of this environment nor of any other: we see Ripley working as a valet at the theatre. During a musical performance on stage, Ripley's face peeps out of the heavy curtains of a theatre box. Half of his face is covered by the curtain, and his eyes are intensely studying the performance on stage. Suddenly, a woman in the box turns around and looks at him, prompting Ripley to close the curtains quickly. The strict expression on the woman's face functions as a warning, as if to prevent outsiders like Ripley from entering the privileged elite class without permission. Afterwards, we see Ripley playing the piano in the darkness on the stage after closing hours. Again, he is caught by someone, this time the janitor, and Ripley apologizes and leaves quickly. By portraying a restricted world of wealth and upper-class, Minghella creates the impression of a closed world, to which Ripley longs to be a part of. In this way, Minghella establish a mood of alienation.

The setting of New York is also filmed from Mr. Greenleaf's shipyard. The industrial landscape and the sounds of workers building boats surrounds Ripley and Mr. Greenleaf as they discuss the trip to Italy to convince Dickie to come back home. The shipyard elicits a feeling of New York as a modern, wealthy, and powerful city, which shapes its identity through industry. The shipyard evokes a vibrant mood.

As in the novel, the setting of Ripley's rundown basement apartment is portrayed as an unbearable place of living, reflecting Ripley's sense of an unbearable place of home within himself. The scene in the apartment is filmed with dim lighting and tightly framed with obstructing shadows, to create the sense of a narrow space. The grid over the basement windows in the blurred background, along with the use of shadows on Ripley's face, creates the feeling of being locked in a cage. The sounds of the upstairs neighbours fighting loudly, to the extent that the roof shakes, also create the feeling of a limiting environment and sense of isolation. In addition, the camera angle looks up at Ripley while rotating around, to create an effect of dizziness and disharmony in the room. Ripley's exit from his basement apartment, up from a dark, narrow and steep stairway, reflects a feeling of an inhuman environment. Minghella also emphasizes the notion of new beginnings by creating a transitional mood as Ripley prepares for his departure to Italy. The mood in the apartment transitions from chaotic to orderly and harmonious. A calm, classical song introduces the theme of Italy. The apartment is tidy and Ripley is dressed in a suit as we see him leaving the bleak apartment through an enlightened entryway. The transitional mood is emphasized as Ripley's climbs up the steep and narrow stairway from his grimy basement apartment, and into of Mr. Greenleaf's comfortable limousine. The mood of the scene reflects Ripley's transition from a life where he is constantly working to have ends meet, to a life of wealth and luxury.

Ripley's arrival in Italy is filmed with loose framing, allowing an abundance of space to unfold. The scene is filmed with a focus on landscape. Ripley arrives in a little bus, and as the bus passes the frame and drives into the distance, it opens the image of an endless heaven as blue as the ocean it seems to float into. The scene evokes feelings of freedom, relaxation, and bliss. It is also a contrast to the urban city and modern life. The little fishing village of Mongibello evokes the feeling of tradition and local norms. We hear the voices of the locals, who are either talking or singing as they greet each other. The mood is warm, harmonious, and exotic. This

stands in contrast to the urban and stressed sounds of machinery, televisions in bars, and honking cars in New York.

### **3.9 The Characters of Ripley and Dickie**

A significant change to the character of Ripley in the film is his guilty conscience. This alteration of character is established in the very first scene of the film. Under the credits, we see the slowly unveiling of the face of a saddened Ripley in a dark cabin, staring down, desolate and lost. The camera rotates around Ripley's face, showing each side of his face, as if he is wearing a mask. One side is lighted, while the other side is in darkness. The first line of the film, which is uttered by Ripley, emphasizes the film's focus on guilt: "If I could just go back. If I could rub everything out. Starting with myself. Starting with borrowing a jacket" (*Talented* 1:23/2:13). The singing of a lullaby, together with Ripley's grave facial expression in the scene, underscores Ripley's sensitivity while also suggesting that whatever Ripley regrets is somehow irreversible. Ripley is also cold and calculating as in the novel, but his feelings of guilt affect the plot development and the feeling and atmosphere in the film. One scene which exemplifies how Ripley's guilt affects the mood of the film occurs when Ripley and Meredith Logue go on a date to the opera. On stage, two opera singers confront each other with a gun. We see that Ripley is deeply engulfed in the scene as the confrontation reminds him of his confrontation with Dickie. One of the men takes out a gun and shoots the other man. The camera floats over the audience quickly before it zooms in on Ripley on the balcony. Ripley reacts to the gunshot with a shake in his body, as though he can feel it in his body. In the next scene, the man falls on the floor, covered with snow, while fake blood runs out from under his body. Ripley begins to cry as he watches the dramatic scene. The scene suggests that Ripley's imitation game is not just a result of his calculating ways, and because he wants to gain access to and control of other people's lives. Rather, his strong physical response suggests his strong affective experience of the play, and thereby his ability to feel pain and a deep sense of guilt and remorse. However, the chilling aspect of Minghella's version of Ripley is that the character's capacity to feel a deep sense of guilt does not prevent him from murdering people. Freddie and Ripley's lover Peter are both murdered after the scene in the opera.

In addition, the film brings up more directly than the novel the homoerotic subtleties at play between Ripley and Dickie. Whereas the novel portrays homoeroticism as a shameful subject,

expressed through Dickie's disgust, the film allows for a more compassionate and flirtatious version of Dickie, features of him which permeate the character and are reflected in all of his relationships. Minghella's version of Dickie character establishes a liberated, ecstatic and light-hearted mood in the film. The movie portrays Dickie as a popular person among the townspeople, an aspect of the plot that is more apparent than in the novel.

As in the novel, Dickie's murder is the most gruesome scene in the film. The main difference between the novel's depiction of the murder and the film's lies in the fact that whereas Dickie's murder is planned and calculated in the novel, it unfolds as an impulsive decision in the film. As a paramount event in the story, this alteration in the film affects the overall mood of the scene. In the film, a disquieting mood is quickly established between the characters from the beginning of the boat trip. The scene projects a strange feeling that something has reached its peak and is now over. A feeling of distress is established in the physical movements of the characters. While Dickie is standing up, shouting and dancing, shaking the boat from side to side, Ripley is sitting down, attempting to steady the movements of the boat. As Dickie sits down and begins to play air-drums, Ripley optimistically begins to discuss his plans of continuing to live in Italy with Dickie, "just for arguments' sake" (*Talented* 51:23/2:13). Dickie turns his head away from Ripley and responds disinterestedly: "I don't think so" (*Talented* 51:36/2:13). Dickie displays his absolute worst side in the boat with Ripley. His neglect of other's people's feelings is evident in his dialogue with Ripley. Annoyed by Ripley's talk of staying in Italy, and Ripley's belief that Dickie loves him, Dickie creates a distance between himself and Ripley, and underlines how Ripley instead has become a burden to him: "Tom, I don't love you. To be honest I'm a little relieved you're going. I think we've seen enough of each other for a while" (*Talented* 52:00/2:13) to which Ripley, enraged, can barely reply "What?" (*Talented* 52:13/2:13). Dickie then exclaims the fateful words which prompt Ripley to kill him: "You can be a leech! You *know* that! And it's boring. *You* can be quite boring!" (*Talented* 52:13/2:13). Ripley subtly shakes his head in the realization that he is deeply unwanted. Restless movements of the camera reflect the waves that bump the boat up and down and the growing mood of distress in the characters' dialogue. We see a close-up of Ripley, with Dickie blurred in the background, as he turns his head away from Dickie and looks out onto the ocean, withdrawing his presence in the boat. The camera is on the side of Ripley's face, a perspective that portrays his face and eyes directly, without the disguise of his glasses. This



allows for an intimate portrayal of him and underscores the feelings of the pain he feels from Dickie's words.

Ripley confronts Dickie, pointing to his flaking and changing moods and behaviour, from playing the saxophone to suddenly wanting to play drums, and from impregnating Silvana to wanting to marry Marge suddenly. Dickie gets aggravated and attacks Ripley, and Ripley's murder of him therefore unfolds as a necessary defence. The lights from the sunny sky soon becomes relentless, as it stands in contrast to the red blood pumping out of Dickie's head and running down along with his golden hair and white clenching teeth as he attempts to kill Ripley. The openness of the ocean no longer suggests freedom. Its overwhelming vastness causes moods of fear and isolation, as there is nowhere to either hide from each other or to be seen and rescued by others. The ocean is all-seeing, making the characters appear powerless, a point illustrated visually by filming the characters from a bird's eye view. The murder is also portrayed with an emphasis on sound to project moods of suspense and horror, but also to convey the characters' emotional and psychological state.

In the middle of the brutality, Minghella composes a lovely horizontal shot of the sea, with a mountain barely visible in the background through the ocean mist, and the boat in front. We see the shadow of Ripley standing with an oar, apparently alone, with sparks of the sun in the ocean surrounding the boat. After Ripley has finished the final stroke of his oar, Minghella creates a contrasting mood of ease in the calming sounds of seagulls, waiting to fight over the catch of food of the day. The sound of seagulls guides us away from the drama we have just witnessed. From the distance, it appears as though Ripley is a fisherman. The image underscores the idea that appearances may deceive. The scene then transitions into a dreamlike state, with a blurred image of the ocean which becomes increasingly darker. Finally, Minghella applies double exposure to transition the scene further into a bird's eye view of the boat in which Dickie and Ripley lie together, seemingly as two lovers. The eeriness of the scene is underscored by a ghostly musical theme, the image of Ripley holding tightly around Dickie's dead body, as well as the fact that Ripley is held by Dickie's lifeless arm. The scene reflects Ripley's obsession.

### 3.10 Freddie Miles

In the adaptation, the character of Freddie Miles has been changed considerably. In contrast to the novel, Freddie's character is more present in the film, and Minghella provides more depth to the character by involving him in several scenes. The character's overt critical and suspicious attitude towards Ripley develops a tension in the relationship between the characters and contributes to the development of suspense in the film. Some similarities with Highsmith's character have been translated to the film. Minghella translates neatly Highsmith's vision of Freddie, not only physically through his red hair and broad shoulders, but with wobbly yet observant eyes, as well. Freddie is sharp, and Minghella has translated this aspect of the character to the film, shown by his quick suspicion and discomfort with the sudden presence of Ripley, a complete stranger in Dickie's life. However, Minghella further portrays a witty, eccentric, and more unsympathetic character than in the novel. Freddie is flamboyant and intruding in the film, aspects of the character which are not present in the novel. This is exemplified by Freddie's boastful arrival in Rome, where he meets Dickie and Ripley. Freddie arrives in a red open top sports car playing jazz loudly from the radio. Strolling across the Piazza, Freddie looks at two young women passing him, and exclaims: "Oh God, don't you just want to fuck every woman you see, just once?" (*Talented* 33:27/2:13). The unsympathetic portrayal of Freddie is emphasized by the character's demeanour. For instance, his heavy and monotone voice insinuates a sense of indifference to the world, and his laughter expresses a feeling of dishonesty. His hands often hang in the air as if they were hanging on a string, adding a sense of laziness to the character. Audiences can deeply sympathize with Ripley's aversion towards Freddie's intrusion. Freddie deprives Ripley of Dickie, who seems deeply infatuated by Freddie's energy and vigor. Ripley is left alone, wandering the ancient streets of Rome and visiting art museums. In this way, the character instigates our empathy for Ripley, as he is excluded and isolated. Images of Ripley's lonesome wanderings in Rome, visiting art museums, evoke moods of hurt and desolation.

Freddie acts as a representation of Dickie's social circle by being a part of the inner circle of Dickie, Marge and Ripley. He appears as a more threatening character to Ripley than in the novel because of his constant dislike and suspicion of Ripley. He introduces a new external point of view on Ripley, one which observes him critically. Keeping the same watchful eye on Dickie's life as Ripley, albeit with different motivations, Freddie becomes a competitor to

Ripley. His presence thereby intensifies the mood of suspense in the film. Ripley is often portrayed from Freddie's suspicious point of view. Freddie comments on and subtly mocks Ripley for his conformist style, demeanor, and overall lack of fit in Dickie's luxurious and bohemian lifestyle. Freddie's mockery of Ripley empowers Freddie and consequently makes it increasingly difficult for Ripley to make a good impression of himself. Freddie's point of view on Ripley offers an insight into Ripley that is not found in the novel. Whereas Ripley in the novel appears hateful, annoyed, and vengeful while meeting Freddie, the film version of the meeting portrays Ripley as clumsy and inferior to Freddie. Freddie is portrayed as a person that we as audiences come to dislike the same way as Ripley does. Minghella involves Freddie in an added scene in the film which displays Ripley's growing obsession with Dickie as well as his simultaneous distaste, bordering on hate, for Marge. While at sea, Dickie and Marge share an intimate moment in the cabin, while Freddie sits drinking at the steering wheel of the boat. Ripley sits with a book in his hand on the roof of the cabin and stares obsessively at Dickie and Marge through the window. Freddie, sharply observing Ripley's strange demeanour towards him, starts to tease Ripley: "Tommy! How's the peeping? Tommy...How's the peeping?" (*The Talented* 40:54/2:13). In this way, Minghella translates the teasing of Ripley's gruesome aunt Dottie in the novel, who teases Ripley as a child, in a deeply insulting way.

The murder scene of Freddie Miles is contextualized within the hostile moods existing between Freddie and Ripley throughout the film, which climax in the murder. Freddie's suspicion of Ripley is never directly expressed verbally in either the novel or the film. However, the music score applied in the scene intensifies the mood of suspense. The music is applied as a way to generate the sense of a game being played between the characters. For instance, in a point of realization for Ripley, in which he understands that Freddie is becoming too suspicious of him, music transitions from the piano chord to the soundtrack. As Freddie walks over to the piano, he begins to push heavily down on a piano chord, disturbing the atmosphere of the quiet room while emphasizing the tension between the characters. He abruptly stops playing and points directly at Ripley while confronting him: "Are you living here?" (*The Talented* 1:19/2:13). The apathetic sound of Freddie's voice expresses the accusative nature of the question. Clearly, Freddie is not interested in knowing if Ripley is hiding something, he already heavily suspects that he is. It becomes apparent that Freddie no longer believes Ripley. Ripley replies: "No, no, I'm staying here...for a few days" (*The Talented* 1:20/2:13). Freddie says nothing, yet watches

Ripley attentively, continues to push the chord, and spins his pointing finger around, as if to signal confusion. Ripley, increasingly annoyed by Freddie's suspicion, and of his ruthless playing of the chord, says: "It's a new piano. You probably shouldn't....probably shouldn't..." (*Talented* 1:20/2:13). All the while, Freddie continues to interrupt Ripley by placing weight on the chord. Each time, we see Freddie comically wobbling his eyes and throwing his hand carelessly up each time he plays, as if to ridicule Ripley. In this way, the piano is applied as a way to speak for the characters. Freddie says nothing, and his silence creates a strained atmosphere of suspense. The moment is intensified by the soundtrack, which enters at this point to underscore the uncanny feeling between the characters. We hear the echoing sound of a thinner piano chord playing in the soundtrack, which underscores the significance of the piano chord in the scene as a signal of Freddie's suspicion. The transition from the sound of the piano chord in the room to the echo of the sound in the soundtrack provides an entrance into Ripley's mind. Ripley's eyes have been looking at the piano, as if to avoid Freddie's eyes. He now confronts Freddie by looking at him directly and smirking. The apparent ease in his face creates a sense of disharmony. We know he is in a forced situation in which his lies are being confronted by an antagonist who is just as smart as he. This is evident in the next shot, where we see Freddie's facial expression mirroring Ripley's; Freddie, too, is smirking and looking directly at Ripley, as if to confirm Ripley's fears. The scene may be read as Freddie's attempt to bring out the real Ripley, which he manages to do in this moment. This revelation of the real Ripley is underscored by Freddie's sudden shifts in the tone of his voice. As he looks around in the room, Freddie suddenly asks, in a friendly manner: "This place come furnished? It doesn't look like Dickie. It's *horrible*, isn't it? It's so...bourgeoisie" (*Talented* 1:20/2:13) Ripley, who says nothing, is entirely unaffected by Freddie's attempt to ridicule him. He only continues to smile. In this way, the music expresses a feeling of unease in the scene, as well as suggesting Freddie's suspicion of Ripley.

### **3.11 Peter Smith-Kingsley and Silvana**

Peter Smith-Kingsley is another character from the novel that has been significantly altered in the film. In the novel, Peter is described as Ripley's English friend, who is a part of the socialites that Ripley hangs out with in Venice towards the end of the novel. Minghella has developed Peter into Ripley's lover in the film. He is presented as the one person with whom Ripley might have a chance to develop an honest relationship based on true and mutual love. His character

thereby accentuates the exploration of desire, as well as the underlying insinuations of homosexuality that transpire in the novel. The characters' sensibility and compassion for one another develops a feeling of kindness and warmth in the film. The scenes featuring Peter and Ripley show us a gentler and more introspective Ripley than in the novel. Peter allows Ripley to explore his darker places. Ripley tells Peter:

Don't you just take the past and put it in a room, in the basement, and lock the door and never go in there? That's what I do. And then you meet someone special, and all you want to do is toss them the key and say: "Open up, step inside!" But you can't, because it's dark, and there are demons, and if anybody saw how ugly it is... (*Talented* 1:41/2:13)

Viewing Ripley from Peter's point of view allows for the development of a more complex character than Highsmith's character, whose primary focus is Dickie, and later escaping suspicion. As a mature character, Peter's love, comfort and trust allow Ripley to explore and unveil his feelings of pain and self-hatred, as well as bringing forth his feelings of true love.

One of the characters that have been added to the adaptation is the character of Dickie's lover, Silvana. She is a part of Dickie's extended circle of friends and acquaintances and represents a darker version of Dickie as a character. As Dickie's lover, Silvana shows up in different places throughout the movie. Her secretive conduct and obvious hurt and disappointment at Dickie's treatment of her develops an ominous mood and sense of foreboding to the plot of the film. Her character sheds light on Dickie's greed and lack of responsibility. Silvana's story ends tragically as she commits suicide due to an unwanted pregnancy with Dickie. Throughout the movie, we see her trying to deliver Dickie a message, yet Dickie ignores her warnings. We learn that Silvana asked Dickie for money for an abortion but that he did not help her. Her suicide is a wake-up call for Dickie, who feels guilt-ridden and in need to move on in life. It is also a turning point for the plot development and changes the dynamics in the relationship between Dickie and Ripley. The discovery of her suicide occurs in the midst of the celebration of a local custom in which a human-sized figure of Madonna is brought out of the water by the locals. Suddenly Silvana's body turns up from the water, as lifeless as the statue. The locals immediately start to mourn her loss and screams of desperation and horror fill the air. From his villa balcony, Dickie desperately screams out to the crowd: "Is someone calling an ambulance? Is someone calling an ambulance??" (*Talented* 42:59/2:13)). The tragedy lies as much in Silvana's suicide as it

does in Ripley's misconception of the culture from which Silvana comes. To Dickie, Italy is a place of relief, a place in which he may act outside of the moral boundaries of home. Silvana is a seductress to him. To Silvana, Dickie's lack of help in getting money for an abortion is fatal in 1950s Italy.

### **3.12 The Ending**

The film's conclusive ending is considerably different from the novel and establishes a tragic mood as Ripley kills his lover Peter. In the novel, Highsmith allows Ripley to slip away from the police as he arrives off the boat in Greece. This allows him to dwell in freedom and continue his thieving and murdering rampage for another four Ripley books. Minghella's *Ripley*, however, portrays Ripley's moral fall with a tragic and dramatic mood. Whereas Ripley's impressive ability to escape is celebrated in the novel, created by an optimistic mood in the ending, the film primarily examines the effect of a life based on escapement on Ripley's conscience. Minghella questions Ripley's morality by portraying his journey in the film as a "journey to purgatory" ("Truly"). The character in the film is troubled by the feeling of being entrapped within his loneliness. It also examines Ripley's struggle to escape from himself.

Although Ripley manages to fool everybody and escape suspicion, he does not escape the truth about himself and his increasing feelings of guilt and entrapment. On the boat home to America, Ripley tells his lover Peter: "I'm sorry, Peter. I'm lost. I'm going to be stuck in the basement, aren't I? That's my....terrible and alone...and dark...and I've lied about who I am, and where I am, and so nobody can ever find me" (*Talented* 2:05/2:13). In the end, Ripley kills his lover Peter and is afterward seen on the bed of his cabin, with a frozen look of shock, seemingly trapped within himself. The entrapment is stylistically expressed through a focus of the camera on the reflection of Ripley in the mirrored closet, which is increasingly narrowed as the closet doors close into the complete darkness of the screen. Ripley becomes entrapped in the mirror. In the end, he is no longer present in the room. The filming of the reflection in the mirror is significant, as it suggests the idea that Ripley has succumbed to an isolated reflection, one which reflects nothing, as there is no substance to Ripley's identity. It also illustrates Ripley's imprisonment in the role of an impersonator. The end scene establishes a confining and grave mood, which reflects Ripley's mind. Although Ripley has impersonated people throughout the entire film, his meeting with Peter is a temporary relief, as we see that he truly finds happiness

with him. By killing Peter, Ripley kills his only possibility of experiencing a relationship based on truth and love, and the possibility of confronting himself. He is caught not by police, but by and within himself. In this way, Minghella's portrayal of the moral consequences of Ripley's actions is evident through the way Ripley is caught within himself, an empty soul. Ripley is forever attempting to escape from his empty self by assuming new identities, yet in his refusal to confront himself, he never will. The ending of the film entirely reshapes our idea of Ripley. Not only is the ending conclusive in contrast to the novel, but it also portrays Ripley as a murderer with a moral consciousness. The film's portrayal of the tragedy of Ripley's moral fall, and the notion of purgatory, is also evident through the allegorical aspects of the film, as symbolized by the church where Peter Smith-Kingsley works, and in which Peter assumes the role of saviour to Ripley. The elements of the classical tragedy are also expressed in the film through the use of classic angelic music towards the end, which connects the audience to a sense of profundity and closure. This is further emphasized by the sounds of a closing closet door in Ripley's cabin in the final scene.

### **3.13 Comparative Analysis**

This part of the analysis will compare the ways mood is established in the novel and the film. In the novel, the setting of New York imparts a dark and decaying mood through depictions of dark streets, brownstone buildings, seedy bars, and Ripley's rundown and malodourous apartment. Ripley's apartment is the first of many places in which Ripley only stays temporarily, as he never settles anywhere. Highsmith's description of Ripley's apartment as a dark and smelly place conveys a gloomy and desolate mood. The place also evokes the feeling of abandonment, through Highsmith's depiction of the uncleanliness and lack of care for the place. The gloomy and desolate mood of the apartment reflects Ripley's feeling of homelessness within.

Likewise, Ripley's apartment in the film is portrayed as a rundown place, expressing a feeling of decay and homelessness. Minghella evokes the mood of isolation by applying visual obstructions in the frame, rotating camera movements, jagged edges gliding across the screen, and the sounds of fighting neighbours to represent a narrow space. Initially, the mood of the apartment is anxious, gloomy and confining. However, Minghella's use of jazz throughout the film begins in the apartment, where Ripley spends his time studying jazz musicians. His dedication to the music, and his joy of making the right guesses, creates an optimistic mood

despite the chaotic environment. Minghella's portrayal of Ripley's apartment also suggests the notion of new beginnings through a transitional mood which transforms the apartment from a place of chaos to a place of harmony as Ripley prepares to leave for Italy.

In both works, the city of New York evokes an urban and industrial mood. As portrayed in both works, New York reflects Ripley's sense of detachment. In the novel, this feeling of estrangement is evident in Highsmith's depictions of Ripley's feelings as he is leaving New York. In the film, the feeling is evoked by the portrayal of Ripley as a stranger in every context in which he appears; contrary to our initial impression of him, he does not belong to the high-class world of the Greenleafs; he is only a fill-in for somebody else. His job as a valet at the theatre provides him with the opportunity to examine music and to play the piano on stage in the shadows, but he is rejected from this place too. Even in his run-down apartment, he seems misplaced.

In both works, the setting of Italy provides notions of history, classicism, and local tradition. It also suggests freedom and new possibilities. Ripley is drawn to his associations of Europe as a place of new beginnings and is invigorated by the luxury of Dickie's life. A significant difference between the novel and the film is in their representations of Italy. By using sounds and music, primarily jazz, Minghella portrays a young, youthful and vibrant country which is coloured by both its traditional customs as well as its modern life, attracting young, wealthy people. Through its audiovisual representation, as well as its constant visual presence, Minghella transforms the setting into a character by itself, by portraying Italy as a popular destination. It is a vibrant place of art, culture, and music, features which attract young and wealthy people who can afford to travel. The characters travel to Italy in order to experience the country in itself. By making Italy more attractive and appealing, Minghella places the viewers firmly in the characters' shoes. It becomes evident why Italy is an appealing place. All of the characters are there to fulfil dreams: Marge is in Italy to write her book, Dickie is there to enjoy a bohemian life of luxury and joy, and Freddie travels there because a part of his wealthy lifestyle is to travel. In both works, Freddie is involved in the trip to Cortina. In the novel, he also travels to London suddenly. In Ripley's case, of course, it is vital that he is able to assume Dickie's identity in a country that does not pry too much regarding passport photos.



The moods of the setting are significant as expressions of the underlying emotions of characters' relationships. Minghella creates a connection between the characters and the setting of Italy, in a way which makes viewers connect with the characters through the setting. For instance, when Ripley, Dickie and Freddie meet in Rome, it quickly becomes evident that Ripley is the third wheel of the group. Whereas Dickie and Freddie stay in a vibrant music store, listening to jazz, Ripley goes to see ancient architecture. We see Ripley passing an enormous sculpture of a foot. Ripley's small size compared to the sculpture illuminates Ripley's sense of inferiority to the relationship between Dickie and Freddie. Moreover, the grandeur of the empty and solitary area of the Roman Forum in the evening, together with the gloomy music in the scene, evokes an atmosphere of abandonment and loneliness, reflecting Ripley's tremendous feeling of hurt and rejection. He has nobody there with which to share the grandeur of the view displayed in front of him. In addition, he is alone in his experience of being hurt.

The small and narrow streets of Mongibello display a charming and secretive mood, which reflects the secret relationship between Dickie and Silvana. We see Marge and Ripley walking along the streets in sunlight, and we see Dickie meeting Silvana there in secrecy. Rome, on the other hand, the place where Ripley and Dickie meet the flamboyant Freddie, displays moods of modern life, musicality, and flirtatiousness, moods that reflect the disruption in the friendship of Dickie and Ripley as a result of Freddie's sudden entrance. The vitality that Freddie brings with him also reflects the beginning of the stagnation of Ripley and Dickie's friendship.

The different approaches to Dickie's murder in the novel and the film reflect the different versions of Ripley, who is primarily calculating in the book and guilt-ridden in the film. In both works, Ripley's eventual decision to kill Dickie is based on Ripley's feeling of Dickie's tremendous disrespect of his kind offerings of friendship, and of his fear of being lonely and a failure. In addition, the different approaches to the character and the murder scene develop different moods in the two works. The murder seems chilling in the novel, precisely because of the planning of it beforehand. In the film, the murder is the result of Dickie's assault on Ripley and becomes a confrontation in which Ripley must defend himself. The scene is chilling, but Minghella also creates a sad and anxious mood because of Ripley's feeling of being blatantly rejected. The scene initially evokes a feeling of shock and becomes uncanny afterwards because of Ripley's evident obsession with Dickie.

The expressive significance of the music, setting, and the characters as ways to develop mood in the film, show that Minghella's adaptation challenges the prejudiced idea of film adaptations as inferior copies of an original source novel. Instead, the medium-specific devices of film, as well as the alterations to characters of the film, suggest the complexity of communication. Music functions as a narrative tool that conveys the emotional aspect of the film, as well as disclosing the cinematic world. Likewise, the setting expresses atmospheres and tensions, and suggests the characters' identities. The alterations of characters in the adaptation, such as Ripley, Freddie and Peter, emphasize the complexity of human nature.

Freddie is a pompous and extravagant character, which initially makes him appear self-absorbed. However, he is also extremely sharp and observant, as in the novel. He is also witty, and in this sense provides a sense of momentary relief in the tense atmosphere of the film. The character's sharpness creates a suspenseful mood in the film. Peter is kind and charming, and seems the ultimate light in Ripley's life, yet he is also naive in his adamant belief in the goodness of Ripley, yet this naivety is also an expression of Peter's innocence and firm belief in the goodness of others. This is an essential trait of the character which is necessary in order to develop an image of Ripley as a pure soul with the capacity to discover true love. In this way, Peter's calm, warm and empathetic character brings an optimistic and harmonious mood to the film. The character's unconditional love for Ripley provides a sentimental mood to the story, as it enlightens Ripley's dark side. Peter unveils Ripley as a more humane, troubled and complex character.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis has been to examine translations of mood in the cinematic adaptations of Highsmith's *Ripley* and *Salt*. The aim has been to change the view of cinematic adaptations as secondary and inferior copies of the novel, to a view of cinematic adaptations as a supplement to the novel which aims to re-create, re-interpret, and develop the story. Viewing the adaptation as an independent artistic re-creation of a story allows for a rewarding approach to both the film adaptation and the novel, and to the experience of film viewing itself. As an independent re-creation of the story, the cinematic adaptation advances our understanding of the novel and illuminates a variety of aspects from the novel, while also being valuable as an original source by itself. One of the main questions asked in the introduction was whether successful Highsmith adaptations, through the stylistic devices of film, can capture aspects of the story that are not emphasized in the novel, but which audiences nonetheless wish to associate with Highsmith. The claim was that the success of the adaptations analyzed here is a result of their ability to preserve a distinct mood from the novel while also establish other moods through the variety of techniques applied within the medium of film.

The choice to examine the technique of mood, specifically, was based on the idea that mood is an undervalued yet essential part of the film experience. As Sinnerbrink claims, moods allow us to engage emotionally with the film, and our emotional connection with the film is therefore essential to understand the overall meaning of the work. In addition, the choice to examine Highsmith's work with a focus on mood was based on the impression that mood is a prominent feature in Highsmith's novels as well as in the adaptations. The aim was to explore why, specifically, the two Highsmith's novels and their adaptations elicit different feelings.

My adaptation analysis of *Salt* and *Carol* shows that the adaptation diverges from Highsmith's novel significantly in the development of mood. The novel emphasizes an anxious and confining mood that reflects Therese's sense of alienation from society's expectations of her social role as a heterosexual young woman in the 1950s. The moods are developed through descriptions of Therese's thoughts and feelings, and the use of diction and vocabulary. The verbal and non-verbal language of characters is more fully present in the novel than in the film.

This is particularly evident with Therese, whose point of view is the main perspective of the novel. Therese's voice is therefore considerably stronger in the novel than in the adaptation.

In *Carol*, Haynes emphasizes moods of desire, disconnection, and disintegration. Whereas Highsmith slowly develops mood through descriptions of the characters' interior worlds, diction, and vocabulary, Haynes translates and expresses these moods instantaneously through a combination of stylistic devices of film such as diffusion of color, light, sound, music, camera angles, and the overall look of the film, as well as the actors' countenance and overall performance. Therese appears more muted, with a tendency to observe the world rather than participate in it. On the other hand, the reserved version of Therese highlights Carol's impact on her. This representation of Therese serves to show that the main person in Therese's life is Carol, not herself.

My adaptation analysis of *Ripley* shows that both the novel and the film establish a suspenseful mood through the themes of murder, obsession, and identity theft. However, Minghella also establishes a mood that is empathetic, harmonious, and at the same time tragic, by exploring the themes of guilt, remorse, and unconditional love. In this way, Minghella creates a diversity of moods reflecting Ripley's complex journey throughout the film. Ripley's complexity as a character is the result of his capacity to murder combined with his ability to feel guilt and remorse. Minghella's Ripley is therefore a more sentimental and humane character than in the novel. In addition to the themes of the film, music is applied to establish the moods of the film. Jazz and classical music are applied to evoke a vibrant, passionate, melancholic, and grave mood which primarily serves to reflect Ripley as a multifaceted character. The various moods of the film emphasize the transformation of the character of Ripley, from a cold and calculating murderer in the novel to a guilt-ridden and remorseful character in the film.

Although mood is an essential part of both the novels and the films analysed here, mood is more strongly emphasized in the films. In this way, the adaptations defy the notion that film adaptation is in any way inferior to the novel as an art form. Instead, the films' focus on the establishment of mood as a way to highlight particular aspects of the story contributes to new ways of experiencing the novel. The adaptations thus shift the course of the discussion of film adaptation away from fidelity criticism to a discussion on the way that film may complement and supplement the novel through its status as an equivalent and independent art form.

## Works cited

*Carol*. Directed by Todd Haynes, performances by Cate Blanchett and Rooney Mara. The Weinstein Company, 2015.

Clarke, Donald. "The five best Patricia Highsmith adaptations". *The Irish Times*, Culture, May 2014, <https://www.irishtimes.com/blogs/screenwriter/2014/05/06/the-five-best-patricia-highsmith-adaptations/>. Accessed Feb 2021.

Cwik, Greg. "The 5 Best and 5 Worst Patricia Highsmith Film Adaptations". *IndieWire*, October 2014, <https://www.indiewire.com/2014/10/the-5-best-and-5-worst-patricia-highsmith-film-adaptations-69364/>. Accessed Jan 2021.

Highsmith, Patricia. *The Price of Salt*. Dover Publications, Inc., 2015.

---. *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. Vintage, 1999.

Hutcheon, Linda. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London and New York, Routledge, 2013.

Lachman, Edward. "Edward Lachman Shares His Secrets For Shooting Todd Haynes' 'Carol'". *IndieWire*, December 2015, <https://www.indiewire.com/2015/12/edward-lachman-shares-his-secrets-for-shooting-todd-haynes-carol-48627/>. Accessed Feb 2021.

Lodge, Guy. "Patricia Highsmith at 100: The Best Film Adaptations". *The Guardian*, Culture, Film, Jan 16 2021. [www.theguardian.com/film/2021/jan/16/patricia-highsmith-at-100-the-best-film-adaptations](http://www.theguardian.com/film/2021/jan/16/patricia-highsmith-at-100-the-best-film-adaptations). Accessed February 2021.

McKee, Alison L. "The Price of Salt, Carol, and Queer Narrative Desire(s)". *Patricia Highsmith on Screen*, edited by Wieland Schwanebeck and Douglas McFarland, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. 139-157.

Minghella, Anthony. "Truly, madly, Ripley". *The Observer*, Oscars2000, Feb 13<sup>th</sup> 2000.

---. *Interviews*, edited by Mario Falsetto, The University Press of Mississippi, 2013.

Montgomery, Hugh. "The Talented Mr. Ripley is a sociopath for our Instagram age". *BBC, Film History*, Dec 12<sup>th</sup> 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20191211-the-talented-mr-ripley-is-a-sociopath-for-our-instagram-age>. Accessed January 2021.

Nagy, Phyllis. "Highsmith Was the Queen of Guilt". *Patricia Highsmith on Screen*, edited by Wieland Schwanebeck and Douglas McFarland, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. 275-279.

---. *Carol. Best Adapted Screenplay*. The Weinstein Company, 2015.

Patterson, John. "Carol: The best Patricia Highsmith adaptation to date?". *The Guardian*, 23 Nov 2015, [www.theguardian.com/film/2015/nov/23/carol-patricia-highsmith-todd-haynes](http://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/nov/23/carol-patricia-highsmith-todd-haynes), Accessed 23 March 2021.

Sinnerbrink, Robert. "Stimmung: exploring the aesthetics of mood". *Screen*, vol 53, no 2, June 2012, pp. 148-163.

Snyder, Mary. *Analyzing Literature-to-Film Adaptations. A Novelist's Exploration and Guide*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2011.

Stam, Robert. "Introduction: The Theory and Practice of Adaptation". *Literature and Film. A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*, edited by Robert Stam and Alessandra Raengo, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, 1-52.

*The Talented Mr. Ripley*. Directed by Anthony Minghella, performances by Matt Damon, Jude Law, Gwyneth Paltrow and Cate Blanchett. Paramount Pictures/Miramax International/Buena Vista International, 1999.

Plantinga, Carl. *Moving Viewers: American Film and the Spectator's Experience*, University of California Press, 2009.

Watercutter, Angela. "How Todd Haynes Made *Carol*, the Year's Most Beautiful Film". *Wired*, February 2015, <https://www.wired.com/2015/12/todd-haynes-carol/>, Accessed 24 March 2021.

White, Patricia. "Sketchy Lesbians: *Carol* as History and Fantasy". *Film Quarterly*, vol 69, no 2, 2015, pp. 8-18,

Wilson, Andrew. *Beautiful Shadow: A Life of Patricia Highsmith*, Bloomsbury, 2010.

