SOME ASPECTS OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY IN HIS RELATION TO AMERICAN LITERARY NATURALISM

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CHAPTER I

THE NATURALIST TRADITION AND HEMINGWAY

A study of a living author is in many respects inconclusive. In certain other and considerable respects, however, such a study can contribute valuable material to the work done so far. While no last word can be said, a more vivid impression of the times in which the author wrote can be offered by a contemporary rather than by a historical outlook.

This thesis will consider the work of Ernest Hemingway in relation to the school of American novelists who are known as "Naturalists". It is not my intention in this work to include all of Mr. Hemingway's writings. His Journalism includes his reports on the diplomatic manoeuvres in Europe at the close of the last war; his personal thoughts on fishing, hunting, men's clothes and recreations, revolution in Cuba, and now first-hand accounts of war in Spain and Great Britain and France. It is an interesting but little known fact that Hemingway had several poems published in the earliest days of his career as a writer. These will not be taken into consideration here. The aim of this study is to consider Hemingway as a leading American Naturalist and to demonstrate his ability to transcend the position of a stock artist.

Since Hemingway's critics take exception to traits in his work that are typical Naturalist tendencies, it will be the purpose of this first chapter to study some of the characteristics to be found in the American school of naturalistic novelists. In this way it will be possible to decide, in some measure, how much of the credit and how much of the "blame" can be fairly allotted to Hemingway, and how much can be allotted to a society which has provided the stimulus of the movement.

The term Naturalist as it applies to writers of fiction in the past fifty years can be defined only broadly. The authors believe themselves to be portraying truths not misleadingly, and to be reporting life as it really is. They saw man as a creature biologically advanced over other animals only through a greater cunning, and not distinguished from them by the possession of a free and individual will, or by the possession of a soul. Neither did they believe in a Spiritual Father on whose benevolence and mercy man could rely. They chose their subjects and their methods of treating those subjects with as strong a bias as the Romanticists, but they were attempting to reverse the positions held by the Romanticists.

There is a definite distinction to be made between the American and European schools of Naturalism. Although they

both sprang from the same basic philosophy, they applied it to totally different problems and cultures, and with vastly different results. European Naturalism arose in the last half of the last century and grew from an old and settled culture. It was in part the result of the new mechanistic psychology, and in a lesser measure, the result of a desire on the part of the literary artists to breath new life into the literature of the late nineteenth century. The Romantic movement had spent itself, and no strong new movement had emerged. In America it followed as a result of the strong reaction of a young nation faced for the first time with industrial capitalism.[1] It was more of an involuntary response to life than a literary creed or philosophy. Since the rise of American Naturalistic fiction is a more spontaneous reaction to the social content, its artistry is less studied and deliberate than that of the Continent. This is not to say that high artistic standards were not obtained in America. Stephen Crane, for example, has been compared favourably with the European masters. The earnestness and honesty of the American school deserves serious attention and compensates where compensation is needed, for the flawless skill of Flaubert and Zola.

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1 Alfred Kazin, On Native Grounds, An Interpretation of Modern American Prose Literature, (New York: Reynal and Hitchkock Company, 1942.) p.15

Alfred Kazin enumerates the ills of Modern America:

> But the new America that was cradled in the Civil War, baptized by the Bessemer process and married too early in life to the Republican Party, the new America that came in rudely through Gettysburg and the Wilderness, stamping across a hundred corpses, blaring its tariffs, sniggering its corruption, crying - "Nothing is lost but honour" - that America was so strange, shocking and new that its impact on the first post bellum generations still reverberates in the American mind.[2]

There were, of course, some poseurs in the ranks of the American Naturalists. It is even dangerous to say how much of any one author's work is basic conviction and how much is pose. But in general, the fact that the movement in America had no "coherent and dynamic orientation," no literary laboratory for experiments, and was born grim and joyless,[3] would seem to indicate that the New World response to determinism and industrialism was, in the beginning, a less studied and more genuine response than the Continental movement.

The natural progenitor of the movement was realism, which was a literary movement aiming at a truer representation of life through the use of undistorted facts, events and characters.

It minimized unnatural plot manipulation, allowing

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[2] Ibid p.18

[3] Ibid p.15

events to speak for themselves. It subdued optimism and largely abandoned the aristocratic approach to society, sacrificing its literary "all" at the altar of honest, objective interpretation. The Realists had no philosophy in common other than their belief in objective truthful writing; they retained their individual outlooks as a group, but their ranks probably carried the seeds of the pessimism of the later Naturalists. A valid philosophy carries more weight and appeal if it is based upon an accurate knowledge of fact, even though the philosopher construes his facts in such a way that we cannot believe his end result.

W. D. Howells describes the realistic method thus: "Realism is nothing more nor less than the truthful presentation of material."

In so defining the term, Howells fails to realise that literature prior to his time was not essentially untruthful. It was life as the authors saw it, or imagined they saw it, or believed it possible to see it, prior to the drastic revaluation of man's environment which the "modern world" caused him to make. Their method, then, carried an implied philosophy. They were stirring into awareness but they had not yet awakened.

Luccock claims that Naturalism is a self-attached

appendage to realism,[4] but it seems to be instead, a very logical outcropping. While the realists were making all the facts evident, and modern psychologists, scientists and economists were giving these facts their interpretations, certain artistic temperaments who found these interpretations uninspiring, reacted violently and articulately.

A popular tendency is to date the birth of the disillusioned man from World War I. This is partially accounted for by the fact that a great deal has been written by young men in both this continent and Europe since that war, and as a direct result of that war. The Naturalist School in America has actually enjoyed a fifty year ascendancy as a school. Its articulation is becoming more insistent as it sees the world plunging from war to depression and back to war. It fancies it sees the earth spiralling to its destruction.

It is not the ambition of this study to discover how effective a war is in shaping a nation's artistic endeavour. History does not support a definite conclusion on the question whether a war furthers or hinders art. The great artistic era of the Renaissance was one of comparative peace,

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[4] Halford, E.Luccock, Contemporary American Literature and Religion, (New York: Willett Clark and Company, 1934) p. 55

but at the same time, the devastating Napoleonic wars produced many great writers.

Obviously, the Great War determined the subject matter of a large volume of literature that immediately followed it. It placed emphasis on the effects of mass bloodshed on both the individual and his society. The artists became engrossed in examining these effects on themselves and on their fellow men. It is a nice point whether or not the Naturalist movement, lacking the impetus of the horror arising from the last war and its aftermath, would have given place to a new school.

Possibly the most outstanding feature of Naturalism is its pessimism, which stems from the belief in determinism, or the notion of a clearly unsympathetic universe over which man's illusory striving can exercise no control. It is more frequently an implied view than a stated one. The nineteenth century saw the intellectual world deeply moved by Darwin and the biological determinists and by Marx and the economic determinists. A sudden and blinding flash of light swung in on man's last refuge, the psyche, and his individual will seemed to shrivel and to sink into impotence and stupor.

But the twentieth century probed even further and explained away man's emotions, leaving only raw nerve ends,

responsive solely to external stimuli.

The Naturalists allow for no moral judgment. They are anti-moral sceptics. The fact that they are preoccupied with morals does not make them "burningly moral"[5], as Lewisohn claims, but it does manage to keep them out of the ranks of the amoral, who are so unconcerned with morals as to have never discovered their existence, or, in any event, to have recognized their value as a social good.

They feel that man is impelled - (the a priori assumption being that he is incapable of self impulsion) - by biological determinants such as heredity and environment, by mechanistic determinants, by the chemical precipitant or "chemism" in which Dreiser believes, by a "vast imbecility given enormous power and no benevolence"[6], or by a behaviour pattern dependent upon glandular functioning. The choice, if there is one, is not exhilarating.

The various techniques employed by the school are largely the temperament of the individual artist. It can, and often does, include the "stream of consciousness" method,

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[5] Ludwig Lewisohn, Expression in America, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1932) p. 463

[6] Russell Blankenship, American Literature, as an expression of the national mind, (New York: H.Holt and Company, 1931) p. 514

the slice of life formula as well as various reportorial journalistic devices. An interesting technical device has been attempted by John Dos Passos, Ben Hecht, Katherine Brush and others. Scenes are presented in much the same manner as they are in a movie newsreel. A superficially haphazard, kaleidoscopic effect is produced, but as the process continues, a definite relevancy appears, and a final thematic coherence is made evident. Quasi-autobiography is also a popular method used by the author to demonstrate his philosophy. The apparent structural incoherence in Dos Passos' stories is resolved by careful reading and is common to many followers of the Naturalist school. The continuity is found to lie in mood and theme rather than in events.

There is an admittedly Freudian tinge to a great deal of the work done by the school, but this appears to be due less to the importance the authors attached to Freud than to the greatly increased freedom they have enjoyed in their writing since the close of World War I. The relaxed moral standards of the upset world permitted almost unlimited licence in the realm of art. By 1927 people, under the tutelage of science, economics and psychology,[7] were prepared to accept Naturalism regardless of its possibly undesirable practical effect on society.

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[7] Ibid p. 537

Although one might suppose that nature produces human character in nearly infinite variety, the "Naturalists" have tended to simplify and reduce its characteristic variations remarkably, and so to reduce their field of vision.

Both Parrington and Hastings have attempted to specify the exact types of character to which the Naturalists have a bias, although they concede that their lists are not inclusive or definite. Parrington lists three main types: Characters with a marked physique, small intellect, and animal drives, excited neurotics who are the victims of moods, often aggravated by a physical defect; and (less frequently), strong characters whose will is broken.[8] Hastings mentions the primitive, instinctive, mean, ugly, vicious types. He classifies them as "simple, oversimple, non-intellectual, sophisticates and neurotics."[9] If these estimates told the whole story, it would be reasonable to say that the school appraised the whole world as unstable; and therefore the school would not have submitted such valuable documents as they have turned in during the past decade.

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[8] Vernon Louis Parrington, The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America, 1860-1920. Main Currents in American Thought, vol. III, (New York: Harcourt Brace Company,1930) p. 323

[9] William Thomson Hastings, Syllabus of American Literature, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941) p.94

It is understandable that the school of pessimistic determinists should exist at a time when individuals are so dwarfed and overpowered by great social events; but its faults are grave and its usefulness and wisdom limited. America needed the critical objectivity of Naturalism, but perhaps has other needs also and would do better to qualify her authors" "roaring denial of metaphysical and moral values." [10]

This first conscious integration of experience and expression,[11] like most untried things, lacks the perspective and balance that only time and trial can give.

A charge laid at the door of some Naturalists, is that they are inclined to a superficial and meaningless view of life, and their futility lacks the sincerity of anguish. Some employ a scale of inverted values to achieve originality, and their new positions seem to have been reached too easily. In the naturalistic novels of the twenties which deal with social discontent, they do not budge very far from their middle class outlook and so do not achieve as much true understanding of their problems as have the more open-minded authors of the thirties and forties. Their somewhat narrow vision gave their writing the appearance of severing relations with

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[10] Ludwig Lewisohn, Op. Cit. p. 338

[11] Ibid p. 414

the social whole.[12] They reduce man ad absurdum to a simple animal with only his animal drives and no central intellectual or spiritual control.

In their intense preoccupation with their artistic development, their sensibility, originality, and their denunciations of society and industrialism, they ignored the value of illusion as an energy producer. This oversight led them to sometimes bitter and sometimes apathetic writings.

In denying the spiritual life of man, they discovered a need which they are unable now to make good, and the lack of which they feel very keenly. Their despair accumulates until it becomes intolerable; they themselves have denied it of all significance through their attitude to it. Kazin raises the question whether or not the American author of this century did not seek expression rather than deliverance.[13]

The most forcible criticism of the movement as a whole has been advanced by the late Paul Elmer More. More maintains that the Naturalists have missed all the attributes of lasting value. He believes, as do a great many other intellectuals, that the universal bestiality of man is not the universal appeal of art. Another well-made point he

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12 V. F. Calverton, The Liberation of American Literature, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932) p. 400

13 Alfred Kazin, Op. Cit. p. 365

establishes is that the inverted order cloys the soonest; that is, that novelty has a fleeting value only. The very intensity and element of shock, in the stark over-emphasis of Naturalism turns quickly to satiety and disgust.

As Rosenfled says:

> Brutality is an unprofitable substitute for neglected concentration and penetration. And where they are superficial and incompletely declarative of the situation entrusted to them, the epic and dramatic form, active beat, verisimilitude, constitute a miscarriage of the author's business of projection and definition quite as fatal as a one sided subjectivism, wild lyricism, and unrelieved analytical procedure as completely abortive of the reflection of universal law remaining the prime concern of art.[14]

In considerable measure the movement is self-defeating; in dissipating the rosy aura of illusions that had encircled even some of the realists, such as W. D. Howells, they set up further illusions of their own. For is not their complete futility and disillusion a needless admission of bankruptcy?

A closer study of Hemingway's work, taken as typical of the Naturalist School would lack a good deal of its point if we did not first consider a few of the other writers whose books are their reaction to, or interpretation of, determinism.

In taking our view and choice of the Naturalists,

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[14] Paul Rosenfeld, By Way of Art, Criticisms of Music, Literature, Painting, Sculpture and the Dance, (New York: Coward-McCan, 1928) p. 163

then, we will reject the resounding classification that are so convenient and so misleading: The Cult of Violence, The Cult of the Simple, the Hard-boiled School, The School of Sensibility, the Philosophical Naturalists, the Post-War Disillusionists, The Hangover School, the Aesthetes, The Lost Generation, The Beautiful-but-damned, The Futilitarians, The School of Agony, The Marxists, The Proletarian Writers, The Left Wing Novelists, The Primitivists and other graphic but non definitive labels.

To impose limits on this inquiry so that it may claim some definiteness and relevance, we will confine our interest to those authors of this century in The United States who have shown a decided and consistent belief in determinism.

Stephen Crane, although he died at a very early age, may be said to be the father of American Naturalism. He pioneered almost alone in the movement during the last decade of the last century. Literary tastes had, admittedly, shown a proclivity toward Realism and Naturalism, but the ripple had not yet become a roaring tidal wave and so was temporarily backwashed by the rush of "Stevensonian gush," [15] in the early 1890's.

Crane's first novel, Maggie: A Girl of the Streets

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15 Alfred Kazin, Op. Cit. p. 10

was definitely naturalistic, but since it was not widely read, it did not have a telling effect on American literature. His Red Badge of Courage gave Naturalism to America in 1895. It was such a successful assertion of a new literary position, that there could be no subsequent retrenching or denial. He demonstrated that life and death are casual events in the cosmic scheme of things, this world being just a ship cast adrift by an uncaring God. Human effort is vain, in so far as the ultimate reward of human effort is the gift of immortality through God after death. These points of view could have been established, and Crane would still not have fallen under the Naturalist category, had he offered reform, indeed he did not seem interested in reform, but went along through his bitter life span with a sometimes icy, and sometimes fiery disdain for the world.

Frank Norris, like Crane, died before his time but shares with him a great deal of importance as an example and an influence. Norris was a disciple of Zola, and in his attempt to add the knowledge he had gained on the Continent to American letters, brought Zola's Naturalism to his own country. Norris emphasized sometimes economic determinism, sometimes blind chance. The Octopus (1901) is an example of his economic determinism, demonstrating how the tentacles of industrialism grasp and try to crush the individual.

Perhaps Theodore Dreiser has exerted the greatest single influence on American literature this century. His novel Sister Carrie appeared in 1900, and was published largely through the help of Frank Norris, who recognized it at once as important. It was received with disapproval because it went even further into the annals of evil than Stephen Crane's Maggie: A Girl of the Streets; it not only documented and called attention to sin, but it allowed the sinful Carrie to succeed.

After the early death of Norris and Crane, Dreiser was left almost alone until 1917, to carry on the tradition of American Naturalists. In 1911 he presented his pathetic Jennie Gerhardt, which brought H. L. Mencken into the field as his champion, and caused the United States to recognize him as a serious and powerful artist with a message. In 1912 The Financier appeared, and in 1914, The Titan. These two books formed part of a projected trilogy and were the fictional account of the career of the magnate, Samuel Yerkes. The study is considered to be the most acute and carefully compiled chronicle of American business ever written. In 1915 he published The Genius, a tale about a man's intense pursuit of wealth, love and art. Before considering The American Tragedy, his best known work, it will be appropriate to glance at the American literary output during the years when Dreiser was upholding the Naturalist tradition almost

single-handed.

The period from 1903 to 1917 saw an enormous volume of radical, polemic, critical, muck-raking prose. I do not say literature, for it was a turgid stream devoted more to specialized criticism than to higher expression of art, although it had considerable value socially. Its importance in connection with this study is a negative importance. Several of the authors whose philosophy at the outset was naturalistic, lost sight of their goal as artists and grasped zealously the banner of reform.

Jack London, originally a Darwinian, could not sort out and organize his various interests and so got trapped in the cross-currents of social reform, and writing for money.

Robert Herrick abandoned the Naturalists whole-heartedly, and devoted his intelligent but not inspired pen to social problems.

Upton Sinclair, although never clearly an out-and-out member of the school used his talents as a literary artist solely for a weapon to bring about reform.

It was immediately following the first World War that the Naturalists cropped up in numbers and with a violence and determination that would not be gainsaid. They had a lot of things to say about their world and they were going to be heard.

So they began to speak their piece, and are still speaking; the last of their testimony has not been made; so the consequences of these protests have not yet been reckoned.

Dreiser's influence can scarcely be overestimated. All subsequent Naturalists owe him a debt, whether it be in their consciousness that they do so or not. He believed that there are chemisms which exist in the blood stream and attract human beings, physically and chemically, to their own disaster. The world is too big to be any man's oyster. "Things are in the saddle," as even the idealist Emerson came to realise, "and ride mankind." And all organic "things", or physio-chemical forces, as well as inorganic, are governed by pure chance. Since Dreiser is a cosmic philosopher as well as a novelist, his distinctions between human qualities are less great than those of a man with a smaller outlook; also, the fate of the individual is swamped to a greater extent in the general pity of the world - "The most portentious human tragedy must seem to him (Dreiser) only a tiny gasp for breath, the most delightful human comedy only a tiny flutter of joy." [16]

He minimizes the distinction between good and evil, wise and foolish, beautiful and ugly, recognizing principally

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16 Carl Van Doren, The American Novel 1789-1939, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1940) p. 249

the strong and the weak. Any of these distinctions to which he does admit, serve to emphasize the pathetic nature of life. He shows that superiorities are just as ineffectual as their lack would be in the securing of the happy or successful life.

We do not know where we come from nor where we go, but we are allowed by an indifferent universe to pursue our unthinking, chemically determined lives until, without warning or reason, we are snuffed out. We are moulded by an imperfect society and warped by convention, until the final chemical reaction takes place and we revert to our component parts.

In his American Tragedy, Dreiser exhibits his greatness and his weakness. As a cosmic philosopher, he is almost as powerful as he is a novelist. Sometimes he forgets his aesthetic pattern in favour of pursuing his argument. His lumbering style with its solecisms is not the concern of this study, but in his pleonasmic way, he does manage to illustrate the basic harmony between fiction and life. In his careful documentation of all the influences on Clyde Griffith, Dreiser does approach the true meaning, for him, of men's actions in the aggregate. It is cumulative action over the slow accruing of which he broods. He seems to feel the inevitability of a storm out of a clear blue sky, and sits sombrely down to wait for it. He almost wills it to happen and then studies the gathering gloom with an odd combination

of compassion and scientific interest.

It is not at all a settled point that Sherwood Anderson was a Naturalist. In certain of his facets he seems to tend toward out-and-out psychological naturalism, and in others he veers toward whimsical naivete. In The Egg and in Unlighted Lamps he expresses the determinism which characterizes so much of the naturalistic writings. And in Brothers he adds a further note of gloom as he says: "The whole story of mankind's loneliness, of the effort to reach out to unattainable beauty tried to get itself expressed from the lips of a mumbling old man..."[17]

Yet in his Notebook he seems to be full of the wonder of things. His complete democracy of both subject and theme allows him, in all of his works, to find the beauty he admires so much in the humbler walks of life. He does not deal with essentially ugly things, nor does he distort what he sees to make it the more grotesque; but he does allow that what he finds to be beautiful may not be the commonly accepted standard of beauty. In his own words, he denies the basic consistency of the naturalists mood; "I float in many lives, am distressed, made gay, made

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[17] Anderson, Sherwood, The Triumph of the Egg, B.W. Huebsch Bros.,(New York: 1926) p. 114

happy - a thousand times each day" 18

In The Other Woman, Anderson offers a fine example of how he feels the eternal significance of a single moment, and since he feels that a moment can have permanent value, he expresses a hope which anyone may entertain all through their life - that their moment may yet come.

It is a hard thing to say, after reading I Want to Know Why, and The Egg whether or not Anderson is speaking in generalities. He is obviously aware of the intricate design into which people and circumstance are woven, but it is not certain that he felt the design was unalterable and unavoidable. Alfred Kazin claims that Anderson has "... more tenderness than God." That tenderness could be of the brooding, unhopeful type of Dreiser, or it could be a tenderness for people who suffer from inhibitions and their resultant loneliness too keenly to find the gateway to freedom as he has done: "At last after seeking many confessionals, I came to paper." [19] In writing he found his gateway.

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[18] Anderson, Sherwood, Sherwood Anderson's Notebook, (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1926) p. 126

[19] Op. Cit. p. 61

A Story Teller's Story shows that Anderson was in desperate need of freedom from economic and social conventions. Further, it shows that he would never achieve that unless he escaped his environment entirely and wrote as he honestly felt, and dealt only with those subjects that most preoccupied his mind. Dark Laughter, as indeed all his work, is almost as autobiographical as A Story Teller's Story, or Tar. Here the black folk symbolize life without the complexities and neuroses commonly found in the more sophisticated society of the whites. They stand for all the carefree joys of childhood combined with all the privileges of the adult world. Bruce Dudley is precluded from finding this freedom by the unalterable nature of racial differences.

The symbolism in Anderson's work is obscure much of the time. It is, in the main, Freudian, and has been variously interpreted. More says of his pruriency, that it is like the twilight state in a low fever and is full of Platonic bestial dream-desires; a sickly feverishness of the imagination. He says that the good ideas that Anderson had are contaminated by the "bestial stream of the unconsciousness which seeps through because it has been allowed to grow putrid." [20]

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20 Paul Elmer More, Demon of the Absolute, The New Shelburne Essays vol. I (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1928) pp. 71 f

Despite the psychopathic and fantastic manifestation, Anderson is as much a determinist as the most aesthetic and materialistic members of the group. The fact that he deals in intangibles does not change his philosophical position. His dreamy, half-submerged style is due to his attempt to convey several planes at one time; his attempt to see a moment or a person from all angles from one vantage point. The result is that of the eerily beautiful distortion of sound and vision underwater, with all the tense desperation for air that a drowning person would feel. He achieves an effect closely resembling that achieved by Debussey in his "Cathedrale Engoute".

Between Hemingway and Dos Passos there is a close relationship both socially and artistically. John Dos Passos is probably more politically-minded than Hemingway; his Marxian convictions are more deeply rooted and his social conscience more active. Since both these authors respect and admire and understand each other's work, it is not impossible that they are both trying to say somewhat the same thing, each in the medium best suited to his talents.

Dos Passos has wavered from the deterministic and especially so in his last work, State of the Nation (1944), published this summer. It is a survey of the Home Front,

well written, but optimistic and journalistic in tone. Where he most typifies the Naturalists is in his impressionistic trilogy, U.S.A. This work consists of the life story of six men and six women whose paths sometimes run parallel, sometimes cross, and sometimes seem to be going in different directions altogether. The three books came out as follows: Forty-second Parallel; 1930, 1919; 1932, The Big Money; 1936

It is in Manhattan Transfer, however, that we most clearly see his estimate of life, because in it, he flashes on the screen of his philosophy, moving pictures of a cross section of humanity living under the conditions of a busy metropolis. Although he half believes that individual exploitation and private ownership are the leeches that bleed men spiritually and economically white; he fails to imply that he has any real faith in social revolution. He says that the only solution is social revolution, but then indicates that if there were any solution - that would be it... but is there? His art is free from the bias of reforming zeal.

The characters in Manhattan Transfer are quite innocent of faith, idealism, the power of self-motivation, and of anything so foreign as hope. Their creator has absorbed the morbid rythms of frantic and crazy futility as he has felt them in New York, and synchronized them with

his philosophical assumptions about his characters. And since his characters are integral components of the social whole, he achieves a relationship between the individual and the mass, and makes a destructive analysis of them both at once.

Kazin says Dos Passos is the first "technological novelist", because he places the novel squarely in the machine age [21] and, I assume, nowhere else. His kaleidoscopic newsreel technique not only allows for thematic development, but also creates the speed-up technological atmosphere which lends so much to the spiritual destitution, hoplessness and loneliness that he portrays.

This study omits some contemporary authors who are generally classed, along with Hemingway, as outstanding Naturalists. In some considerations, these men fall into the Naturalist school, but they do not exhibit a sufficiently decided tendency towards scrupulous documentation nor do they actually have very much respect for Realism, but lean toward surrealism and abstractionism. [22] Time does not permit an exploration of their divergences

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[21] Alfred Kazin, Op. Cit. p. 344

[22] Ibid p. 393

from the tradition of the school, but their numbers include Faulkner, Caldwell and Steinbeck.

The lesser lights of the Naturalist tradition, followers largely of Hemingway, have not written enough on which to base an estimate of any value as yet. Among their ranks are such names as Burnett, Cain, Callaghan, Herbst, Dahlberg and O'Hara. They are grouped under the general heading of "The Cult of the Simple". They show the same confusion of means and ends operating in reverse, the same bleak futility, but in place of art they substitute shock tactics and slick brutality. Richard Wright's Native Son shows more serious artistic conscience than some of the others.

Naturalism seems to have spent its force, to have delivered its thunder and to be now clinging grimly, but yet not surely, to its tradition, waiting for a bright new talent or a fresh impetus. Santayana feels that they do not know the English language and that they have been allowed to bubble over for so long that they haven't any more fresh inspiration and leavening power.[23] It is entirely likely

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[23] Fred L. Pattee, The New American Literature, A Survey, 1890-1930, (New York: The Century Company, 1930) p. 464

that this present war will provide the movement with the power it lacks at the moment - enough to keep it dominant for at least another decade.

Ernest Mill Hemingway is assessed by most critics as a non-intellectual. His career is generally considered to be either static or degenerative. It is the attempt of this study to prove that Hemingway's progress is erratic but quite decidedly it is progress, both artistic and intellectual. He stands, after his For Whom the Bell Tolls and his Spanish Earth, close to maturity, although his maturing has suffered from environmental limitations.

Prior to examining his works, in an attempt to establish this thesis, it may be well to consider the probable factors which seem likely to have had an influence on his life, and so on his writing.

His life indicates nothing of the abnormal from what we know if it. He was born the son of a doctor in Illinois at the end of the last century. He was one of six children. Apparently his childhood and adolescence were uncomplicated and happy. He was an individualist as a child and both resourceful and independent, so far as keeping his own counsel and organizing his pastimes go. His individualism, although pronounced, did not mean that

he was odd or different in any way, on the contrary, he was very much "one of the boys" in his high school days. From his earliest day of fishing, which he enjoyed at the age of two, he showed a predilection for the rugged manly sports. This later developed into his sportsman's approach to the whole of life and determined his choice of the subject matter of his writings. He excelled at athletics and was one of the swashbuckling football eleven. He was into more than his share of "teen" trouble, and he and his other friends who wore their showy jerseys with the canvas elbows, made a great and noisy show of both their toughness and their midwest "savoir faire". Conventions meant nothing except a code that was fun to defy. As the stories of In Our Time and later small references to his childhood show; the bragadoccio in Hemingway was symptomatic of basic tender mindedness and sensibility which gave him his deep conviction that a cruelty and sadness underlay everything.

While still in his late teens, Hemingway went off and joined the Italian Arditi and won the Medaglia d'Argento ad Valore Militaire, and the Croce de Guerra. During his period of service with the Italian army, his trench blew up and he lay buried beneath the rubble, deserted for dead for four days. This experience undoubtedly left its scar on both body and the mind of the nineteen year old youth.

It may go far to explain Hemingway's subsequent preoccupation with death and the death impulses.

Following his discharge from the military hospital, and a brief visit home, he took up residence in Paris in the latin quarter and devoted himself to his art. It was here that he met the important people in literature and art, he lived in a garret which had housed Verlaine in his last days of poverty. In this atmosphere of great talent and intense self-discipline, he lived frugally on a few sous a day and learned from every source available to him. After he had mastered his craft, he went to Spain to witness almost the only exhibition of wholesale death that is today presented to the public, of the civilized world. He went to the corrida and watched and studied, and even participated actively in the bullfights. Then he applied his perfected writing technique to his findings.

From that date on Hemingway seems to have obeyed the dictates of his whim, moving on at a moment's notice, writing seriously when finances allowed and reporting and producing articles for the "pulps",[24] in the lean years. He has lived mainly in Key West, Cuba, Spain, Africa and Manhattan. He seems as unable to settle down in his matrimonial alliances as he does in his place of abode.

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24 Esquire Magazine

It is outside the realm of this study completely to estimate how much, or what kind of influence his three wives have had on him. He appears, however, to have a more kindly estimate of women by the time he comes to portray Maria in For Whom the Bell Tolls than he had when he created Catherine in A Farewell to Arms.

Concerning literary debts, the only one Hemingway will acknowledge is his debt to Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn. In truth he has an exceedingly absorptive and assimilative mind, and unconsciously took to himself portions of technique and philosophy from every source which he admired and with which he came into contact. He was a Ulysses - truly a part of all he had met and all he had done and all he had read.

There are three positive and unmistakable influences which have effected his work, whether he acknowledges them or not. They are Gertrude Stein, Sherwood Anderson and Ecclesiastes.

From Stein he learned the value of the sound of words rather than of their meaning. He learned that cadence was not only possible in prose but that it was essential for conveying nuances of emotion and sensation. He learned to play tunes with key words and to employ

the technique of a composer rather than that of an author. Stein also taught him how to work. She showed him that he could not give to his art anything less than his undivided attention. Her friendship and criticism and artistic connections were invaluable to the young Hemingway.

Sherwood Anderson and Gertrude Stein may well have felt a mixture of pride and shame as they used to discuss him together, because Hemingway repudiated his undeniable debt to both of them.

Anderson, a great force in the group of midwestern writers, taught Hemingway a lesson which he has turned to his inestimable advantage - that is the effectiveness of utter simplicity. The simplest statement slowly reiterated has an overwhelming cumulative power. A certain amount of Anderson's sensitivity and intuition also were absorbed by Hemingway.

Greater than his debt to a contemporary author, is his debt to Ecclesiastes. He appears to have made an intensive study of it with regard to tone and to diction and to philosophy. The chapter in the Bible and some of Hemingway are so akin that the Preacher might have written for the twentieth century Naturalist and Hemingway might have been a scribe for the Bible.

> I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold all is vanity and vexation of spirit. [25]
> That which is crooked cannot be made straight; and that which is wanting cannot be numbered. [26]
> For in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow. [27]

This excerpt includes some of the most cardinal features in Hemingway's creed. Here is the futility that is implied or stated in his early works. His insistence in keeping his characters minds clear of thought is not just a pose, but a definite belief that thinking, and thus eventual knowledge, will bring sorrow.

Imagine Hemingway setting about the creation of The Sun Also Rises, almost the whole outline of his book appears in the following passages:

> The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose
> The wind goeth toward the south and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.
> All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. [28]

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25 Chapter I v 14 Ecclesiastes, The King James Version of the Holy Bible

26 Ibid v 15

27 Ibid v 18

28 Ibid Chapter I vv 5 f

The absolute indifference of the cosmic plan is shown in this passage. Life begins an orbit which is completed whether it be futile, worthwhile or actively destructive.

Another parallel is offered which is so close as to make it worthwhile to mention in passing, "You'll lose it if you talk about it" - Hemingway,[29] "...and a fool's voice is known by a multitude of words." 30

Both the Preacher and Hemingway have almost a horror of exuberance and uncontrolled joy; they both control their occasional flights of ecstasy with intellectual brakings, "But if a man live many years and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness for they shall be many." [31] Hemingway's attempts to depict happiness, even brief flickers of pleasure, all carry the implication that a price will have to be paid for them immediately it is passed. The drunken glows include the grey hangovers, the fishing trips, the skiing trips, the hunting trips all make the return to the workaday world so much the harder. This finite quality of pleasure makes the joy only partial,

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29 Ernest Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926) p. 26

30 Ecclesiastes, Chapter V v3

31 Ecclesiastes, Chapter XI v 8

because while half the mind is at peace, the other half is grappling with thoughts of the "dark days".

Does not Catherine's final evaluation of her death in A Farewell to Arms: "It's just a dirty trick",[32] and Jake in The Sun Also Rises: "...Besides what happened to me is supposed to be funny..." [33] correspond to:

> I returned and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all. [34]

So Hemingway's characters move pretty much within the sphere described by the Preacher until he returns to Spain, not to seek exhibitions of death, but to serve in the cause of freedom from the death he saw everywhere inflicted by unprovoked aggression. He never completely abandons the philosophy of Ecclesiastes, but he is able to understand that the absolute view taken by the prophet of doom cannot apply to this life if people are to go on inhabiting the world. He realizes at last, that the gospel of doom, if followed out scrupulously in practice, would tend toward

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32 Ernest Hemingway, A.Farewell To Arms, (New York: Modern Library, 1932) p. 354

33 Ernest Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, p. 26

34 Ecclesiastes, Chapter IX v 11

human retrogression and the final disappearance of man. Hemingway admits, in For Whom the Bell Tolls, and Spanish Earth and even The Fifth Column, that the individual can act in a way that is beneficial to society.

CHAPTER II

THE PERIOD OF WAR INFLUENCE AND EARLY GROWTH

Studied chronologically, Ernest Hemingway's works will appear to be a groping for values. His progress is neither rapid nor steady; indeed it seems to stop still at one point as if doubting its own motivation; then it resumes its growth. His early writings showed more technical advance than philosophical progress. At the end of this period, when his works became blatantly autobiographical, all the gains he had made in his art and in his thinking seemed to be lost. But as his most recent writings show, he has once more felt the instinct toward maturity and realized its fulfillment in For Whom the Bell Tolls which is the full fruition of his art and of his social comprehension.

When his first little volume appeared in Paris, printed and published in an old wine vault in 1923, Hemingway had attained a technique that was solid and would last his literary life. He has not changed that technique radically since then, and, except in rare and exciting heights, has not much bettered it. This study, then, will confine itself chiefly to his maturing sense of values and mention technique only as it serves to emphasize those values.

It is not at all clear in what order Hemingway's first books were written. There appeared as a group in 1923 and included:

> In Our Time, paris, printed at the three mountains press and for sale at shakespeare & company in the rue de l'odeon; london: william jackson, took's court, cursitor street, chancery lane.

and THREE STORIES & TEN POEMS ERNEST HEMINGWAY. and TEN STORIES. None of these are in print now, as they were printed by hand and had very limited editions. In Our Time was expanded, revised and coordinated with the brilliant little entre acts, which now give it its cohesion, and published by Scribner in New York in 1925. In 1938 the first forty-nine stories Hemingway wrote and his play The Fifth Column, were incorporated into one volume. This lumping together of his work without regard for the reader's palate or his understanding has done, and will continue to do much harm to Hemingway's reputation as an artist and as a thinker. It is far more profitable to read the short stories in their early topical arrangement, if a real understanding of the work is to be reached. It is the small volumes in order of their publication that will be considered here.

In Our Time, though a collection of stories, closely resembles the general features of a novel. Its tone, its

message, its background and its principal character are consistent throughout, and it is only in reading the group as a whole that the fullest meaning can be appreciated.

Nick Adams is the young Hemingway in his Michigan childhood. He is a curious combination of extreme sensitivity and almost morbid curiosity about the brutal and painful aspects of life. Throughout the series, Nick is seen to be growing up and finding more and more the essential cruelty of the world, until he is treated to the ultimate proof of all his premonitions and small clues: the holocaust of war.

Between each of the short stories is a small vignette about the horrors of war on the field of battle and in procession of refugees, about the sadistic callousness of soldiers desensitized by bloodshed, about firing squads, about a cigar store holdup and shooting, about bull-fights in their worst aspects and bull fighters in theirs, and about hangings. These seem, at first glance, to have no close or significant relationship to the short stories and seem unjustifiable in their stark brutality, because they are irrelevant and unnecessary. It is in the juxtaposition of these vignettes and the stories that the burden of the book lies.

It is considered by some, that the two are used solely as contrast, and are presented as such without the benefit of having the author point out the moral implications. Hemingway is demonstrating the difference between the civilized and the brute or uncivilized. It seems more probable that he was intensely aware of the counterpoint of life, and was engaged in illustrating his belief that the two halves of the world are ineluctably fused.

In his introduction to In Our Time, Edmund Wilson says: "The condition of life is still pain and every calm or contented surface still vibrates with its pangs. The resolution of that discord in art makes the beauty of Hemingway's stories." [1]

It is possible to enjoy life with one's senses, but one can never enjoy it completely through intellectual enjoyments because of man's knowledge through experience that he must fight an always defensive battle against enormous and brute odds, and that the fruits of victory are simply being allowed to survive to continue the same old fight.

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1 Edmund Wilson, Introduction to In Our Time by Ernest Hemingway, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons 1930) p. xi

Young Nick, like Hemingway himself, is the son of a physician and is introduced early in his life to some of the ruder elements of it, the impact of which he never forgets. In Indian Camp he is certainly under the age of ten when he is taken to witness a Caesarian delivery which his father performs on an Indian woman. The agony of the birth proves to be more than the husband can bear, so he slits his throat with a razor as he suffers in sympathy in the upper bunk. Nick sees first the woman, slashed by the surgeon's knife and then the man, slashed by his own razor. The tender immaturity of the boy's mind is seen in the conversation the lad has with his father on the homeward journey:

> "Do ladies always have such a hard time having babies?" Nick asked.
> "No, that was very very exceptional".
> "Why did he kill himself, Daddy?"
> "I don't know Nick. He couldn't stand things, I guess."
> "Do men kill themselves, Daddy?"
> "Not very many, Nick."
> "Do many women?"
> "Hardly ever."
> "Don't they ever?"
> "Oh yes. They do sometimes,"
> "Daddy?"
> "Yes."
> "Where did Uncle George go?"
> "He'll turn up all right."
> "Is dying hard Daddy?"
> "No, I think it's pretty easy, Nick. It all depends."

In the early morning on the lake sitting in the

> stern of the boat with his father rowing, he felt quite sure that he would never die.[2]

The entr'acte following the story is a sketch of an evacuation and of childbirth in one of the crowded carts. The childbirth is so sordidly ironic and yet so stoically accepted, it is an easy matter to presage the tremendous effect the shocks of such a world will have on Nick(Hemingway).

In The End of Something Nick has added a few years to his score and shows decided symptoms of an ego at war with the world as he finds it. He is becoming perfect raw material for the Lost Generation. In getting rid of Marjorie because of her mother's ill repute, he voices a typical adolescent earnestness and inarticulateness.

> Nick looked on at the moon coming up over the hills.
>
> "It isn't fun anymore".
> He was afraid to look at Marjorie. Then he looked at her. She sat there with her back toward him. He looked at her back.
> "It isn't fun anymore. Not any of it."
> She didn't say anything. He went on. "I feel as though everything was gone to hell inside of me, I don't know, Marge. I don't know what to say." [3]

Not yet was Nick at the callous stage of Chapter III

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[2] Ernest Hemingway, "Indian Camp, The Fifth Column and the First Forty-Nine Stories, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938) p. 193

[3] Ibid "The End of Something" p. 208

in the interlude sketches where:

> We were in a garden at Mons. Young Buckley came in with his patrol from across the river. The first German I saw climbed up over the garden wall. We waited till he got one leg over and then potted him. He had so much equipment on and looked awfully surprised and fell down into the garden. Then three more came over further down the wall. We shot them. They all came just like that. [4]

But his arrival at that stage was a matter of time only. This was life. Nick just hadn't met all of it yet. He had seen its tendencies and its rottenness and heard its challenge to his masculinity - but only in flashes during his childhood and youth. Enough for a certain awareness, but not a full realization of the bitterness of actuality.

The same conviction that something is wrong with the world is echoed in the fragmentary scene beginning, "It was a frightfully hot day. We'd jammed an absolutely perfect barricade across the bridge. It was simply priceless...." [5] Hemingway expresses his own bewilderment as to what happens to man that he arrives at an acceptance of, and even participation in, the enjoyment of stark yet joyous killing. Nick is already wondering what happened to him and Marge. He says he guesses it was just like "... when the three-day blows come now and rip all the leaves off the trees..." [6] -

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4 Ibid "Chapter III"

5 Ibid "Chapter IV"

6 Ibid "The Three-Day Blow" p.221

something regrettable and uncontrollable. Love dies ugly and men kill with zest - two symptoms of the universal depravity.

Nick goes to the Italian front for his baptism in blood, as is portrayed in Chapter VI. When he is wounded, he says to his comrade Rinaldi, "Senta Rinaldi. Senta. You and me we've made a separate peace." [7] After the war, phases of Hemingway's brief visit home are recounted in Soldier's Home. It shows his maladjustment in exaggerated form. The returned soldier, Krebs, seems to be permanently maimed spiritually, while Hemingway's war disability needed only intelligent treatment,new surroundings and interests.

> Krebs acquired the nausea in regard to experience that is the result of untruth or exaggeration, and when he occasionally met another man who had really been a soldier and they talked a few minutes in the dressing room at a dance he fell into the easy pose of the old soldier among other soldiers: that he had been badly, sickeningly frightened all the time. In this way he lost everything.[8]

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[7] Ibid "Chapter VI"
The critics make much of this remark and use it as a handle by which they dangle Hemingway over their fires as antipolitical and so on. I do not see that it is indicative at all - besides being both true and obvious, the observation is a natural one to make and could be read to convey bitterness at being hauled out of the fight before it was over.

[8] Ibid "Soldier's Home p. 244

His relationship to girls was probably a common one. He liked them well enough to watch, but not well enough to complicate his life with them; he wanted to "live along without consequences".[9] He felt this same desire to reject responsibility toward his parents. The story ends leaving Krebs hopeless, which possibly indicates the alternative Hemingway might have faced had he not uprooted and gone to Paris.

My Old Man, although it does not include the Adams family, could well be Nick. The youngster is motherless, as to all practical intents and purposes Nick was. He is very close to his father as Nick and the young Hemingway were. The setting is very different however - Joe follows the races around Europe with his father who is a track tout. The Old Man is a "has-been" jockey, and has sunk to dishonest practices as he sees his powers waning. He has been unable to resist the easy "wins" so definitely within reach, and salves his conscience by making the physical welfare of his young son his excuse. When the father is killed in a steeplechase, one of his cronies who knows he is a "rat" says in Joe's hearing: "...I don't give a good godam if he did, the crook. He had it coming to him on the stuff he's pulled." [10]

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9 Ibid p. 245

10 Ibid "My Old Man" p. 303

And little Joe, after being comforted by George, a friend of his father's reflects emptily: "But I don't know. Seems like when they get started they don't leave a guy nothing."[11]

In Our Time closes with a pair of purely joyous fishing trips which seem to be a part of Hemingway's exclusively recreational writing, they are not searchings for an answer to the problems facing him in life, but simply "an acute and beautiful distillation of sensations." [12]

Although The Sun Also Rises does not catch all the lights of Hemingway's "diamond in the raw" genius, it catches what is perhaps his most brilliant plane. To many, it is a point unresolved whether he echoed with absolute reportorial faith, the emotion of an era, or whether he had an influence in shaping that era through his novel and his own personality. The outlook he describes is not confined to the sophisticated derelicts who hung around cosmopolitan cafes and fanned each other's embers of despair after the last war. Much the same lostness may be seen among the youth involved in this present conflict; perhaps the author has caught the essence of the reaction of a certain type of young people to any war.

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11 Loc. Cit.

12 Robert Littell, "Notes on Hemingway", New Republic, 51:306, August 10, 1927.

Nor is Hemingway the patron saint of the expression, "Let's have a drink." A trapped and betrayed youth that have lost both the things to fight for and the things to fight with, have turned to escape through alcohol quite generally for centuries. The group that go to the Spanish fiesta from the Paris bars for something exciting to do is a collection of intelligent young people whose rational values have collapsed causing them to act in an irrational manner.

The "I" in the book is Jacob Barnes, known as Jake, who had suffered a war injury on the "joke Italian front" that left him impotent. Despite the bitterness this loss created, he is determinedly struggling to salvage something out of what is left. Since his disability makes him ineligible in the race for the woman he loves, he values friendship and an innocuous role in society as the best goal.

Jake does most of his thinking before he goes off to sleep and frequently becomes maudlin over the warped life fate has forced him to lead. Reflecting on the speech made after his injury while he is recuperating in the hospital, he says,

> "...Che mala fortuna! Che mala fortuna! "
> I never used to realize it I guess. I try and play it along and just not make trouble for people. Probably I never would have had any trouble if I hadn't run into Brett when they

> shipped me to England. I suppose she only wanted what she couldn't have. Well, people were that way. To hell with people. The Catholic Church had an awfully good way of handling all that. Good advice anyway. Not to think about it. Oh, it was swell advice. Try and take it sometimes. Try and take it. [13]

He sincerely but idly regrets his religious slackness. He sighs over his lost Catholicism and wonders if it will come back. His sexual impotence seems to effect all of his other activities. All he is, is a creature with the right instincts, which have grown vestigial through his confusion between action and reaction. As though the war and Brett had not administered enough of a drubbing, Jake allows the most repulsive character in the book (Robert Cohn) to knock him out.

He honestly seeks a code that would see him through life, but rather intimates by his passivity that someone will have to give it to him, since he has a maimed initiative.

> I thought I had paid for everything. Not like the woman pays and pays. No idea of retribution or punishment. Just exchange of values. You gave up something and got something else. Or you worked for something. You paid some way for everything that was any good. I paid my way into enough things that I liked, so that I had a good time. Either you paid by learning about them, or by experience or by taking chances, or by money. Enjoying living was learning to get your money's worth and knowing when you had it. You could get your money's worth. The world was a good

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13 Ernest Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, p. 31

> place to buy in. It seemed like a fine philosophy. In five years, I thought, it will seem just as silly as all the other fine philosophies I've had.
>
> Perhaps that wasn't true though. Perhaps as you went along you did learn something. I did not care what it was all about. All I wanted to know was how to live in it. Maybe if you found how to live in it you learned from that what it was all about. [14]

His emasculation was complete. His spiritual condition was so lassitudinous that it went beyond effeminancy:

> That seemed to handle it. That was it. Send a girl off with one man. Introduce her to another to go off with him. Now go and bring her back. And sign the wire with love. That was it all right. I went in to lunch. [15]

Lady Brett Ashley is generally dismissed with the label nymphomaniac, beneath character analysis. She, like the others in the party, is also a dipsomaniac. Neither of these terms accurately applies to her, nor does it to the others. Both of these conditions are mental derangements that involve morbid cravings, which connote perversions with uncontrollable desperation for gratification. The derelicts in the book exhibit unlimited freedom and cool uninhibited frankness in erotic matters, and fabulous and consistent intemperance in drinking matters; but these are only symptoms and traits of a total social malaise and do not suggest that the individuals are inherently deranged.

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14 Ibid p. 153

15 Ibid p. 250

Brett was driftwood left from a brave bark. She married a lunatic of the most snobbish British aristocracy who drove her insane through his brutal treatment of her, and through his habit of keeping a loaded revolver by his hand all through the night. She got out of this marriage and was promptly faced with the horrors of war. Since the war she has drifted aimlessly on the surface, going with any current that came along. She feels that she must exert her power of choice soon before she finds it has gone: "I've got to do something. I've got to do something I really want to do. I've lost my self respect." [16]

Prior to this time, she had been in a dazed and willess stupor from alcohol and from the impact of her unhappy life. She exhibits her casual unmorality in discussing her interlude at San Sebastian with her most recent lover, Robert Cohn.

> Brett: "I rather thought it would be good for him."
> Jake: "You might take up social service." [17]

Hemingway takes his crew of lost youths to the fiesta[18] and to the corrida and on a fishing trip in the Pyrenese. During the entire fantasia of gaiety and sensual

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[16] Ibid p. 190

[17] Ibid p. 85

[18] The English title of The Sun Also Rises is Fiesta

delights, he maintains an ominous vibration that transmits itself without ceasing to the reader. The irremediable troubles are still there, not very far underneath the anaesthesia produced by fleeting pleasures. The fishing trip is loaded with superficial light-heartedness, but even the descriptions of nature keep the inherent tragedy always in the foreground of the subconscious.

It is a fairly obvious analogy that is drawn between the brutally unjust drama of life and death in the bull ring with the group of dissipates who watch it and ape it in their own spheres of activity. The very fact that the orgiastic nature of the fiesta appeals to them and expresses to some extent their emotions exhibits their own descent to paganism through war and slaughter.

Brett maintains the sympathy of the readers and partially justifies herself morally by forsaking the young bullfighter who wants to marry her and whom she knows she would ruin. It is no indication that she has given any consideration to reforming herself, but it <u>is</u> a flash of the "old" Brett. It is a definite indication that she once had a higher standard and that it is so ingrained in her that she cannot ever completely escape it:

> "You know it makes one feel rather good
> deciding not to be a bitch."
> "Yes."

"It's sort of what we have instead of God."
"Some people have God," I said. "Quite a lot."
"He never worked very well with me."
"Shall we have another Martini?" 19

In some respects these beautiful-but-damned children are heroic. They <u>are</u> children because that is what they were when they went into the war and since they have crawled out, instead of maturity, refraction has taken place. They are neither flippant nor are they moral panhandlers. They cannot laugh off their predicament but they do not snivel, nor do they cast their burden on society. They carry their unhappy load squarely on their own backs and seek no quarter, as Bill Gorton says to Jake: "Ought not to daunt you. Never be daunted in public.....If I begin to feel daunted I'll go off by myself. I'm like a cat that way." 20

The same gloomy inevitably of Ecclesiastes is overwhelmingly apparent throughout the novel - perhaps it would be better if, some day, the sun did not rise, and so freed these slaves from the treadmill.

The year 1926 saw the publication of a parody in a raucously humorous vein. It was entitled <u>Torrents of Spring</u>, and it is generally considered to be a parody on Sherwood Anderson's novel, <u>Dark Laughter</u>, although Garnett, in his

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19 <u>Op. Cit</u>. p. 256

20 <u>Ibid</u> p. 75

introduction hints that the view has been taken in some quarters that it is a parody on D. H. Lawrence's Mexican Indians. Garnett suggests that it is Hemingway's parody on Hemingway. [21] A study of this jeu d'esprit is not of sufficient importance to warrant its inclusion here.

A Farewell to Arms appeared with outstanding success in 1929. Some people do not consider this as "typical" of Hemingway, for the reasons, I suppose, that they feel it is sentimental in tone and lyrical in treatment. It seems to be the least autobiographical of all his fiction, despite the obvious fact that its scene is laid in the very arena of the war in which Hemingway fought. To support this statement, let us consider the famous retreat from Caporetto, almost universally applauded as the best piece of sustained narrative in Hemingway or in modern American letters. The author was not in that retreat, and yet he has shown it with a clarity that he frequently loses when he is involved himself. In examining the hero of the novel, Lieutenant Frederic Henry, it will become evident that the author and his creation have little in common except their general

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[21] David Garnett, Introduction to The Torrents of Spring, a romantic novel in honor of the passing of a great race, by Ernest Hemingway, (London: Jonathan Cape 1933) p. 15

outlook on war and patriotism.[22] A Farewell to Arms is more of a contribution to literature than The Sun Also Rises, which is inclined to be a document out of contemporary life rather than an example of the literary art. In A Farewell to Arms, Hemingway's silences are voluble, here he shows his ability to effect the magic of conjuration in the reader.

Ford Madox Ford, in his introduction to the volume, gives his own impression of Hemingway's style in a manner very like the one he is criticizing:

> Hemingway's words strike you, each one, as if they were pebbles fetched fresh from a brook. They live and shine each in its place. So one of his pages has the effect of a brook bottom into which you look down through the flowing water.[23]

Despite the fact that the book is not conspicuously autobiographical, it does illustrate a step forward in Hemingway's search for an answer. That advance is seen in the demonstration that Fred Henry is prepared to discuss life with the priest while he is perfectly sober. The closest Hemingway's earlier characters got to religion and sober discussion, was a nervous second or two in an empty church and a fragment or two of talk while waiting for a waiter to bring the drinks. The hero is now, as his

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22 And the outlook Hemingway had at this time is non-existent today.

23 Ford Madox Ford, Introduction to A Farewell to Arms, by Hernest Hemingway, p. xvi

renegade friend in the regiment, Rinaldi says: "I know, you are the fine good Anglo-Saxon boy. I know. You are the remorse boy, I know. I will wait till I see the Anglo-Saxon brushing away harlotry with a toothbrush."[24]

This sort of speech might spring quite naturally from the characters in The Sun Also Rises - but seems strangely discordant with anything Henry might say.

The fact that Rinaldi is not the hero is a further evidence to support the suggestion that Hemingway is departing from a negative philosophy. Now his characters are capable of a greater number of analytical and lucidly sincere moments.

Rinaldi is spiritually adrift and aware of the fact. His entire preoccupation is action to cloak the voids he feels in his life. He feels that the only solutions are work, drink, and sexual expression. And since these are not a mutually beneficial trio, they constitute no solution at all. He is a lovable and pathetic character, a generous and loyal friend, a clever surgeon, but is so hopelessly naive in his unmorality, that he has destroyed the very scales by which it would be possible for him to weigh a moral issue.

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[24] Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 179

> "All summer and all fall I've operated. I work all the time. I do everybody's work. All the hard ones they leave to me. By God, baby, I am becoming a lovely surgeon."
> "That sounds better."
> "I never think. No, by God, I don't think; I operate." [25]

And Hemingway heaps a few coals of recrimination on Rinaldi, his alcoholism begins to fray and tire his nervous system so that he is able to exercise less and less control, and his unthinkable erotic excesses repay him with a venereal disease.

Henry's respect is won by a young, sincere and unaffected priest, and, although he cannot share a point of view with the cleric, he will not make fun of him, and tries to dissuade his fellow officers from doing so. Unconsciously, the young American ambulance driver is influenced by the priest's kindly understanding and purity. The priest also provokes Henry into more thoughtful discussion than he would normally allow himself. As he asks questions of the priest, his mind is open at least a crack:

> "What is the difference(between officers and men)?"
> "I cannot say it easily. There are many people who would make war. In this country there are many like that. There are other people who would not make war."
> "But the first ones make them do it."
> "Yes."
> "And I help them."
> "You are a foreigner. You are a patriot."

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[25] Ibid p. 177

> "And the ones who would not make war? Can they stop it?"
> "I do not know."
> He looked out of the window again. I watched his face.
> "Have they ever been able to stop it?"
> "They are not organized to stop things and when they get organized their leaders sell them out."
> "Then its hopeless?"
> "It is never hopeless. But sometimes I cannot hope. I try always to hope but sometimes I cannot." [26]

As time wears on and war weariness bores deeper and deeper into the moral fiber of the army, we find that priest's temptation to lose faith in human progress echoed in the retreat from Caporetto, in the attitude of the Socialist ambulance drivers, who say it is a class war and a money making slaughter, in Rinaldi's depression and in Lieutenant Henry's desertion. This increasing bleakness of outlook is seen in the next discussion between the priest and the hero:

> "We are all gentler now because we are beaten. How would Our Lord have been if Peter had rescued him in the Garden?"
> "He would have been just the same."
> "I don't think so," I said.
> "You discourage me," he said. "I believe and I pray that something will happen. I have felt it very close."
> "Something may happen," I said. "But it will happen only to us. If they felt the way we do, it would be all right. But they have beaten us. They feel another way."
> "Many of the soldiers have always felt this way. It is not because they were beaten."
> "They were beaten to start with. They were beaten when they took them from their farms and put them in the army. That is why the peasant

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[26] Ibid p. 76

has wisdom, because he is defeated from the start. Put him in power and see how wise he is."
He did not say anything. He was thinking.
"Now I am depressed myself," I said. "That's why I never think about these things. I never think and yet when I begin to talk I say things I have found out in my mind without thinking."
"I had hoped for something."
"Defeat?"
"No. Something more."
"There isn't anything more. Except victory. It may be worse."
"I hoped for a long time for victory."
"Me too."
"Now I don't know."
"It has to be one or the other."
"I don't believe in victory any more."
"I don't but I don't believe in defeat. Though it may be better." 27

The priest had a curious dual standard of values, both halves of which were completely divorced. His deep love of Christ and his faith and sentimental attachment to Abruzzi remained unchallenged, while his other ideals went smashing to infernal damnation. It is in this segregation of values that his strength lies, and in his strength lies his powers to comfort and so his justification of his calling. He shows clearly that faith is not logic.

Frederic Henry got himself into the war without going through any intellectual or moral trials; so he felt vaguely apart from both the issue at stake and the dangers involved. His desertion, then, was the natural culmination of the multitude of doubts that assailed a mind lacking a basic

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27 Ibid p.189

and fervent conviction. He had his own grave doubts as to the absolute benefits of war to social progress and to the service of mankind. When the nation for whom he was fighting exhibited the same doubts and began to retreat.... for the very sake of consistency of position, he must do likewise. The critics with the most tender moral perceptions see the immoral weakling of a hero dashing his sword to the ground and deserting his comrades-in-arms to flee to the arms of his mistress. Until the carabiniere laid hold of him, Henry had been determined to see the thing through even though he did not have any faith in it, and though he felt it was none of his war:

> Anger was washed away in the river along with any obligation. Although that ceased when the carabiniere put his hands on my collar. I would like to have had the uniform off although I did not care much about the outward forms. I had taken off the stars, but that was for convenience. It was no point of honour. I was not against them. I was through. I wished them all the luck. There were the good ones, and the brave ones, and the calm ones and the sensible ones, and they deserved it. But it was not my show any more and I wished this bloody train would get to Mestre and I would eat and stop thinking. I would have to stop. [28]

"It was no point of honour." That would seem to imply that if he had felt that it was a point of honour, he would have stuck to his bargain, Catherine or no Catherine. Although he thought of her while he was away at the front,

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28 Ibid p. 248

it was never with the possibility of seeing her, except when the fortunes of war would permit; never by desertion. To a great extent, war, like life, was a game, without the connotation of pleasure. He played it as best he knew how, and followed the rules experience had taught him worked best, and like most sportsmen, was unrhetorical and undemonstrative: "I did not say anything, I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression 'in vain'."[29]

In the retreat from Caporetto, rather than delivering himself of a tirade of his cold disgust at the prosecution of war, he simply sets the key and lets the waves of his silent invective play through the description. He commences with a simple statement that suggests all the dirt and discouragement in the world; he describes the retreat as "orderly, wet, and sullen."[30]

Catherine is not strong as a character by herself, but is a powerful symbol and is effective as such. By symbolizing a love that is strong enough to weld two lonely souls together, rather than acting as each others crutch, she symbolizes all that man yearns for in the face of war

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29 Ibid p. 196

30 Ibid p. 199

and disillusionment and impermanence. She satisfies Henry's atavistic yearnings, his need for parental understanding, his need for comradeship, his need for a wife and his need for security and home. Except in this relation to him she has no importance of her own. She seems a creature incapable of life and action in any other sphere, yet her service to the man was considerable, in so far as she made him deepen his conception of life and gave him a fuller comprehension of his fellow human beings. It is impossible to say whether Catherine's weakness as a character is due to Hemingway's generally low estimate of women, or whether he feels a disability to portray women of a firm character.[31]

Both of the lovers felt a vast sense of insecurity and had caverns of loneliness in their personalities; but together they made one whole person incapable of any division:

> We could feel alone when we were together, alone against the others. It has only happened to me like that once. I have been alone while I was with many girls and that is the way you can be most lonely. But we were never afraid when we were together. I know that the night isn't the same as the day: that all things are different, that the things of the night cannot be explained in the day,

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31 Pilar in For Whom the Bell Tolls, by Ernest Hemingway, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940) defies this suggestion, although it is just a possibility that Hemingway had either improved his technique or revised his estimate of women.

> because they do not then exist, and the night can be a dreadful time for lonely people once this loneliness has started. But with Catherine there was almost no difference in the night except that it was an even better time. If people bring so much courage to this world the world has to kill them to break them, so of course it kills them. The world breaks every one and afterward many are strong at the broken places. But those that will not break it kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry.[32]

The death scene in which Catherine fails to rally from the ordeal of a prolonged and difficult childbirth is thought by some readers to be the only possible resolution of the situation. It is their feeling that such a love could never survive the peaceful workaday world. It seems more likely that Hemingway was giving a faithful and sympathetic representation of the love affair of two young people who were defeated in the fulfilment of that love by an overdose of "tough luck".

The bitterness in the wild thoughts that race through Henry's head as the apprehensions for his lover's safety grew, is not that of an abnormal type but quite typical of a man who has gambled desperately with life; is about to lose everything and is unfamiliar with prayer.

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32 Op. Cit. p. 266

Up until this time he has used the word "God" only for profanity.

> I wished to hell I'd been choked like that. No I didn't. Still there would not be all this dying to go through. Now Catherine would die. That was what you did. You died. You did not know what it was about. You never had time to learn. They threw you in and told you the rules and the first time they caught you off base they killed you. Or they killed you gratuitously like Aymo. Or gave you syphilis like Rinaldi. But they killed you in the end. You could count on that. Stay around and they would kill you.[33]

This is simply the babbling of grief and terror which needs neither logic nor coherence to make it effective. It is interesting from the point of view of the artist and shows psychological insight. It is the thoughts of a man sobbing inwardly; if he were talking, he would be sobbing aloud. As his feeling intensifies, his statements get wilder and more dogmatic and he finally rises through a crescendo of tortured articulation; then Hemingway drops the baton, leaving empty silence for the walk back to the hotel in the rain.

Hemingway seems to believe in this type of love story, for as he says three years later:

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33 Ibid p. 350

> Madam, all stories, if continued far enough end in death.... All those who have really experienced it (love) are marked, after it is gone, by a quality of deadness....Madam, it is an old word (love) and each one takes it new and wears it out himself.[34]

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[34] Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932) p. 122

[35] Margaret Anderson, in asking Hemingway if he could not have given his lovers more awareness, is reported to have elicited the following exclamation from the author: "I don't get you. Those two people really loved each other. Gee, he was crazy about her."

CHAPTER III

LITERARY SUICIDE AND REBIRTH

Hemingway stumbled rather badly on his way to maturity. At the end of the twenties he began to falter, and by the mid-thirties the critical wolves had marked him for their own. It is a common impulse of the layman to expect an established and recognized literary artist to be always at his best, and he is disappointed more frequently than not on this score, for it is a common sign of the artistic temperament to have excessive heights and depths. A low ebb in the work of a creative genius is not a death knell. In the career of Hemingway, though, the glimmers of the old talent were apparent only to readers who were as charitable as they were keen.

The young Hemingway had accepted his metier almost from the first and had a scalding message to impart, and he discovered a technic which was a perfect medium for so doing. It was not, therefore, beginner's luck that skyrocketed him to fame which he found he could not easily support. He had "arrived" as a technician and had expressed his soul up to the point it had reached in A Farewell to Arms; now it remained for him to sit by and wait for his inner self to progress another step so that he could be as sure of his matter as he was of his manner.

Then he could be confident of his ability to write and to grow.

The literary slump that made the critics say Hemingway was "through" and made the public feel somewhat frustrated and defrauded, was indeed a serious one. Despite the bad writing he did and the self-conscious inflated ego from which he suffered, his honesty and artistic integrity did not flag for a long time until in a reckless or evil hour he sold his talent to the "pulps".[1]

During this period, Hemingway published two auto-biographical books and two compilations of his short stories. The short stories were written over the period of years following the publication of In Our Time, and so do not rightly fall into a distinct phase of his career. His short stories as a whole are more consistent and homogeneous than his novels. It is difficult or impossible to select one of them at random (barring, of course, the stories of In Our Time) and place it in its correct chronological position.

Strictly speaking, there is a third novel that belongs in these years; To Have and Have Not, (1937). The

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1 Esquire Magazine

reason it will not be considered under the same head is that Hemingway wrote it at the end of his period of inferior output and it contains the germ of more promising works.

This chapter, then, will first consider Death in the Afternoon and The Green Hills of Africa, then the short stories; Men without Women and Winner Take Nothing, and finally, To Have and Have Not.

Death in the Afternoon is "a Baedeker of bulls".[2] It contains a very comprehensive glossary of the terminology of the corrida, a detailed and exact account of what the spectator may expect at a bull fight, an exposition on how to fight bulls, a history of the breeding and care of bulls, and a history of the better known bullfighters of Spain, an excellent group of photographic cuts of bullfights, and personal interspersions of an elegaic and sometimes maudlin nature.[3]

As a text book, its merits would be unquestioned -

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2 Malcolm Cowley, "A Farewell to Spain", New Republic, 73:76 November 30, 1932.

3 Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, p. 192, says, "If a writer knows things and writes truly - he may omit and have the reader sense what he omitted." This explains a good part of Hemingway's apparent lack of taste. He casts too much of the responsibility on the reader and does not allow the reader's tastes or sensibility to affect him.

<u>if</u> it did not include the imaginary old lady who not only allows, but encourages Hemingway to talk about himself and his thoughts. As a collection of memoirs and reflections, it could never have passed for much, because Hemingway is confused to such an extent intellectually that he contradicts himself frequently. The book has a distressingly broken tone throughout, perhaps because, during the three years which it took him to write it, he was undergoing unusual strain within himself.

The more he lacks confidence and the more neurotic he becomes, the louder he roars of his masculinity, and when he hears his roar echo empty, he slops over with defeated sentimentality. He has arrived on the top of the literary heap, realizes the responsibilities inherent in his position, and is frantically wondering what to do about it.

He does cast a glimmer of light on his interest in the corrida and in death. Like the Spanish people, he feels that death is especially important in that it is so much longer than life. It is the <u>moment</u> of death that he claims really preoccupies him. He has a romantic concept of it and attaches a mystical import to it which makes the entire corrida a ritual.

Hemingway sees the killer, the one to be killed, and

death, as three separate entities which, in the final moment, fuse and melt into one in the moment of truth or reality. Then he cancels what beauty he has been able to suggest by becoming the complete reporter again. From mystical imagery, he turns to brute facts and uses them to illustrate the ironies of life. This method can be extremely effective if handled well, but Hemingway employs it in an inferior manner and so creates a poor impression on the reader. He tells us that the Spanish people witness this spectacle for a "nominal fee" at five p.m. daily. This sudden transition from imaginative beauty to actuality is quite enough to impress the reader without Hemingway interjecting a personal and unnecessary boast, he wildly claims that he loves to kill as it gives him the sense of having cheated death! He implies by this that death hugely enjoys claiming human prizes and that he in his turn enjoys denying death its pleasurable occupation. Certainly a view both subjective and somehow forced and unnatural.

There is no evident growth in this book, indeed it could be omitted from this study, except in the interests of an account which aims at reasonable completeness.

Death in the Afternoon has a value, however slight, in its careful instruction in the art of bullfighting, but

The Green Hills of Africa is a cross between an exposition on big game hunting and the writing of great literature and it is lacking woefully in both of these departments. His monologues are at once dogmatic and vague; in an attempt to ally the big game hunter and the artist, he shows his anxious, confused, overzealousness:

> It is not the way hunting should be. It is too much like those boys who used to be sent to Paris with two years in which to make good as writers or painters after which, if they had not made good, they could go home and into their father's business. The way to hunt is for as long as you live against as long as there is such and such an animal; just as the way to paint is as long as there is you and colors and canvas, and to write as long as you can live and there is pencil and paper or ink or any other machine to do it with or anything you care to write about, and you feel a fool, and you are a fool, to do it any other way.[4]

This is a perverse private dramatization and definition of hunting, akin to his views on killing above.

He sets himself up as a standard of literary judgment on "Emerson, Hawthorne, Whittier and Company" and condemns them for their lack of sensual perceptiveness. He also wonders casually if a trip to the salt mines of Siberia might not have done Thomas Wolfe the same good it did for Dostoyevsky, (as Dostoyevsky later imagined).

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4 Ernest Hemingway, Green Hills of Africa, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935) p. 13

He also segregates himself from his fellow American writers in the same school to which he belongs:

> ...Naturalists should all work alone and some one else should correlate their findings for them. Writers should work alone. They should see each other only after their work is done and not too often then. Otherwise they will become like writers in New York. All angle-worms in a bottle, trying to derive knowledge and nourishment from their own contact, and from the bottle. Sometimes the bottle is shaped art, sometimes economics, sometimes economic-religion. But once they are in the bottle they stay there. They are lonesome outside the bottle.[5]

He discusses the possibilities of reaching a fourth and fifth dimension in prose writing, actually a goal for which he has striven and is still striving. It is a matter of opinion and personal taste whether or not he has ever attained that goal. His own definition of literary fulfilment is,

> First there must be talent, much talent. Talent such as Kipling had. Then there must be discipline. The discipline of Flaubert. Then there must be the conception of what it can be and an absolute conscience as unchanging as the standard meter in Paris, to prevent faking. Then the writer must be intelligent and disinterested and above all he must survive. Try to get all these in one person and have him come through all the influences that press on a writer. The hardest thing, because time is so short, is for him to survive and get his work done.[6]

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5 Ibid p. 21

6 Ibid p. 26

Safaris have enormous potentialities for making exciting literature, but this safari has the deadening injection of cheap and superficial self-consciousness. If the country and the animals are allowed to speak for themselves, they tell a fascinating tale, but when they are told what to say, they become greyed and uninspired.

This book, then, joins Death in the Afternoon in general disfavour.

Throughout his short stories, Hemingway's grim belief in a vast impersonal power shaping man's destiny becomes evident once more. In every story practically without exception, the characters are seen as marionettes obeying blindly the dictates of an unseen, uncaring hand.

Since, as I have mentioned above, these stories were not written at one time, and since their presentation to the public has been changed from separate volumes into one volume, perhaps it will not be amiss if Men Without Women and Winner Take Nothing are discussed together in this chapter. They are closely related in tone and subject matter and, of course, technique.

With all the sombreness of tone to be seen in the constant illustrations of fate operating by whim against the interests of man, Hemingway does give two sketches of

bravery of such heroic proportions that it is self-rewarding, regardless of the actual outcome or ethics involved. One of these sketches is that of Manuel Garcia, the old injured bullfighter who tries to make a come back and is humiliated in every possible way and obstructed to the point where only superhuman fortitude could stagger on. He is relegated to the "Charlie Chaplins" in the nocturnals, he is given a poor cuadrilla, no picador, and receives refuse and insults from the crowd in place of flowers and applause. And yet this man, whose spirit should be broken through physical laws alone, kept faith with his calling, his ideals, his self respect and his sportsmanship.

> "You drew the worst lot," the boy said.
> "That's all right," Manuel said. "The bigger they are, the more meat for the poor."[7]

As he faces the surgeon's knife, after a thankless and unsuccessful fight, in pain, he brightly asks of his old friend and picador; "Wasn't I going good, Manos?"[8]

The other instance of heroic bravery is a seeming paradox. It is not usual to divorce bravery and ethics, and yet that is just what happens in the case of Jack Brennan. He appreciates the value that security would have

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7 Ernest Hemingway, The Fifth Column and the First Forty-Nine Stories, p. 343

8 Ibid p. 364

for his wife and family, seeing at the same time the advantages of retiring from the ring. So he throws the fight for fifty thousand dollars. During the fight, Brennan gets badly fouled;

> He was holding himself and all his body together and it all showed on his face. All the time he was thinking and holding his body where it was busted.[9]

but refuses to take the victory and sees it through until he is able to return the foul to his opponent and so lose the title. At such a time, Hemingway entices his audience into unquestioning sympathy with the unethical, unsportsmanlike, mercenary crook, through the universal and basic appeals made by bravery and by devoted family life.

Perhaps the most revealing of the shorter sketches is Hills Like White Elephants. From the brief conversation between a boy and a girl over two glasses of beer unmistakable truths leap up from seeming irrelevancies. A love affair has lost its sweetness; there is a baby on it way. The boy doesn't want the girl to bear it and she wants to. Outwardly they are in agreement, but inwardly they are waging a bitter war with each other and with disillusionment. We can without effort, see what has gone before and recognize the fact that this very moment had its prototypes in probably dozens of other and more minor incidents. We

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[9] Ibid p. 423

can foresee what is coming next; nothing now will ever be the same. It makes no difference which course they take; it won't work out, because the very heart and hope of their love has died. What they had hoped for in each other is not there. They had both counted on the love of the other to overcome all other desires and prejudices. Now, in the final scene between them, they have given up hope to such an extent that they won't even fight.

The same futility is borne home with suffocating force in A Pursuit Race. William Campbell is the man who goes ahead of a travelling show to break the ground and see to the accommodation and other business of the troupe. He has fought a long and losing fight with alcohol and drugs:

> "Listen Billy, " William Campbell said, "I want to tell you something. You're called 'Sliding Billy'. That's because you can slide. I'm called just Billy. That's because I never could slide at all. I can't slide, Billy. I can't slide. It just catches. Every time I try it, it catches." He shut his eyes. "I can't slide, Billy. It's awful when you can't slide."....
> But when Mr. Turner came up to William Campbell's room at noon William Campbell was sleeping and as Mr. Turner was a man who knew what things in life were very valuable he did not wake him.[10]

And again it appears in The Killers. Ole Anderson has done some sort of double crossing in the city and has been hiding out in a small town, and the gang whom he sold

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[10] Ibid p. 451

out have come to get him and kill him. Nick Adams goes to warn him of his murderous pursuers:

> "Don't you want me to go and see the police?"
> "No," Ole Anderson said, "that wouldn't do any good."
> "Isn't there something I could do?"
> "No. There ain't anything to do."
> "Maybe it was just a bluff."
> "No. It ain't just a bluff."
> Ole Anderson rolled over toward the wall.
> "The only thing is," he said, talking toward the wall, "I just can't make up my mind to go out. I been here all day."
> "Couldn't you get out of town?"
> "No," Ole Anderson said, "I'm through with all that running around."[11]

This excerpt expresses completely Hemingway's positive sense of doom: What's the use?

More subtle and yet even more oppressive is the form hopelessness assumes in A Clean Well Lighted Place. The enemy here is more insidious, in that it can't be seen or fought openly. It can't even be recognized! It is a restless melancholia that comes with the night, reflecting man's inherent loneliness and his need of companionship and spiritual consolation. There is an old man who comes into the clean, bright cafe and sits until he is refused further service, and then usually drunk, he staggers quietly home to bed. On the night the story takes place, a younger waiter asks the old man to leave because he wants to close up. The older waiter who understands, reflects sympathetically:

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[11] Ibid p. 385

> "I am one of those who likes to stay late at the cafe," the older waiter said, "With all those who do not want to go to bed. With all those who need a light for the night."....
> "A clean well-lighted cafe was a very different thing. Now without thinking further, he would go home to his room. He would lie in the bed and finally with daylight, he would go to sleep.
> "After all," he said to himself, "it is probably only insomnia. Many must have it." [12]

The two collections just discussed are not up to the standards set before and after by Hemingway, his In Our Time being far and away his best collection, and his later short stories being individual gems. In this respect, then, although they escape the general flaw of out and out self-exploitation that characterized the period; as a group they do not manage to produce in the reader as clear cut and intense an emotional response to the situation described as Hemingway has proven himself capable of producing.

It is at this low ebb of his career that the self-expatriated young artist came "home" and began to feel faint flutterings of a social conscience as well as an embryonic idea of exactly what "home" meant. He had not been there when he returned from the World War and described some of his feelings in the person of Krebs. He had lost his roots and never missed them, and when he did think of them, it was with

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[12] Ibid p. 480

a spirit of denial:

> ...Our people went to America because that was the place to go then. It had been a good country and we had made a bloody mess of it and I would go, now, somewhere else and as we had always gone. You could always come back. Let the others come to America who did not know that they had come too late. Our people had seen it at its best and fought for it when it was well worth fighting for. Now I would go somewhere else. We always went in the old days and there were still good places to go.[13]

He adds that he has "served his time for society, democracy and the other things".[15]

Hemingway apparently took the southern route home because of financial strain. He travelled through Key West and, liking it, settled there, and began to study the Conchs or Key West Natives. He collected a series of sketches and took them with him to Europe where he revised them, discarding those that did not lend themselves to a novel and compiled what was left into To Have and Have Not. This is considered by most critics to be the funeral of a once promising talent. Sinclair Lewis finds it a combination of

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[13] Hemingway, Ernest, Green Hills of Africa, p. 285

[14] Stories which deal with intensely atypical or perverted cases will be considered in a separate section, the emphasis in their study will be on art, as they are not a reliable index to Hemingway's philosophy.

[15] Loc. Cit. p. 148

"peurile slaughter and senile weariness."[16] Geismar sees it as"nothingness turned callous", and the "apotheosis of stale horror".[17] Almost the least sin of which the book is guilty is that it is a "loading of the dice".[18] It was a good omen, however, right from the first reviews, that so many critics bestirred themselves to write about it, and to do so with vehemence that could not have been inspired by the insipid ramblings of Death in the Afternoon or The Green Hills of Africa.

Although Hemingway has chosen a particular locale and a particular type of society, his thesis is much the thesis of the other depression writers whose portrayals were of a more general nature: that of a man's loss of identity, self-respect and sense of moral values with his loss of ability to provide. In this book, it is the windmill of economic determinism that Hemingway is tilting.

> "There ain't much money in any kind of chances now, Al," he said. "Look at me. I used to make thirty-five dollars a day right through the season

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16 Sinclair Lewis, "Glorious Dirt", Newsweek, 10:34 October 18th, 1937.

17 Maxwell Geismar, "No Man Alone Now", Virginia Quarterly Review, 17#4:529, October 1941.

18 Charles Marriott, Book Review, Manchester Guardian, p. 7, October 15th, 1937.

> taking people out fishing. Now I get shot and lose an arm and my boat, running a lousy load of liquor that's worth hardly as much as my boat. But let me tell you, my kids ain't going to have their bellies hurt and I ain't going to dig sewers for the government for less money than will feed them. I can't dig now anyway. I don't know who made the laws but I know there ain't no law that you got to go hungry."[19]

There are several other themes suggested in the book, all of them renunciatory, indicating that Hemingway is at last becoming disgusted with himself and his own position. He maligns the writers that flock to the warmth of Florida and there live their dissipated and empty lives; he paints a very sour picture of "one of the biggest men in The Administration" who is on a fishing trip and tries to arrest Harry Morgan; he draws a brutally unsympathetic picture of the rich whose yachts are anchored off Key West, and he blasts human nature itself in such blinding flashes of insight as:

> The crowd was disappointed when the bodies were covered but they alone of all the town had seen them. They had seen Mrs. Tracy fall into the water and they had, before they came in, seen Harry Morgan carried on a stretcher into the Marine Hospital. When the sheriff ordered them out of the yacht basin they went quietly and happily. They knew how privileged they had been.[20]

So disillusioned and unhappy is Hemingway by now that it is impossible for critics or the reading public to agree

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[19] Ernest Hemingway, To Have and Have Not, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1937) p. 97

[20] Ibid p. 247

as to who are the "Haves" and who are the "Have Nots". In some respects this possibility of double interpretation spoils the antithesis of the title.

The book is the chronicle of the disintegration of the character and body of Harry Morgan by economic forces over which he has no control. His career is quite profitable and enjoyable as the book opens; he hires out to fishermen with his boat and pays all expenses until the period of his employment as a guide and expert fisherman is over. The client to whom he has chartered his boat and services loses his tackle. Skipping off without paying, he leaves Harry Morgan nearly a thousand dollars poorer, with no means of recouping his losses and no way of setting up in business again. As a result of this maddening experience and his refusal to work at, or below subsistence level, he begins to use his boat any way he can just so long as he makes money:

> "I don't want to fool with it but what choice have I got? They don't give you any choice now. I can let it go; but what will the next thing be? I didn't ask for any of this and if you've got to do it you've got to do it...."[21]

The opening scene of the book shows his absolute refusal to take three thousand dollars to land three aliens on the keys. Less than two days later, he accepts twelve hundred dollars to take a dozen Chinamen in his boat and "lose" them.

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21 Ibid p. 106

During this affair, Harry murders Mr. Sing, the man who is paying him to get rid of the Chinamen. The proceeds from this undertaking go toward the purchasing of a load of liquor to smuggle into the United States. While he is "running" it, a gun fight costs him both his arm and his boat. Actually there is no farther into degradation that Harry can sink, but to give the book its intolerable weight, Hemingway now takes all of Harry's crimes and combines them in one final hell of suffering and defeat.

He gets a boat dishonestly to help Cuban revolutionaries escape after a bank robbery, and ends shooting four of them to death with his Thompson gun and receiving fatal gun wounds himself.

Harry struggles helplessly right up to the end even though his back is to the wall; his brief attempts for freedom through economic security are energetic and sincere even though he fully appreciates their futility. He knows he is trapped and he feels wherein lie the injustices of the world:

> ....To help the working man he robs a bank and kills a fellow who works with him and then kills that poor damned Albert that never did any harm. That's a working man he kills. He never thinks of that. With a family. It's the Cubans run Cuba. They all doublecross each other. They sell each other out. They get what they deserve. The hell with their revolutions. All I got to do is to making a living for my family and I can't do that....[22]

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[22] Ibid p. 165

Finally as the end approaches, he gasps out his indictment of society as he knows it:

> "A man," Harry Morgan said, looking at them both. "One man alone ain't got. No man alone now." He stopped. "No matter how, a man alone ain't got no bloody chance."[23]

The rich, the intellectuals and the writers fare no better in life, only their misfortunes are not stripped so bare, and thus are not so easily diagnosed. Richard Gordon, the writer doubts his talent, his wife wrecks his ego, and his philanderings do not repair it, nor does he find any balm in alcohol. Finally he loses his wife to a rival who can't even admire him enough to hate him, but finds him pitiful.

The rich but restless industrialist reflects upon retiring:

> The men he broke made all these various exits (from life) but that never worried him. Somebody had to lose and only suckers worried. No, he would not have to think of them nor of the by-products of successful speculation. You win; somebody's got to lose, and only suckers worry.[24]

Hemingway would seem to indicate that the losing struggle up and the losing struggle to stay up frequently meet at a base level. He is, at this point in his career like a neophyte; over-conscious of his own sin and of the

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23 Ibid p. 220

24 Ibid p. 232

sins of the rest of the world and trying to expiate these by recording them as painfully as he is able to do. For years Hemingway rejected a social conscience and now that he has accepted one, he writes the bitterest tale of disintegration that he can concoct. His situation is even more disturbing than Erskine Caldwells' scenes of degeneracy, in that tender humour and pathos are omitted, and only the most brutal reporting methods are used.

It appears to many who have read To Have and Have Not that Hemingway is not acutely aware of the finer points of morality. The only character in the whole book with whom a reader could conceivably sympathize is Harry, and Harry is far from being trustworthy. He denies even the well-known adage about honor existing among thieves. For Whom the Bell Tolls pretty well establishes the fact that Hemingway is capable of making very fine moral distinctions. It might be that, after over indulgence in superficial "arty" egocentricity, this book served the purpose of a complete emetic and left its author ready for his finer works.

CHAPTER IV

HEMINGWAY AS A "CRUSADING" ROMANTICIST

Once before, while he was in the Italian trenches, Hemingway's chances for survival seemed slim, and he recovered better than anyone had hoped. During the 1930's his chances for a survival of creative power seemed to some to be less and less bright, and he once again effected a fine recovery.

There are a number of titles that could be given to this last period under discussion; since it deals almost exclusively with Spain, it could be called his Spanish period, but this does not indicate the nature of the period with relationship to his development. In so far as he has now found his centre and achieved a more balanced awareness, we may refer to it as the period of maturity.

From the years 1936 to 1940 Hemingway wrote his three best short stories, his best novel, his only play and his superb editorialization of a moving picture. It is very little short of a miracle, that in four years, a talent which had been barren for nearly a decade should bear abundant literary fruit, all worth the picking.

The least successful of the works written in these years is the play The Fifth Column; it exhibits certain hangover traits from Hemingway's drunken preoccupation with

death. Many of its most criticized features, however, are not the work of Hemingway but of Benjamin Glazer who adapted the play rather badly for presentation on Broadway.[1]

As Hemingway's The Fifth Column stands, though, it is still the work of Hemingway the hero and correspondent. It is not yet Hemingway the scrupulous artist.

The central figure is Philip Rawlings[2] who is engaged in counterespionage work in Madrid for the Loyalists during the Civil War. The theme is the psychological conflicts involved in his acceptance of his work. He has a conflict between the ideals for which he fights and the methods he must use to defend those ideals. Another problem he faces, is the disparity he feels between his ideal in theory and in

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[1] Mr. Glazer misinterpreted Dorothy completely and so gave it a jarringly broken tone. Since it was Hemingway's first play, and since he was unfamiliar with the theatre through the nature of his occupation and through his disposition, it is not surprising that adaption would be necessary. But one of two things should have been done to prevent a fair play from being presented in totally different form to what was intended and prevent it from discrediting the author. Either it should have been made fit for dramatization under the personal direction of the author or else the author should have employed a technical advisor and revised it himself. Glazer attempted to add a furbelow to battledress. He tried to make lush an author's work whose hallmark is understatement.

[2] This role was played by Franchot Tone at the Alvin Theatre in New York City. He rescued the play from failure and gave an inspired and completely understanding and sympathetic portrayal of Rawlings.

practice. He is also uneasy about the debaucheries in which he feels driven to indulge to achieve even a semblance of normality. He uses liquor and sex to escape momentarily from the revulsions and doubt and jitters his work makes him feel. The obvious conflict around which the play unfortunately develops is nostalgia for home and the fulfilment of his moral commitments.

Dorothy Bridges, oddly enough, symbolizes home. She is typical of a certain set of fast Junior Leaguers that Philip may have associated with before going to Spain. But if the "home" he longs for has any connotations of rose covered cottages, or solidarity as epitomized by the old oaken bucket - Dorothy is miscast. One critic, in discussing Dorothy and Anita, a moorish "tart" who loves Rawlings, speaks of sacred and profane love.[3] This might be quite true if that statement were permitted to apply in exact reversal of its intended implication. Dorothy is an adventuress who suggests home to Rawlings, for more reason than any other, that she is from the United States. She is in actual point of fact, twice the tart Anita is, in that loyalty is a word not yet incorporated into her thoughts.

Philip shows signs of what is to come in For Whom

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[3] Rosamond Gilder, "War Sacred and Profane", Theatre Arts, 24:314, May 1940.

the Bell Tolls when he explodes:

> "....You know what I'd like? I'd like to never kill another son-of-a-bitch. I don't care who or for what, as long as I live."[4]

The play hobbles along to a weak and foregone conclusion and Rawlings "gives up" Dorothy, who is "heartbroken" and the reader merely smiles, understanding that for both of the lovers, it was but an interlude and therefore not quite the moral tug'o'war Hemingway would have us believe.

Of the most recent of his short stories, there is one that exhibits each of the now fully developed facets in Hemingway's talent. The Snows of Kilimanjaro is both a technical triumph and a powerful self-revelation, The Short and Happy Life of Francis Macomber, is a finely drawn psychological study, The Capital of the World combines pathos with a truly definite picture of complex Madrid. The priceless little glimpse of the Old Man at the Bridge is the epitomy of all that is right with the world and all that is wrong with the world, seen at one inspired glance.

The Snows of Kilimanjaro is the story of a death made tragic because of the futility of the life preceding it. A writer has sold out his chances as an artist for the privilege

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[4] Ernest Hemingway, "The Fifth Column", The Fifth Column and the First Forty-Nine Stories, p. 45

of enjoying certain egocentric comforts. As he lies slowly succumbing to gangrene, the prospect of death and his enforced leisure cause him to take stock of himself and his life. He feels in full the bitterness of his bargain with life. Wave after wave of memory pours over him and he sees all his weak compromises in sharp relief:

> No, he thought, when everything you do, you do too long, and do too late, you can't expect to find the people still there. The people are all gone. The party's over and you are with your hostess now.[5]

When death, for which he has neither fear nor respect, overtakes him, Hemingway employs a brilliant technical device. The dying man imagines that the help for which they have sent has come and that he is loaded into the plane which takes off, flying high until he sees the snow fields on the top of the mountain Kilimanjaro and then he knows that is where they are going to land. In describing this fantasy, Hemingway gives no hint that it <u>is</u> fantasy and not fact, so that when the scene shifts to the wife's discovery of her husband's death, the reader leafs back involuntarily to the beginning of the death scene just to make sure.

The power and insight with which the story is told, hints more than slightly that it contains an autobiographical

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[5] <u>Ibid</u> p. 171

element. It could well be a faithful account of a conflict Hemingway has felt within himself. He may feel all but uncontrollable urges to "sell out", and so is able to heighten the pathos of the death of the imaginary author in the story. Hemingway seems to be saying, "There but by the grace of God go I."

The Short and Happy Life of Francis Macomber is an intense piece of music played on taut, highly tuned string instruments. Despite its feverish tension, it conveys more of Africa in its brief spell than the whole of the Green Hills of Africa. Macomber has just exhibited unmistakable cowardice as the story begins. His wife is using a thousand womanish and diabolical devices to keep this fact squarely in the forefront of his mind. There is no love in this marriage, just an intense rivalry, coupled with the knowledge on both sides that a divorce would be to their mutual disadvantage. This failure of Macomber to stand up to certain of the codes of a sportsman gives his wife further excuse to continue her habits of erotic freedom. It also keeps her ascendancy over him. On the next sortie, Macomber overcomes his fear and vindicates his shame of the day before. He is very brave in the hunt, and as he rises from the kill, a man, his wife shoots him instantly. His vindicated masculinity presaged larger emancipations on his part and she could not, even for the briefest moment, swallow that pill of defeat.

The Capital of the World is Madrid, in the eyes of the little boy Paco who is the central character in this story, and the heart of that capital is best seen in the life at a middle-class hotel. We become acquainted with a representative cross section of people who are the kind which gives Madrid its vitality. There are three matadors, one was ill and trying to conceal it, one was an outworn novelty and one was a coward. There were two picadors, a banderillero, two priests, an auctioneer, three waiters, a dishwasher and a chambermaid. The youngest of the waiters is little Paco. His sisters were both chambermaids and had procured his job for him. He thought Madrid a fairyland, clean linen and food a miracle, and the matadors gods. As the other characters mill about and tell their own tales, we are conscious of seeing the tableau through Paco's eyes, missing all the meaner implications and all the sordidness, accepting his beautiful world at face value and without a question. After work, in the deserted dining room, Enrique, another waiter, and Paco play at mock bullfighting. Enrique is the bull, with newly sharpened meat knives for horns. Paco is killed inadvertently by a horrified Enrique and:

> The boy Paco had never known about any of this nor about what all these people would be doing on the next day and on other days to come. He had no idea how they really lived nor how they ended. He did not even realize they ended. He died, as the Spanish phrase has it, full of illusions. He had not had time in his life to lose any of them, nor even, at the end to

> complete an act of contrition. He had not even had time to be disappointed in the Garbo picture which disappointed all Madrid for a week.[6]

There is very little to be said of the Old Man At The Bridge; if space permitted, it would be best praised by inclusion in, its entirety, in these pages. The old man is seventy-six years of age and has walked twelve kilometers; he is without politics; is confused by the term artillery, and worried about the fate of his goats, his cat and his four pair of pigeons and he is too tired to go farther.

> "If you are rested I would go," I urged. "Get up and try to walk now."
> "Thank you," he said and got to his feet, swayed from side to side and then sat down backwards in the dust.
> "I was taking care of animals," he said dully, but no longer to me. "I was only taking care of animals."
> There was nothing to do about him. It was Easter Sunday and the fascists were advancing toward the Ebro. It was a gray overcast day with a low ceiling so their planes were not up. That and the fact that cats know how to look after themselves was all the good luck that old man would ever have.[7]

Hemingway had shrugged at his debt to society for years and now he is accepting it and paying it off with all his energy and ability. He was an important factor in the formation of a group of authors who swore to present the true facts of current history to the uninitiated. After their

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[6] Ibid p. 149

[7] Ibid p. 178

organization as a society, these people took the name of Contemporary Historians. As part of his service in this work, Hemingway teamed up with[8] Joris Ivens, the famous Dutch film director and John Ferno, Ivens' photographer, to make a frank pictorial record of the war in Spain. Their aim was to make the truth so shocking that it would force society from its apathetic position and into some preventive action against war.[9] Ivens, and Ferno are still at work in their crusade, filming the horrors of the Chinese war. The theme of the Spanish Earth is the attempt of the peasantry to reclaim land exhausted through centuries of exploitation and misuse and their failure through war.

In making the picture, all three of its creators ran very grave risks to maintain its honesty as a completely undramatized chronicle of war, and also to inject the maximum of actual horror. The biblical prophets of doom had not louder nor more insistent messages of destruction than this picture.

After the work on the Spanish fronts had been finished, Hemingway brought the picture back to the United States to be edited and to have a sound recording made of

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8 Clearly this is an idealist venture illustrating at once Hemingway's new hope for the world and the old hopelessness of that world.

9 Will history ever pass a verdict on this war?

his commentary. It was shown for Franklin D. Roosevelt at the White House and then, under the auspices of Robert Montgomery, in Hollywood. After this, advance showings were given throughout the United States and the proceeds were devoted to the Loyalists. Hemingway himself donated his entire fortune to the cause as well as all the money he could borrow on personal notes.

The commentary appeared in a slim volume, in a limited edition put out by Savage and Company in 1938, with an introduction by Jasper Wood. The words spoken cannot, of course go so far as to make the film superfluous, but they are sufficiently graphic and powerful, that, lacking the film, the reader can actually see what Hemingway is describing:

> You stand in line all day to buy food for supper. Sometimes the foods run out before you reach the door. Sometimes a shell falls near the line and at home they wait and wait and nobody brings back anything for supper....
> This is a man who has nothing to do with war. A bookkeeper on his way to his office at eight o'clock in the morning. So now they take the bookkeeper away but not to his office or to his home.
> The government urges all civilians to evacuate Madrid.
> But where will we go? Where can we live? - What can we do for a living?
> I won't go. I am too old. - But we must keep the children off the street except when there is need to stand in line.[10]
> They say the old good-byes that sound the same in any language. She says she'll wait. He says

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10 Ernest Hemingway, The Spanish Earth, pp. 41 f

that he'll come back. He knows she'll wait.
Who knows for what, the way the shelling is.
Nobody knows if he'll come back. Take care of
the kid, he says. I will - she says, but knows
she can't. They both know that when they move
you out in trucks, it's to a battle....
Boys look for bits of shell fragments as they
once gathered hailstones.
Before, death came when you were old and sick,
but now it comes to all this village. High in
the sky in shining silver it comes to all who
have no place to run, no place to hide.[11]
....This is the moment that all the rest of the
was prepares us for, when six men go forward into
death to walk across a stretch of land and by
their presence on it prove - this earth is ours.
Six men were five. Then four were three, but
these three stayed, dug in and held the ground.
Along with all the other fours and threes and
twos that started out as sixes. The bridge
is ours.[12]

If the book and film must be condemned as propaganda, it is effective as both propaganda and art. It has a definite place in developing Hemingway to the point where he could write his masterpiece, For Whom the Bell Tolls.

The shifting in values that begins clumsily in To Have and Have Not is now completed. All the empty roaring courage that has been so fatuously praised now has no importance except in its relation to the fulfilling of social obligations, and so is no longer empty. All of the negation and absence of struggle that has so weighted down his art are gone. His bell is not tolling for the Bretts and the

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11 Ibid p. 42

12 Ibid pp. 51 f

Jakes nor for the Catherines and Fred Henrys nor yet for the Harry Morgans; it is tolling for all mankind:

> No man is an Iland, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine; if a Clod bee washed away by the Sea, Europe is the lesse, as well as if a Promontorie were, as well as if a Mannor of thy friends or of thine owne were; any mans death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankinde: And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls: It tolls for thee.
>
> John Donne.

This is the preface Hemingway uses at the beginning of his novel. It exhibits an amazing contrast to the position taken in The Green Hills of Africa.

The new philosophy and technique in For Whom the Bell Tolls pretty well establishes Hemingway's departure from the school of literary Naturalism; the odds are no longer vast and brooding nebulosities, but actualities. Effort is worth while now. And there is beauty. And there is right and wrong, as judged by the standards of society. His new position combines the best features of romanticism, realism and naturalism, a position that has been given no name as yet.

It would be demanding more than Hemingway has to give to suggest that the novel had escaped any trace of his early flaws. A residual "I" still lingers to annoy, although in no such proportions as in the 30's.

There may seem to be an inconsistency in the novel at first glance. It appears that Hemingway has abandoned logic for the sake of emotional homogeneity. The impression a casual reader gets is that Robert Jordan rejects, bit by bit, the cause for which he is fighting. Early in the book he thinks:

> You went into it knowing what you were fighting for. You were fighting against exactly what you were doing and being forced into doing to have any chance of winning.[13]

And Jordan and Hemingway justify themselves in their allegiance:

> ....He was under the Communist discipline for the duration of the war. Here in Spain the Communists offered the best discipline and the soundest and sanest for the prosecution of the war. He accepted their discipline for the duration of the war because, in the conduct of the war, they were the only party whose program and whose discipline he could respect.[14]

And Jordan reflects on Pablo's political development thus:

> They all had the politics of horse thieves. He believed in the Republic as a form of government but the Republic would have to get rid of all that bunch of horse thieves that brought it to the pass it was in when the rebellion started. Was there ever a people whose leaders were as truly their enemies as this one?[15]

Much later on in the events that occur, the hero puts forth very frank views on the cause he has espoused:

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13 Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls, p. 162

14 Ibid p. 163

15 Loc. Cit.

> Since when did you ever have any such conception? Never. And you never could have. You're not a real Marxist and you know it. You believe in Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. You believe in Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. Don't ever kid yourself with too much dialectics. They are for some but not for you. You have to know them in order not to be a sucker. You have put many things in abeyance to win a war. If this war is lost all of those things are lost.[16]

Jordan is not really rejecting the Communists because he, like his creator, never completely accepted them. He is only accepting their means of getting to an end which he himself endorses. Theirs is the method which embodies the greater discipline and economy of action and promises the most certain results. He is no longer the hero who confuses means and ends of the earlier Hemingway fiction. He is justifying his means by an end which he considers moral. Thus he is prepared to support any force that will go into active combat against aggression (Nazism).

At the close of the book, he has experienced disillusion on a good many scores. He has found people in all the factions of both sides who are letting the rest of their party down. Despite this tempering and saddening experience, he sees clearly that he is fighting for a moral good and that that good is well worth fighting and dying for. Perhaps the victory his cause might win is not a joyful victory; few triumphs in

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16 Ibid p. 305

blood bring unmixed happiness, but for the good of humanity, there is no choice but to espouse that cause against the powers of aggression. He reflects this as he lies waiting for death on the hillside:

> He looked down the hill slope again and he thought. I hate to leave it, is all. I hate to leave it very much and I hope I have done some good in it. I have tried to with what talent I had. Have, you mean. All right, have. I have fought for what I believed in for a year now. If we win here we will win everywhere. The world is a fine place and worth the fighting for and I hate very much to leave it....[17]

The inner conflicting loyalties of Robert Jordan might become confusing if handled by a lesser master than Hemingway. As it is, his conflicts and his gradual acceptance of the grim facts of war are clearly understood by the reader. Jordan's confusion is felt rather than shared. The novel does not strain the reader's intelligence uncomfortably nor does it drug his mind with the too-obvious.

Its plot is not involved nor are its characters. Robert Jordan gets a year's leave of absence from the American University in which he teaches, to go to Spain and support the Loyalist cause. He becomes a specialist in bridge blowing. His value is great in this capacity because of his scientific knowledge and his familiarity with the terrain and the language. He is sent to work with a band of mountain guerillas

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[17] Ibid p. 467

under the leadership, nominally of Pablo, but in reality of Pablo's woman Pilar, and there he meets a little Spanish girl named Maria, who is the victim of outrage by the fascists. A tender love affair ensues for the next three days, during which time, Jordan effects a near-miracle in restoring Maria's confidence in life. After living with the guerilla band for three days, the bridge is blown up by Jordan and the accompanying operations cost him his life. The guerilla tribe moves on then, according to their laws, leaving Jordan to die. They go to take up another position from which they can harrass the enemy.

None of the characters are sharply defined. They are outlined rather by their relations with the others in their group. It is in their intercourse with their comrades that they manifest their personalities. It seems entirely probable that none of them could be outstanding in a collection of pen portraits, because they need their environment and the interaction between it and themselves - a new development in the Hemingway technique.

The real interest of the book lies in its vividness, which gives the reader a sense of active and intense participation in the life described. This is true in the two phases of the life they live, the physical and the mental. In the physical aspect, one experiences acute feelings of

fatigue, hunger, fear and cold, as well as the keen gratifications of eating, sleeping, exercising and drinking. Sights and smells are described with such accuracy that the gunpowder explosions are almost choking, the smell of stew appetizing, the clean cold night air exhilarating and the smell of pine needles clean and sweet...and sad. The sound of planes droning overhead and the crackling of distant gunfire lose nothing in their transition from actuality to literature.

Included under the head "mental vividness" are the spiritual and psychological states of the guerillas. Pablo's sense of disintegration, Pilar's disgust with him, Anselmo's sad devotion to duty, Maria's blindly trusting love and Jordan's rationalization and acceptance of his position are all shared to the fullest extent by the reader. As the book unfolds, one's feelings intensify greatly about characters and situations. When, for example, Pablo threw away a vital part of Jordan's equipment the night before the bridge was to be blown, an overwhelming sense of sympathetic futility comes over the reader. The odds that are mutilating the young professor's plans oppress us as much as they would if we were actually experiencing them in real life.

Jordan himself, although the central figure is rather more of a point of view than flesh and blood. He is the lens through which Hemingway sees the Spanish Civil War. Or

perhaps he could be described as the medium which the artist uses to paint his scene depicting a certain part of that war.

Pablo is the most vividly presented figure, Pilar the strongest character, and Anselmo the most lovable person. Edmund Wilson describes Maria as "amoeba-like"[18] which is almost accurate as it is harsh. She and Jordan rise above the surface only through their love which is an expression of love under fire the world over. She is simply an instrument by means of which another side of Jordan's character is manifested. It is only in the truth they convey about the relativity of time that their importance lies:

> ....I would like to have it for my whole life. You will, the other part of him said. You will. You have it now and that is all your whole life is, now. There is nothing else than now. There is neither yesterday, certainly, nor is there any to-morrow. How old must you be before you know that? There is only now and if now is only two days, then two days is your life and everything in it will be in proportion. This is how you live a life in two days. And if you stop complaining and asking for what you never will get, you will have a good life. A good life is not measured by any biblical span.[19]

Pablo has extremely rudimentary cultural instincts but an extraordinarily keen mind for one with no training. His cunning is as instinctive as that of a fox, and he has the manners and habits of swine. At an earlier date, he was the

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18 Edmund Wilson, The Wound and the Bow,(Cambridge: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1941.) Footnote # 1 p. 239

19 Op. Cit. p. 169

leader of the band in all things and he was brave and successful in his leadership, but he has lost his dash and confidence. He was a sadistic murderer who took pleasure in his killing, with very little thought of the moral end he was serving. It is quite possible that only the chance of birth placed him on the Loyalist side. His barbarity would certainly have served him well had he been of the opposition! In dealing with Pablo, Hemingway has shown immense self-discipline; he has allowed Pablo and his actions to speak for themselves but he has not omitted any of the foulness in the interests of whitewashing the Loyalist defenders. Pablo <u>was</u> treacherous but is now blood-sated and beaten. His own evil has turned back and is revenging itself on him. He is now an alcoholic glutton, as Pilar says when she reviles him:

> "I liked you better when you were barbarous," the woman said. "Of all men the drunkard is the foulest. The thief when he is not stealing is like another. The extortioner does not practice in the home. The murderer when he is at home can wash his hands. But the drunkard stinks and vomits in his own bed and dissolves his organs in alcohol."[20]

Pablo resents Robert Jordan's presence in every way and he hampers his work at every turn, coming close to ruining it at the end when he throws away the dynamiting equipment. He finally sees that he can no longer lead the group and that, no matter how hopeless the undertaking at the bridge appears to be, it must be done. He understands at last that it is utter

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[20] <u>Ibid</u> p. 205

folly to try to operate alone; that in solidarity lies the only hope of survival.

Pilar is a sharp tongued masculine type of woman. She is coarse and crude, but has her own moral standard and a sense of justice. In part, she is a woman of action and in part a practical philosopher. No one could be more the heart and soul of charity than she - where she felt it was deserved, but again, there was never a she-devil that could equal her when she found slackness, stupidity, cowardice or disloyalty. She keeps the men of the little band under her iron rule and none of them think to question her right to do so. Her powers of expression are on a par with those of her creator, and she is especially gifted in relating tales of war, bullfighting and love. Pilar is a good friend and nursemaid to the young lovers and offers them the kind of advice they most want and gives them understanding and friendship. She is of actual assistance to Jordan in his dealings with the slippery Pablo. Pablo, she handles magnificently, for she does not fail to take into account the fact that he is none the less a rattler for all that the venom has removed from his sting.

Pablo exhibits the work of centuries upon the minds of the common people. Although they have risen in arms against those who, for centuries, have ground them down; they still have an inbred respect for their oppressors. Pablo says as much as he describes the death of the priest (related by

Pilar to Robert and Maria):

> " 'He died very badly', Pablo said. 'He had very little dignity!'
> 'How did you want him to have dignity when he was being chased by the mob?' I said.
> 'I thought he had much dignity all the time before. All the dignity that one could have.'
> 'Yes' Pablo said. 'But in the last minute he was frightened.'
> 'Who wouldn't be?' I said. 'Did you see what they were chasing him with?'
> 'Why would I not see?' Pablo said. 'But I find he died badly.'
> 'In such circumstances any one dies badly,' I told him.
> 'What do you want for your money? Everything that happened at Ayuntamiento was scabrous.'
> 'Yes' said Pablo. 'There was little organization. But a priest. He has an example to set.'
> 'I thought you hated priests.'
> 'Yes' said Pablo and cut some more bread. 'But a Spanish priest. A Spanish priest should die very well.' " [21]

Anselmo is anything but a born soldier and he is an old man. He is fighting for his belief against his beliefs. He is a gentle faithful character who conscientiously does his share without a question and without a whimper. Meanwhile, as he silently fulfils all his duties, he has ever present and ever gnawing worries inside of himself. He does not believe in killing:

> "They do not understand why the war is made. They do not know for what they fight."
> "No," Anselmo said. "They only know now there is a war and people may kill again as in the olden times without the surety of punishment."
> "You have killed?" Robert Jordan asked in the

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[21] Ibid p. 127

intimacy of the dark and of their day together.
"Yes. Several times. But not with pleasure. To me it is a sin to kill a man. Even Fascists whom we must kill. To me there is a great difference between the bear and the man and I do not believe the wizardry of the gypsies about the brotherhood with animals. No. I am against all killing of men."
"Yet you have killed."
"Yes and will again. But if I live later, I will try to live in such a way, doing no harm to anyone, that it will be forgiven."
"By whom?"
"Who knows? Since we do not have God here any more, neither His Son nor the Holy Ghost, who forgives? I do not know."
"You have not God any more?"
"No. Man. Certainly not. If there were God, never could he have permitted what I have seen with my eyes. Let them have God."
"They claim him."
"Clearly I miss him, having been brought up in the religion, but now a man must be responsible to himself."
"Then it is thyself who will forgive thee for killing."
.....
"I would not kill even a Bishop. I would not kill a proprietor of any kind. I would make them work each day as we have worked in the fields and as we work in the mountains with the timber, all the rest of their lives. So they would see what man is born to. That they should sleep where we sleep. That they should eat as we eat. But above all that they should work.. Thus they would learn."
"And they would survive to enslave thee again."
"To kill them teaches nothing," Anselmo said. "You cannot exterminate them because from their seed comes more with greater hatred."[22]

The book, besides its beauty of thought, is a linguistic feat outstanding in modern letters. The whole novel has been translated into Spanish and re-translated

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[22] Ibid p. 40

literally back into English. It is not surprising that the reader is enveloped in an atmosphere of authenticity, when a Spaniard who read the book, claimed that the effect on him was an illusion, almost perfect, of reading his native tongue. The use of the terms of familiarity, "thee" and "thou" is a master stroke at conveying the simplicity and affectionate unity between Robert and Maria and indeed the whole band. The use of this form of the pronoun also links up politics and the love that is being sacrificed to those politics in such speeches as "I love thee and I love all that we have fought for."[23]

The novel is of such fine artistry, that it could carry a much feebler message and still assert itself in the literature of to-day. Even if Robert Jordan were giving his life to a cause that lacked validity, he lends dignity and value to his undertaking through his approach to that cause and his prosecution of it. Even though the guerillas were nothing more than cuthroats and the love affaire a burlesque, there is a real and living fraternity and emotional spontaneity which are consistent from the beginning to the end. Since none of these possibilities are true, and we must concede the qualities of sincerity, truth and insight to the list of merits of the book, it is not surprising that a gold medal should be awarded it as the book most likely to survive its decade.

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[23] Ibid p. 348

CHAPTER V

SOME ASPECTS OF HEMINGWAY AS A SHORT STORY WRITER

To a great number of people, Hemingway is primarily a short story writer. It is in this field that he has been most widely read. Since, however, some of his shorter pieces do not clearly indicate the steps in the growth of his philosophy, they have not been included in the chronological development of Hemingway's thought as seen in his work.

A proof, if one were needed, that he is a master of the short story may be found in the fact that at least one of his works appears in almost all of the anthologies of the greatest modern short stories. It is a further credit to his ability that it is not always the same story that appears. The editors of these anthologies have varying tastes, but high standards of quality.

In this chapter a brief study will be made of some of these stories considered not so much for their ethical or philosophical content, as for their literary art.

Character is not emphasized as the pivotal point of the Hemingway short stories. Their importance lies largely in the vividness of the impression they produce. The scenes represented by Hemingway are realistic, but his selection and arrangement of points of interest often have a total effect of fantastic refraction. His people sometimes appear distorted,

as does the human body standing before a trick mirror in a midway. Not a few paintings of the surrealists suggest a similar phenomenon. He and the artists differ, of course, in their mediums. The vantage point from which they see the panorama of life is substantially the same. Their art then, is neither perverted not jaundiced nor sickly, but healthy. They accept the permanent presence of a harsh impersonal power and try to work out their own personal relationship to that power. And they are able, with our co-operation, to transmit that knowledge to us for our benefit. They have not necessarily solved the human riddle, but the fact that they have an answer which is capable of rhythmic and emotional communications, gives that answer a lasting value.

In mentally reviewing the short stories of Hemingway, one thinks of a series of water colours rather than a series of tiny plots or character sketches. Taking an imaginary tour of the gallery in which are hung these subtle, yet bold, bits of artistry, we find ourselves pausing before many of them.

Up in Michigan, one of the early group is intensely vivid with local colour. It is an entirely usual day in a tiny hamlet called Horton's Bay set amongst the wild beauty of Northern Michigan. As we leave the village late at night, nothing has happened apparently to disturb the quiet tempo of country life. But Liz Coates has been raped by Jim Gilmore

and the stupor and surprise that outrage has inflicted on Liz is a sensation which will influence her for the rest of her life. Nor is the feeling transmitted to the reader easily put off.

The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife leaves a different impression. An Indian patient of Doctor Adams is honour bound to work off his bill. Loathe to do so, he cleverly picks a fight with the doctor and leaves his obligation unfulfilled. This is not surprising to Nick's father, but expect it though he may, it has the power of disappointing him anew each time it occurs. His wife's plaintive invalidism and her pollyanna Christianity add to his disappointment in the Indian, because we get the impression that the true Christian action for her to take would be to get out of bed and care for her family. It is as though Hemingway had painted a blob representing humanity, and in the style of the surrealist artists, deliberately left a hole where the heart should have been. He seems to shrug and say, with Jake Barnes "Well people were that way. To hell with people." And so the doctor turns to his child and to nature for solace.

In The Battler, it is the technique that arrests the eye. Without painting the black ex-trainer black he succeeds in portraying a negro who is far more plausible than many who are so labelled. This effect is achieved through the use of

dialogue which is completely free of dialect!

Angry frustration coupled with a tinge of resignation is the response to A Very Short Story. The active emotion is the feeling which results from seeing the stupid mess two young lovers make of their lives, and the resignation stems from a realization that these two souls are not by any means unique.

We pass by Mr. and Mrs. Elliot quickly because we think, or are forced to think through Hemingway's magical touch, of people we know and with whom we are out of sympathy and whom we choose to forget.

An emotional relief is offered by Cat in the Rain. There is no electrically charged air, no psychological canker, no obscured issues. We feel that here is representative art at its best. A man and his wife are in a Paris hotel room and they are in open war. She battles him and he battles her. It is all in the open, you can see what they look like and how they feel. Finally a cat, acting as a symbol of temporary victory or truce, rings the bell, so to speak, ending the round.

Out of Season is perhaps the saddest of the less profound scenes. A young couple are side-stepping the game laws in Spain and have to hire such an obnoxious character to act as their guide, and have to be so underhand about the fishing trip that the joy goes rancid. The derelict guide acts as a goad to

their consciences and they finally abandon the project altogether. They are like children playing truant from school with nowhere to go and nothing to do.

The off-kilter scale of values of modern youth is portrayed in Cross-Country Show. The coming of a child is viewed as an unnatural interruption of a life dedicated to pleasure.

Hemingway makes one of his few absolute demands in In Another Country. We are not allowed to infer anything we please nor are we allowed to react any way we please. We must stop and sympathize wholeheartedly and unreservedly with the wounded major who has just lost his bride through death. We must also sympathize with the teller of the tale who has been trampling heavy-footedly on wounds he could not see.

Army demoralization is the key to the little grotesque titled A Simple Enquiry. It exposes the breaks that appear in a man's armour when he has been under prolonged and miserable stress and yet it shows that the game is never entirely lost - the major had a shining armour once. Being badly burned and demoralized, he has slipped a cog, but he is still a sporting gentleman when he accepts his batman's refusal without malice.

The irony of contrast and the element of surprise are deeply impressive in a Canary for One. A fatuous old fool of

an American lady has just denied her daughter the right to love and is offering her a canary as a substitute. She is at once an annoying meddler and a pathetic figure. In describing how she ruined her daughter's life, she discloses her own barrenness of spirit and her loneliness. She couldn't bear to lose her daughter and can't face up to her own motivations. The writer of the story and his wife, with no obstacles to be overcome at all, still have failed at marriage. When they hear of the thwarting of true love, their own position must bite into them like an acid. They are amiss somehow - but how? It is not until the last sentence that Hemingway reveals that the married couple are separating.

Ten Indians is a gayer picture, full of the atmosphere of Michigan woods and the natural resiliency of youth. It is a rare thing when a Hemingway character (Nick Adams) finds that "life is so full of a number of things", that he cannot remember to be sad over a recent and painful wound.

An Alpine Idyll occasions much conjecture. The story is about a Swiss peasant whose wife died in the winter and being snowed in he stored her body in the woodshed and used her lower jaw to hang his lantern on while he chopped wood. It is possible that it is a ghoulish tale of no import beyond its narrative value; it is possible that two conceptions concerning the dead are being contrasted - perhaps the peasant felt that

he had acted excusably under the circumstances, but felt that he could not stand up to the censure of convention. It is also a possibility that solitude and exigency are being shown as creators of unnatural behaviour. Or perhaps the wife has been only a drudge in life and ingrained habit makes the husband seek a use for her after death. If one is willing to read deeply enough - perhaps Hemingway is trying to show that our lives are not entirely publishable, that there are incidents for us all which, if brought to light would be embarrassing and difficult to explain logically. The prose technique used suggests constant passing and repassing of light and shade.

Out and out impressionism is used in Banal Story, yet there is a masterly relevance in Hemingway's apparent indirection. He gives, in a lightening flash, all the data of the corrida and the fighters that Death in the Afternoon confused and made valueless by its hysteria.

After the Storm is sketched in colours so strong that they suggest even sound. A man goes to loot a liner which has been sunk in a storm. He fails after several brave attempts and as he says: "First there was the birds, then me, then the Greeks and even the birds got more than I did." P.1 He establishes the rules by which he is resigned to playing the game. His rules and the conditions of life are both keyed low, but are effective because they compliment each other satisfactorily.

Prev. 1. Ernest Hemingway, The First Forty-nine Stories, p. 476.

The Light of the World, instead of being religion, is the imagination, in this Hemingway picture. In showing how the memory of Steve Ketchel makes two women happy, he never tells us which, if either, of them is cheered by actual experience and which by the fires of her imagination. It makes no difference, apparently. Life has become so dream-like to them that its facts have relatively little importance compared to the superstructure they build upon them.

The pathos of ignorance cries out from the canvas of God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen, (first published in Scribners Magazine under the title Give us a Prescription Please, Doctor). A young lad mutilates himself to be rid of his sexual desires. When he sought help, he got none. He had a real and urgent need of spiritual aid and was denied it, so he took mechanical steps which proved fatal. This heartrending sketch could be taken to constitute a universal indictment of our callous materialism and superficiality as well as our tendency to pass on the other side of the road.

How much of A Way You'll Never Be is a self portrait, is hard to say. Nick Adams is the victim of either trench psychosis or shell shock and has lost his confidence through the psychoneurotic label the army doctors have given him. Hemingway was never so labelled, but he undoubtedly had seen comrades who were and had probably felt twinges of fear for

his mental balance at times of severe shock and stress. The depiction of Nick's state of mind excites active sympathy and communicates a good bit of his unrest and nervousness.

A Day's Wait is a charming little picture of very young childhood. It shows Hemingway's rich understanding of, and sympathy for the very serious problems of children. Young Schatz, educated in France, doesn't know that a temperature of one hundred-and-two is not fatal on an English thermometer, as it would be on a French thermometer, and so lies for a whole day waiting for death. Just as Hemingway understands his derelicts, prostitutes, crooks and psychotics, he enters into the consciousness of a frightened child and speaks for the child with a tenderness and sympathy infrequently found in a hard-boiled fiction writer.

The Fontans and the rolling scenic beauties of the mid-west both contribute much to the particular charm of Wine of Wyoming. It is perhaps Hemingway's most consistently cheerful scene. Everywhere is a certain "joie de vivre", depending as is usual, largely on sensual delights. The feeling which exists between Fontan and his wife is rather more spiritual than most of the marital relations, Hemingway describes elsewhere. The only note struck which is less than happy is in the farewell scene in which Hemingway and his friend (likely John dos Passos) see how their selfish inconsider-

ateness has caused these good people pain. And so the sprightly rhythm of the story slows down, as regret leaves its impression on the minds of the travellers.

The Gambler, the Nun and the Radio presages the arrival of the period of the thirties. A certain frantic note is struck which points fairly to the unhappy state into which Hemingway was lapsing:

> Religion is the opium of the people. He believed that, that dyspeptic little joint-keeper. Yes, and music is the opium of the people. Old mouth-to-the-head hadn't thought of that. And now economics is the opium of the people;along with patriotism the opium of the people in Italy and Germany. What about sexual intercourse; was that an opium of the people? Of some of the people. Of some of the best of the people. But drink was a sovereign opium of the people, oh, an excellent opium. Although some prefer the radio, another opium of the people, a cheap one he had just been using. Along with these went gambling, an opium of the people if there ever was one, one of the oldest. Ambition was another, an opium of the people, along with a belief in any new form of government. What you wanted was a minimum of government, always less government. Liberty, what we believed in, now the name of a MacFadden publication. We believed in that although they had not found a new name for it yet. But what was the real one? What was the real, the actual opium of the people? He knew it very well. It was gone just a little way around the corner in that well-lighted part of his mind that was there after two or more drinks in the evening; that he knew was there (it was not really there of course). What was it? He knew very well. What was it? Of course; bread was the opium of the people. Would he remember that and would it make sense in the daylight? Bread is the opium of the people.[1]

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[1] Ernest Hemingway, The First Forty-Nine Stories. p.583

Some of the stories included in the anthology exhibit Hemingway as a reporter only and will not be included here. One of them, indeed was in a press story - Che Ti Dice La Patria?

Hemingway has been compared to several other writers. The similarities that have been pointed out, have not been indications of an attempt to ape the style of certain literary masters. Hemingway aimed at originality of both thought and expression. Where he is most often a subject of comparison, is in his short stories.

His hero is the Byronic hero. The freshness and vitality of his landscapes and local colour and atmosphere have been likened to the handling of such different talents as Turgenev and Mark Twain. If there is one author whose work is more like that of Hemingway, I should say that author would be Rudyard Kipling.

Immediately this suggestion is made, obvious objections may be raised. It is admitted, then, that the two writers differ radically in their basic underlying philosophies; that is, Kipling was not a determinist. He had leanings in that direction but those leanings did not include all of humanity. He did feel that certain people were the victims of a malevolent fate which they could not hope to escape. It often seems that Kipling feels India is England's dark star and

those people she sends there are forordained to doom or salvation, regardless of their actions. In this way, the operation of the human will is of no account.

A second point of major dissimilarity is the technique employed by each of them. Hemingway leaves a great deal of inferring and disentangling up to the reader. He rarely, if ever, tells "what happened next". Much of his impact comes from this device of his which leaves his reader at a pitch of excitement or curiosity or emotion. Kipling takes all the strands of his yarn which may leave his reader in some doubt, and disentangles them with infinite care. So conscientious is he in this matter that the explanation sometimes appears to be anticlimactic. A reader who has become caught up in the narrative with any appreciable completeness can usually supply the ending the author intended. There is more emphasis on plot in Kipling, and more emphasis on impression in Hemingway. Another minor point of dissimilarity lies in the fact that Kipling relies a good bit on dialect, and Hemingway tries to avoid its use at all costs. <u>For Whom the Bell Tolls</u> is written in the Spanish Idiom throughout but it has not the same superficiality as the employment of the negro or the cockney dialects with their phonetic spellings.

There are probably many more differences which could be illustrated, but these few will serve to prove that the

position taken here is that Hemingway and Kipling resemble each other in certain respects.

Perhaps the most outstanding feature that they share in common is their subject matter. Men of action are the central figures in the vast majority of their works. They are rough men, men who find life at the frontiers more tenable than life in the more civilized and urban centres. They are none of them whiners, they are not easily fazed and never intimidated. They are ready always with their fists or guns or whatever other weapons are at hand. Neither Hemingway nor Kipling could have written with such authority and confidence had they not known barrack life intimately. They knew men as they were when they were divorced from the veneer imposed by domesticity, their life in the battlefields of India or Italy, on hunting and fishing trips, in gambling dens, and in bars. There is not the restraint on behaviour patterns which is imposed by the artificiality of convention. It is a common legend that the unrolling of the western prairies bred "men that were men", it could be added that the pages of these two authors contain brothers for these pioneers.

Private Learoyd, Sergeant Mulvaney, Private Ortheris, Colonel Deever are all lusty, likeable men whose counterparts can be found in Hemingway in his soldiers, his fishermen, his hunters and even in certain sketches of Nick Adams. As a

whole, however, Kipling's men are more normal and more joyous. There is a certain rollicking quality suggested in even the grimmest of situations. He manages to transmit the feeling that all is not lost, and that there is nothing neurotic about their courage.

Both of the authors have a fairly low estimate of women. They do not form a large part of any situation and are used more as plot motivation than as separate entities possessing character and deep spiritual import. Maisie and Bessie in The Light That Failed are shallow and mercenary and most of the women in the Plain Tales from the Hills are simply referred to as Miss or Mrs. so-and-so and their points of view are never represented at all. They are simply narrative data. Hemingway treats his women in much the same manner. Brett in The Sun Also Rises is certainly not a character who would cause the reader to desire to emulate her, and Maria in For Whom the Bell Tolls is no more than a practical demonstration of one side of the Jordan personality. In other instances, Mrs. Elliot in Mr. and Mrs. Elliott is an abyssmal fool; the woman with the canary in A Canary for One is a foolish moral coward; Dorothy Bridges in The Fifth Column is a "tramp"; Nick's mother is a neurotic; the little Indian girls in the backwoods from whom Nick learned his first lessons about love were unfaithful. Both Hemingway and Kipling being men's men, it is possible that they had carried over the disdain for the

weaker sex from actively masculine youths. It is a common pose, among the so-called tough boys, to further assert their maleness by an apparent disregard for "gurls".

The treatment and importance which they give to alcohol has certain aspects in common. It is not treated as a primarily moral issue. Drinking is not considered to be a sign of weakness. There never arises any discussion among the characters about whether it is advisable that they enter a bar, or whether they will suffer the next day, or whether they will be seen, or whether their wives will smell their breaths and so on. Usually the reader is unaware of their intention altogether until, during the course of a conversation, the bartender is called or referred to. Despite this acceptance of drinking as a normal habit, both authors have a strong realization that liquor is a crutch in times of strain. In Kipling's Thrown Away, when he and the major framed a letter explaining The Boy's death, for example, he says, "I am afraid to say how much whisky we drank before the letter was finished."[2] In Hemingway's work, a hundred such examples could be cited, perhaps the most general example, and the weightiest, would be The Sun Also Rises in which almost all of the characters keep their consciousnesses just slightly submerged in alcohol throughout the novel. They have all shared

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[2] Rudyard Kipling, Plain Tales from the Hills and Soldiers Three. p. 23

the strain of the war years and the delayed shock is playing hob with their nerves. Liquor, then is at once, in both writers' works a pleasant social habit and a false armour against the trials and heartaches of the world, but not taboo.

Family life is not a favourite topic of either man. Instead of a wife, their men have their gun, their "buddy", their bottle and the excitement and rapid tempo of a life of action.

Understatement is a characteristic they share. It is highly effective in both cases. Since they deal with startling and effective facts and situations, they apparently feel that emphasizing them with startling words would be gilding the lily. A death is a death, no more. The ability to use the device of understatement without loss of force or sincereity, adds much to the impression the reader has of the rugged masculinity of Hemingway and Kipling.

Kipling had a greater versatility than Hemingway, although it would be hard to say which of them reached a higher standard of prose fiction writing. It is interesting to note that they were both reporters; which accounts in some measure, I suppose, for their interest in, and knowledge of, people outside the spheres in which they moved socially. It also accounts for a good deal of their objectivity, which

is almost perfect when they are at their best.

It is interesting to conjecture whether or not Kipling might have resembled Hemingway more closely had he lived a little later and had missed the general optimism spread by England when she was at the peak of her imperialism. Kipling was an imperialist at heart; Hemingway's sympathies lay not with empire builders, but with the fellow "down on his luck."

CHAPTER VI

EVALUATION

Foreshadowing things to come is often dangerous and foolhardy. This is particularly true in the arts. In this evaluation of Hemingway, therefore, no prophecies will be advanced. Rather than looking ahead to his literary future, a brief estimate will be made as to how much he has contributed up until now to modern American prose fiction.

It seems unavoidable to mention his present work which is causing volumes of criticism. At the time of writing, Hemingway is the war correspondent for Collier's Magazine and for a newspaper syndicate. It is impossible to say whether the writing he is now doing represents a relapse to the superficially subjective type of writing of which he was guilty in the 1930's, whether he is attempting to contribute his bit to the war effort, or whether he is simply potboiling. If the first of these is true, his chances of ever finding his artistic wellspring are so much the less. If the second is true, his work is commendable only for its aim. It is to be hoped that the third case is true. In any event, it is a great pity that external pressure exerts such a prostrating influence on his art. At the close of the present hostilities he will be wise to abandon the voluminous and unthoughtful newspaper copy to which he is devoting his time but not his talent. Perhaps this period of inferior production is

leading up to a great novel. Hemingway may be one of those artistic temperaments that need an interval of rest and regeneration between major creations.

In estimating the permanent contribution Hemingway has made to modern American literature, it is perhaps well to enumerate once more those features of his work which are not looked upon as desirable influences.

One of the outstanding philosophies which runs through his work is empty and fallacious. It is the mental habit of leaving obstacles unsurmounted. The problem is often eliminated entirely or else treated with opiates. To many of his characters, the whole of life is a barricade set up by fate against them. They sometimes go around the hurdle and sometimes they retreat from it, but seldom do they climb over it. They use opiates because life is a task to them, since they find no joy in either "ducking" a problem or in resigning themselves to it. Hemingway does not say that this outlook is universal; indeed in <u>For Whom the Bell Tolls</u>, he indicates that he believes it is not. But his mind gravitates to the fringe of humanity which finds life too much of a losing fight to show optimistic effort.

In addition to the major outlets of alcoholism and promiscuous love, Hemingway believes in simplifying the whole process of living and escaping from the necessity of thinking

through action. This has a slightly greater value insofar as it does not directly damage the will, but is far from a solution and is of negative social import.

The same philosophic immaturity is seen in some measure in the sketchy outlines and in the fragmentary scenes in his novels. He makes no attempt to play up the background for its bearing on the characters. If the background is powerful enough to assert itself, he allows it to do so, but if it is not, the characters stand alone, sculptured by the meagre outlines of dialogue. Scenes are suggested and set in motion but the unravelling is assigned to the reader. Rosenfeld objects justly that the burden laid in the way upon the reader is at times disproportionate with the effort of the artist.

Another evidence of the incompleteness of Hemingway's account of life lies in the fact that he ignored the "nice people", and the so-called normal walks of life. There are no co-operative social units which have plans and long range ambitions that take years of toil and patience before realization, no family groups with the miracles of everyday life and living, none of the beauty of parenthood. His eclectic methods of character and plot selection leave us on the outer edge of the reality of the world. For the most part, his people and their problems are atypical of the general mass,

and his treatment of them is so emotionally bare that they become even more remote from the true pulse of humanity. It is as though he were dissecting man and is so extremely anxious to get to the bone that he mangles and discards the sensitive nervous system in the interlying tissue. This leads to the inconsistency of his basic position which is vaguely disturbing to even his most casual readers. E. M. Root expresses the matter thus: "With cerebral sentimentality, he outwardly denies the emotion that evidently he is ashamed of inwardly feeling."[1] But he does not escape completely with this outward denial because both readers and critics feel the actual presence of, and conflict with, this inner self which he rejects.

Although we cannot help feeling the presence of these shortcomings, Hemingway still stands out as the most important influence on the American Novel of this century outside of Dreiser, and his position since the award of the Limited Editions Club gold medal for his For Whom the Bell Tolls, is almost unchallenged in The United States.

Hemingway has made a twofold contribution to his world, his writing will live on because of his gift to history and because of his gift to literature.

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[1] E. M. Root, Christian Century. Aesthetic Puritans, 54: p. 1044

Historically he has tried to set down, along with other powerful writers such as Aldous Huxley, the moral history of his time. When the war so tragically demonstrated the fact that the existent moral code was inadequate, Hemingway and others set out to discover a meaning for the events they had witnessed by acquiring the fact and interpreting them in the light of their own unsought experience. Even when they came to the wrong conclusions from a moral point of view, they clearly illustrated where the troubles of the world lay. Often, as in the case of Hemingway's and Huxley's philosophy of meaninglessness, the fact that the writer was going in the wrong direction lends poignancy to the whole account. They showed how painful and often unsuccessful were their own gropings and without intending to, offered consolation to the reader who learned that he was not alone in his quandary.

These men of the hard-boiled or disillusioned outlook showed not only what they thought the world had come to but also what it was doing to the sensitive and artistic youth who were interpreting it for us. They showed, for example, the discrepancy between dissipation and happiness, the inability of the world to appreciate the love it sought so feverishly to emancipate, the utter vacuousness of a mechanical life. Thus so long as the ordeal through which this century has already passed through is remembered, its most vital imaginative interpreters will continue to be read. Not the least of

these is Hemingway.

In the field of literature, his two greatest gifts form a seeming paradox; he gave both a steadiness and a larger freedom to the novel. The steadying influence which he gave modern American literature came from his constantly high standard of craftsmanship, his mastery of his own metier and his absolute literary integrity. He attacked his artistic problems with courage and consistent perseverance that were reflected in his writings themselves.

If it is possible to compare Hemingway's prose to the music of a composer and at the same time to compare his vision to that of a painter, there is a brotherhood in blood between him and Goya. Not for the superficial reason that their greatness was bred from Spanish tribulation, but for the reason that their views on war and atrocity are in accord. Goya's group of etchings The Disasters of War could easily illustrate Hemingway's prose or, conversely, Goya's paintings could have occasioned the writing of Hemingway's stories. Faure's description of Goya fits Hemingway without revision:

> When a sob mounts to his lips, Goya stifles it, sneers and asks himself whether it is really worth while worrying about human affairs, whether it is worth while to arrest the hand which is about to kill, to open the door to the mother who is pursued, to snatch up a child and rescue it from the orgy of massacre in which all its relatives have perished....
> ....There is for most men one disaster more irremediable than torture or death. And that

> is to lack the courage and the strength to relate them.[2]

Even the captions which Goya usually scribbled in at the bottom of his work are the same powerful stubby prose of Hemingway and they exhibit the same disgust and irony so briefly expressed in: "They won't arrive in time." "He died without aid." "Bury them and be silent." "Is this what you were born for?" "Wonderful heroism! Against dead men!" And against a particularly grim scene - "I saw this.", just as Hemingway concludes his little gem Spanish Earth:

> So if it's all the same to you I won't go to see Spanish Earth any more. Nor will I write about it. I don't have to. Because we were there. But if you weren't there I think you ought to see it.[3]

So did Goya!

Rosenfeld says that we applaud the bravura of the accounts of the tortures of war by both Hemingway and Goya but are at the same time vexed at their superficiality. Hemingway plumbs the depths in his work but it is possible to read him and enjoy doing so without investigating or comprehending those depths. He presents material without underlining the implications, the material being eclectically chosen, admittedly, but still capable of deep and important interpretation.

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[2] Elie Faure, Introduction to The Disasters of War by Fransisco de Goya, Eighty-five Etchings (London: George Allen and Unwin Limited, 1937) p. x

3 Ernest Hemingway, The Spanish Earth, p. 60

An interesting parallel has been drawn between Lord Byron and Hemingway,[4] arising in part from the fact that they were both gloriously and articulately "lost", and partly because they both have triumphed as legends rather than authors and also because they are, beyond question, their own heroes. A unique explanation of the psychology of the "lost generations" is advanced in the same article. Fadiman finds them so deeply wounded and hopeless that they are not even interested in reform or revolution, and so lose political and social conscience altogether. As a direct consequence of this view of life, they withdraw inside their carapace and devote their attention exclusively to the cultivation of their own ego upon which they can rely for consistent reactions as long as they live. It is their answer as sensitive perfectionists, to the real world. Unable to make the adjustments demanded of them, they make a violent stab at denying the world as it exists outside of their sensory perceptions. This interpretation is interesting when it is opposed to the popular assumption that they took a positive position in their approach to the ideal state of nature such as was claimed by Rousseau for his Noble Savage. This state of nature corresponds fairly closely to that indicated by Hemingway; the happy man is the simple man, just above the animal level; his life is good until self preservation forces him into a co-operative society.

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4 Clifton Fadiman, Op. Cit. pp 63 f

Concerning style, besides the assimilation and fusion of the gifts of Stein and Anderson, Hemingway developed power from devices of his own invention. He began to use some of these devices experimentally and achieved more awkwardness than forcefulness, but as he practiced using them they became highly effective. To give the actual impression of movement, he made masterly choices of verbs of motion. To give the sense of things shared, he used the small straightforward words and colloquialisms. To escape the conceit of omniscience, he used the technique of an on-the-spot reporter which conveys the idea that Hemingway himself has no idea how the story will come out. This adds a good deal to the interest he has been able to arouse in his narrative fiction. One of the methods he used to add to the intensity of his effect was that of giving his omissions a definite pattern, they are equally important with his assertions and at times produce a greater impact.

Another way Hemingway builds up his climaxes, is to change the usual order of things and add or subtract an element to which the reader has become accustomed: for example: Alcohol is used liberally throught A Farewell to Arms, The Sun Also Rises and For Whom the Bell Tolls except in the biggest moments of each book. There is no intoxicant present in Catherine's death scene in A Farewell to Arms; Brett Ashley is sober when she reveals her soul to Jake in The Sun Also Rises; as is Robert Jordan as he makes his last reflections on life in

For Whom the Bell Tolls. The author gives these scenes a poignancy and clarity by omitting any detail that would tend to befuddle the character or to blur the emotions inherent in the situation.

He demanded much from other American writers by setting and maintaining very high standards himself. His key to powerful writing was accuracy, through which he found himself able to transform American speech into effective prose and to preserve the poetry of American scenes on paper. Through his scrupulous choice of words and startlingly effective word groupings, he showed the way young writers must follow if they wished to perfect a style as forcible as his own.

Hemingway went far toward completing the emancipation of the American novel which Howells began almost a half century before. He forced his reading public to co-operate with the artist and to draw their own conclusions and to make their own implications. He left it up to the readers and critics to decide for themselves how effective moral standards are in the judgment of art. This laissez-faire attitude on the part of the author explains at least in part, the violently divergent opinions held by the general public about his works.

Hemingway helped tear down a lot of the false erudi-tions and affectation in the contemporary literature of his day. He brought some of the more precious and pretentious

writers down to the level where they were at least safe from ridicule and where they could communicate with a much wider reading public.

On some of the younger writers of hard-boiled fiction, however, the effect Hemingway has had is far from happy. They have grasped at his technique and his early superficial philosophy and read it hurriedly, taking it to themselves without any conviction. They have brutalized the already brutal and made it slick. They have become specialists in literary shock and horror. They seem to have arrived at this position through the fact that they did not suffer and endure conflicts to arrive at the intelligibly brutal stand Hemingway took, so that they used their imagination to go on to greater "triumphs" of sordidness. In reading some of their work, one realizes from their rare flashes of thought that they are ignorant of the significance of the romance (or even normality) whose passing they so profanely celebrate.

The difference between Ernest Hemingway and the writers of his school was his intelligent preoccupation with death and with the deeply hidden forces of guilt and animal impulses and with the inverted scale of moral values and with his mistrust of exuberant "letting go". The difference also lay in his superior skill. Admitting then that his is not of the common literary clay, one may easily comprehend his eccentricities

and his fantastic ups and downs. The critics have used Ernest Hemingway roughly, but largely on grounds that are relatively unimportant beside his great talent....They seem to expect him to give more than he perhaps has it in his power to offer - work on a high intellectual level.

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