WAR AS A FACTOR IN THE FICTION
OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY

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WAR AS A FACTOR IN THE FICTION
OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>HEMINGWAY BEFORE WAR</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>WORLD WAR I</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>SPANISH CIVIL WAR</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>WORLD WAR II</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>HEMINGWAY AFTER WAR</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

HEMINGWAY BEFORE WAR

(Ernest Hemingway was born in Oak Park, Illinois, on July 21, 1899. He has always been acutely aware of Oak Park, where he lived continuously until 1917. This intensely middle-class suburb of Chicago has undoubtedly had a vital influence on Hemingway. He was never wholly at ease with its rather special milieu, nor it with him.) Oak Park has always been a fundamental element in his attitudes toward middle-class life and middle-class people. If one happened to be, like Hemingway, the oldest son of a union between two such locally prominent families as the Hemingways and the Halls, the scrutiny of the Oak Parkers was even more intense. Oak Park was an atmosphere calculated both to irritate and to attract a boy who was proud, competitive, and intelligent. This was true particularly if his intelligence were of a satiric and inquiring kind. (It was also a rather limited world in the superficial sense of not presenting a variety of types or scenes. The forthcoming shock of contact with the ugliness of journalism and war would be intense and memorable for a young man reared in such a relatively sheltered world.\(^1\) His home town conditioned

certain of his values in a way that is almost a parody of popular concepts about the importance of heredity and environment.²

Hemingway was the second child in a family of six; there were four sisters and a younger brother. His father, Clarence Edmonds Hemingway, was a large, bearded doctor of medicine, famous for his eyesight and his devotion to hunting and fishing. It was he who instilled in Ernest his love of the outdoors, of hunting and fishing.

Grace Hall Hemingway, Ernest's mother, was a religious and musical woman who sang at the First Congregational Church. How religious she was is evidenced by the fact that she named all her daughters after saints. Hemingway seems to have been repulsed by her.

It is obvious that the interests of the parents conflicted. This conflict evidently came into the open over the question of what the first son was to become. His mother wanted him to be a musician. At one time she bought him a cello and even removed him from school so that he would have time to practice. In contrast, before he was three years old, his father had given him a fishing rod, and by the time he was ten, a shotgun. Available biographical evidence indicates that Ernest not only accepted his father's creed of life but also rejected his mother's. That he was a lonely

²Ibid., p. 1.
boy is remembered by his Oak Park contemporaries. That he was discontented with his life in that environment is attested by the fact that he tried to escape by running away from home on two separate occasions. It is true that his adolescence was made difficult by the intensity of his own character and the complexity of his family relationships. Normally his common sense and energy sustained him; occasionally he had bleak moments. The demands of his physician father invariably conflicted with the rich artistic aura which his mother attempted to cast over her family. There was inevitable confusion for a boy as responsive and sensitive as their oldest son.3

In such a community as Oak Park, education was as important as religion, and equally earnest. The residents of Oak Park established for the local school system standards that were genuinely impressive, particularly in the secondary field. With justification, the residents maintained that four years at Oak Park High were the equivalent of two years of college.4 The curriculum was built around the liberal arts. The English Department, to which Hemingway responded most fully and in whose classes his contemporaries remembered him most clearly, was large and efficient. In this department he was given a sound reading background. Much time was spent in the study of the Bible, particularly the Old Testament. Hemingway once remarked, "That's how I learned to write—by reading the Bible."5

3Ibid., p. 13. 4Ibid., p. 4. 5Ibid., p. 4.
Two English teachers in Oak Park High were important in his development. One was Margaret Dixon. Her importance was in the area of temperament and attitude. She encouraged him in his writing and suggested aids in style. Her blunt honesty and mild iconoclaem were valuable antidotes to the smug complacency of Oak Park. Her economic and social ideas were somewhat at variance with the very conservative school and community. Charles Fenton feels that it was a piece of extreme good fortune that she was available to Hemingway. 6

The other teacher was Fannie Biggs. She was a frail but wiry little woman, a kind of genius, but well-read and possessing a fine sense of humor. Most important, her requirements were always exacting. She flourished more in the field of imagination. Fannie Biggs invariably used Hemingway’s themes and work as outstanding examples of whatever it was that she had requested. 7 Even more important, she was a personal friend. She was available and sincerely interested when young Hemingway needed an understanding listener.

Oak Park High was also advanced in that it published both a newspaper, Trapeze, and a magazine, Tabula. Hemingway was a reporter for the Trapeze, and in his senior year was one of six editors. He did not volunteer to write for the paper, but when he was asked, he contributed regularly.

6Ibid., p. 8. 7Ibid., p. 8.
He was functioning as a reporter, but often he seemed more a columnist in that he could not always maintain the objectivity of conventional reportage.

In 1917 Ring Lardner of the Chicago Tribune was probably the contemporary writer most widely read in the Chicago area. Hemingway read him, too. The most impressive aspect of Hemingway's use of Lardner as a model was the imaginative way in which he transferred the latter's techniques into a high school framework. Hemingway also understood the Lardner device of self-derision. Hemingway's initiation into the field of writing really began with the Trapeze. Journalism would be the basic ingredient of his formal training at least until 1922, and his vocation from 1920 until 1924. He began this career at the age of sixteen as a sports writer on his high school paper. His work for the Trapeze had an importance far larger than the recognition it brought him from his contemporaries. It provided him with personal direction. Mr. Bobbitt, the sponsor, felt with justice that the Trapeze experience was "the opening wedge for the newspaper experience which Ernest went into immediately upon graduation."8 He had found in this paper experience and the beginnings toward a tangible objective.

Charles Fenton says that the primary significance of Hemingway's Tabula stories is to emphasize the crucial apprenticeship which lay ahead of him in journalism, in

8Ibid., p. 25.
war, and in the European associations of the 1920's. His high school fiction demonstrates that he was blessed with an acute interest in all new experience, a ready narrative style, and a sound training in clear self-expression.\textsuperscript{9} In \textit{Tabula} he published both verse and fiction. His first story was "Judgment of Manitou," published in February, 1916. Hemingway was a junior and sixteen. This story was clear, precise, controlled, lucid. Its literacy is evidence of the sound education he was receiving.\textsuperscript{10} In April, 1916, the second story, "A Matter of Colour," showed that his principal strength was his utilization of material which he had either experienced or observed. The third story was in the November, 1916, issue and was entitled "Sejai Jingan." This story, as the others, was drawn from the northern Michigan woods he knew so well as a boy. His early stories contained a vast amount of dialogue, a half-breed hero, and many killings.

Young Hemingway's friends were beginning to notice his writing. One contemporary said, "I think Ernie started seriously to write soon after 1915. He had a typewriter on the third floor, well away from his family. By that time he was writing for the fun of it and apparently felt that he was developing ability along that line. He would read to me some of the things he was writing and was quite enthusiastic."\textsuperscript{11} His English teachers remembered him as a bright

\textsuperscript{9}Ibid., p. 17. \quad \textsuperscript{10}Ibid., p. 15. \quad \textsuperscript{11}Ibid., p. 7.
and gifted student. Later, they maintained that even in his freshman themes he wrote with an avid interest in realistic adventure. His contemporaries remembered that his work was always highly individual. His literary ability was recognized, but one might have predicted that he would be a writer of humor.\textsuperscript{12}

Hemingway participated in most of the activities in Oak Park High: he played in the orchestra, belonged to the debating club, the swimming team, and the football team. He did not particularly relish playing football; however, at Oak Park it was accepted that if one were able, he played football. He was also interested in boxing. At the age of fourteen he had gone to a Chicago gymnasium to take boxing. As a result of his zeal, he got his nose broken on the first day. Later he was hit in the eye in such a way as to damage it permanently. Nevertheless, he completed the course.\textsuperscript{13} Hemingway has seldom been able to resist a challenge in any area of his life. The instinct to win has been almost a reflex; his conscious attitude toward the reflex has caused it to become graceful. Hemingway was so spectacularly well-rounded in extracurricular posts and memberships that it required eight lines to list his achievements in the Class Book. The summary of his

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., p. 12.

\textsuperscript{13}Phillip Young, \textit{Ernest Hemingway} (New York, 1952), p. 114.
contemporaries' opinions of his varied achievements appeared in the Class Book under his picture and his list of achievements as "None are to be found more clever than Ernie."\textsuperscript{14}

Hemingway was chosen to write the Class Prophecy, and his treatment of the assignment was characteristic of his Trapeze columns. He created an elaborate melodrama with a martial setting in which he cast his classmates in roles precisely the reverse of their temperaments. The approach of graduation, as well as the superintendent's distaste for his Lardner-type articles, seemed to furnish him with a heightened creative momentum, for the bulk of the Lardner material was written in the last weeks of his senior year. The tone of the articles was satirical. He bowed out of Oak Park in the role of professional iconoclast, his valediction an amiable roundhouse swing at faculty, community, and classmates, not the less pointed for its amiability.\textsuperscript{15}

The Hemingways had a summer house on Walloon Lake, Michigan, in a region populated chiefly by Ojibway Indians. There Hemingway spent many happy days like his hero Nick Adams, who appears in so many of the Hemingway short stories, especially the earlier ones. There he, and again Nick, did their real growing up, learning to hunt, fish, drink, and know girls. There Hemingway went on professional errands.

\textsuperscript{14}Fenton, \textit{Hemingway}, p. 14.

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 25.
with the doctor, his father. He was naturally more at ease and happier to be with his father in the outdoors of northern Michigan than at home with the pressures of his feminine mother. After Hemingway's graduation this summer home was a welcome escape. With a group of friends more important to him than his high school associates, he enjoyed the delights of fishing and camping in a masculine world. These experiences in Michigan gave him the intensity and vividness he sought, and served as the framework for much of his early writing. The ideas of suffering and making suffer, and their relation to the sensual enjoyment of life, are first drawn in early stories of Michigan and Hemingway's experiences there. Even his fatalism begins with his experiences in the northern woods with the Ojibway Indians. Michigan was also an escape from Oak Park, domineering parents, pressures to conform, and assorted authorities.

Hemingway's restlessness became more acute with each week that passed in the summer of 1917. The war and his father's unalterable opposition to his enlistment made his situation intolerable. His father said, "The boy's too young." There the discussion ended. In direct contrast to most of his fellow Oak Park graduates, Hemingway had rejected college. He talked about getting away for good and making his way in the world. As there were relatives and friends in Kansas City, it was finally agreed that in the fall he should go to Kansas City and get a job.
He managed to obtain a cub reporter's job on the Kansas City Star, one of the best papers of that period. The atmosphere of the Star was fresh and exciting, for which nothing in Hemingway's brief high school journalism could have prepared him. He liked to work hard, and he liked the special and extra work. He was expected to master quickly the paper's celebrated style sheet, a long, galley-sized, single page containing the 110 rules that governed the Star's prose. The first rule might well stand as the first commandment in the prose creed which is today synonymous with the surface characteristics of Hemingway's work. It was: "Use short sentences. Use short first paragraphs. Use vigorous English. Be positive, not negative." Language and words could never from this point on be lightly regarded. The effort would always be toward authenticity, precision, immediacy. Of the style sheet Hemingway remarked, "Those were the best rules I ever learned for the business of writing." At the Star, Hemingway toiled over the one-paragraph stories. They demonstrate the paper's crisp, declarative style as well as its stress on the colloquial. They show the Star's insistence that narrative be clear and interesting and precise. Extension would make of these one-paragraph stories the fragmentary sketches Hemingway produced later as "A Very Short Story" and "The Revolutionist." The

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Star stressed reader interest; the city desk encouraged use of dialogue and insisted on authenticity and crispness.

Hemingway met many interesting people at the Star, one of whom was Lionel Calhoun Noise, a brilliant reporter who liked Hemingway's early stories for their objectivity, dialogue, and action. C. G. Wellington, the assistant city editor in 1917, said that Hemingway always wanted to be on the scene himself. Wellington also said, "He liked action. When he was assigned to the General Hospital, he had an irritating habit of riding off with the first ambulance to go to some kind of cutting scrape."\(^{19}\) This trait has lasted throughout his life.

A young man more his age was Ted Brumback, who characterized Hemingway as "bubbling over with energy." He said that Hemingway could turn out more copy than any other two reporters.\(^{20}\) The others who knew him in Kansas City also recalled him clearly for his energy, charm, and above all, as someone who would not sit still. In those seven months Hemingway wrote a number of newspaper stories which startled his associates by their effectiveness and maturity. His exposition was wholly implicit; he avoided both sentimentality and cheapness in his Star articles.\(^{21}\)

Literary critics have sometimes patronized Hemingway as the victim of an abbreviated and inadequate education.

\(^{19}\)Ibid., p. 24. \(^{20}\)Ibid., p. 48. \(^{21}\)Ibid., p. 46.
On the contrary, in addition to the admirable instruction given at Oak Park High, he was the recipient of an extremely literate and concentrated training, general as well as vocational, on the Star. It was an education to which, like any young man, he would be more attentive than he would have been to similar instruction at a school of journalism. 22

Hemingway had learned much at the Star. Now he was ready to move on to other lessons. The war was still much on his mind. Although he had been turned down twelve times by the medical examiners of various units, mostly because of his eye which had been ruined by his early boxing, he suddenly got the break he had been hoping for. His friend Ted Brumback had told him about being an ambulance driver in France. This had duly impressed Hemingway and had given him great hopes. One day they read a story about the Red Cross needing volunteers for the Italian Army as ambulance drivers. Brumback and Hemingway applied and were accepted; on April 30, 1918, they left the Star. Before leaving for foreign duty, they went to northern Michigan for a final fishing trip.

From the Kansas City Star Hemingway took with him not only the lessons he had learned about writing, but also a trained reporter's eye, which would enable him to profit considerably more from his Italian experiences than if, for example, he had been able to enlist directly from high school the previous June. 23

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22 Ibid., p. 37.  
23 Ibid., p. 49.
This much has been a resume of the facts of Ernest Hemingway's life. To make the story complete, and to fill in some missing pieces that are interesting, one may turn to his writings. Much of Hemingway's fiction is said to be autobiographical, due to his own insistence that all be experienced. Nick Adams has already been mentioned in conjunction with his and Hemingway's matching experiences in northern Michigan. They share similar parents, likes, dislikes, and frustrations. If this be true, perhaps more that is found in Nick Adams is true of Ernest Hemingway.

Nick Adams is found in the stories of *In Our Time*; perhaps Hemingway also is found there.²⁴

This conjectured story of Hemingway probably should begin with his grandfather. Likely Hemingway's interest in and fascination for war began with the stories of his grandfather in the American Civil War. His grandfather is mentioned first in the short story "Soldier's Home," in which the mother of Harold Krebs speaks of knowing what war does to men from the stories her father had told of the Civil War.²⁵ This grandfather is also important in the conclusion of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Robert Jordan as he is awaiting death says, "I'd like to tell Grandfather . . ."²⁶

²⁴Ernest Hemingway, *In Our Time* (New York, 1925).


²⁶Ernest Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (New York, 1940), p. 469.
His grandfather is brought in to unify and interpret the conclusion of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. It seems evident that Hemingway's mother's father fought in the American Civil War and that Hemingway heard from his childhood the stories of war and the war experiences of his grandfather. This could account for Hemingway's compelling desire to be in World War I. Also, Jordan in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is proud of his grandfather, who was a hero. This assumes added significance when one realizes that Jordan's father, as Hemingway's, committed suicide. Possibly Hemingway admired his grandfather and wanted to be like him instead of like his father, with whom he was dissatisfied. In this light, war becomes even more important to Hemingway as a person and as a writer.

The short story, "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," depicts the opposite pulls of his parents on young Nick Adams. It records the masculine interests winning over the feminine ones. Yet this important victory was not a simple one, for in giving way to the woman, the doctor was something less than completely admirable. In the later story, "Fathers and Sons," also found in *In Our Time*, Nick is not entirely pleased with the parents who had died so suddenly. In *For Whom the Bell Tolls* Jordan seems to be summarizing Hemingway's own dissatisfaction when he recalls the doctor's suicide and

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27 David Daiches, "Ernest Hemingway," *College English*, II (May, 1941), 735.
and says, "I'll never forget how sick it made me the first time I knew he was a . . . coward." Also Jordan wonders what kind of man he would have been had his father married another kind of woman. It may be that Nick Adams and Robert Jordan express Hemingway's own frustrations and unhappiness. In "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," the wife is a Christian Scientist and is most religious, as was Hemingway's own mother. The conflict of the parents is shown when the mother asks that the son be sent to her, and the father instead allows the boy to go hunting with him. In this story the undertone of the husband's being commanded by his wife is subtly indicated by the husband's being very careful not to slam the door as he leaves. This may have been suggested by the relationship between Hemingway's own parents.

Another story, "Indian Camp," may possibly represent one of Hemingway's terrible introductions to suffering, violence, and destruction. In this story an Indian woman has been in labor for two days. Nick, who goes with his father to deliver the baby, is upset by the woman's screams and asks his father to give her something. The doctor answers that the screams are unimportant and that he has nothing to give. Nick helps his father with the jackknife Caesarean operation, but during the operation, he ceases to watch long before the job is finished. Also during this operation, the Indian father cuts his own throat with a

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28 Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls, p. 338.
razor. When Nick asks why the Indian cut his throat, the Doctor answers, "He couldn't stand things, I guess."

In "The Battler," Nick runs away from home, is knocked off a fast freight by the brakeman, and wanders into an ex-prizefighter, Al Francis, and his Negro companion, Bugs. Nick is completely shaken by the violence, crudeness, and terror he meets in this story. Hemingway twice ran away from home; this may be one of his experiences.

In "The Three Day Blow," Nick and his young friend talk of many things. They discuss books, baseball players who are bought, and how much Nick loves his father. Nick feels that his father has missed a lot, indicating again the negative influence of his mother. This shows the beginning of Nick's withdrawal from society in distrust. The same reasons contributed to Hemingway's attitude of distrust and dissatisfaction with society.

Suffering, violence, and the harshness of life were the early themes of Hemingway. Always he has believed in drawing his writing directly from what he has experienced. As a young man, he had written from his own meager experiences, primarily those of Northern Michigan. His experiences of suffering, violence, death, and unhappiness had been slight; however, his experience was to be greatly enlarged and magnified by his activities, both physical and mental, in World War I.
CHAPTER II

WORLD WAR I

On May 12, 1918, Ernest Hemingway and Ted Brumback enlisted in the Italian Army as honorary lieutenants and ambulance drivers. They then marched up Fifth Avenue in a patriotic parade reviewed by President and Mrs. Wilson. Hemingway was jubilant about finally getting into the war, delirious with excitement, was Brumback's comment. Being in the Army, however, did not mean immediately being in the war. The boat trip to France was dull; Hemingway was bored and disappointed, for this was not war. Finally in Paris, Hemingway and Brumback hired a taxi to see Paris. This excursion took place during the first shelling of Paris by Big Bertha, the new, long-range German gun. The taxi driver was repeatedly told, "Drive up where those shells are falling." Hemingway's enthusiasm eventually got him close to the bursts.

The voluntary ambulance groups were interesting as well as vital. From the beginning these volunteer units had a strongly literary and academic background. One of the first sponsors was Henry James. The drivers were men of generally high education, and the spirit was humanitarianism. The feelings of these young drivers were profoundly
disturbed by the suffering of the wounded. Fenton calls membership in the various ambulance groups an extension and renewal of high school and college, with a fraternity aspect that included the hazing of new men, the publication of a collegiate-like newspaper, and celebrations. The American Field Service and its successor, the Red Cross Ambulance Corps, testified to the humanitarian impulse which was so strong a factor in the American attitudes toward participation in World War I. This impulse has been somewhat obscured by the subsequent disillusionment of that generation, and by the shamefaced skepticism with which many of them later regarded their youthful idealism in joining in the war.

While in Milan, Hemingway saw his first war devastation. He wrote to a friend on the Toronto Star, "Having a wonderful time!!! Had my baptism of fire my first day here, when an entire munition plant exploded." Fenton feels his use of the cliché, baptism of fire, was probably in part ironic, and also was Hemingway's antidote to the solemnity of the Red Cross atmosphere. His memories of this first scene of mass violent death were harsh and specific; this scene of death made such a deep impression on him that he returned to it fourteen years later in his anti-war story, "A Natural History of the Dead." Now Hemingway's chief concern was to

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1 Fenton, Hemingway, p. 54.
2 Ibid., p. 57.
find more of the same. When finally told that he was on his way to "war," he was elated.

From Milan, Hemingway's entire unit went to Schio to join Section IV, which was so firmly established that it was publishing its own newspaper once a month. Immediately Hemingway submitted a story in the Lardnerian manner of his *Trapeze* work. His article, "Al Receives Another Letter," was the longest single item in the paper. The characters were typical Lardner buffoons; the confident expertness of style was in sharp contrast to Ciao's conventional fraternal banter and heavy, Wilsonian purpose. The organization of Hemingway's piece was that of the severe city room of the *Kansas City Star*, while the material was impressive in its display of this new milieu of war. 3 "Al Receives Another Letter" was the extent of Hemingway's published work during the war, although he persistently thought of himself as a writer and continued to write during the late summer of 1918. One of the drivers remembered that Hemingway told him he would have preferred to be a war correspondent, but lacked the necessary experience.

All was quiet at Schio; again Hemingway was fed up, disgusted with war because he was unable to get to the front. At first the hairpin turns banked by thousand-foot drops had proved exciting and novel, yet this newness did not last for long. The Red Cross had many tiny canteens located a few

3Ibid., p. 58.
kilometers back of the trenches, and the soldiers were allowed to visit these three or four times a week for candy, postcards, rest, and a general change in scene. To Hemingway these canteens were interesting because they were frequently in the range of shell fire. In late June, 1918, Hemingway took charge of just such a canteen where he immediately made friends with the Italian officers in the trench units. He persuaded the local commander to allow him to come up to the trenches, and everyday thereafter Hemingway mounted his bicycle at the canteen and rode to the front, laden with chocolate, cigars, cigarettes. His reasoning was that he could do more good and be of more service by going straight up to the trenches. For six days he followed this routine. He threw himself happily into the front-line atmosphere, achieving his goal; at last he was in the war, and he saturated himself in the sensations of trench life. Those six days, and the abbreviated seventh, supplemented by a few more weeks with the infantry in October, were the basis for A Farewell to Arms, many fine short stories, and the central ideas in most of his works.

His removal from his exciting war life was pathetic in its swift finality. Two weeks before his nineteenth birthday and seven days after his first admission to the trenches, Hemingway was struck by the exploding fragments of a trench mortar which landed a few feet from him at Fossalta. He was performing his duty of handing out chocolate to the
Italian soldiers when he was wounded on July 8, 1918. The next three months were spent in the American Red Cross Hospital at Milan. Hemingway was one of the few severe casualties among the American drivers in Italy. A fellow ambulance driver said of his eagerness for action and his genuine desire to serve, "He was extremely conscious of the war as a 'crusade for democracy,' and burning with the desire to have a share in it."  

As has always been true in Hemingway's life, he paid a heavy price for his knowledge and insight. He received 227 separate wounds from the mortar and was hit simultaneously in the leg by a machine gun. After regaining consciousness the second time, he was carried three kilometers by stretcher over a road being shelled, and the bearers dropped him frequently, as is told of Lieutenant Henry in A Farewell to Arms. The dressing station had been evacuated during the attack, so he lay for two hours in a stable waiting for an ambulance. An Italian ambulance ultimately moved him to another dressing station. Hemingway spent five days in a field hospital before he was strong enough to be moved to the base hospital in Milan. In all he had a dozen operations.

Hemingway did show heroism when he was wounded. In the group he was giving chocolate to there were three soldiers; of these one was killed, one had both legs blown off, and the third was seriously wounded. When Hemingway regained

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Ibid., p. 60.
consciousness, he picked up this third soldier and carried him on his back to a first-aid dugout. This scene, too, is faithfully recorded in *A Farewell to Arms*, with only minor variations. Hemingway told Drumback that he did not remember how he got to the dressing station, nor that he had carried the soldier. An Italian officer described his heroism to him the next day. In the hospital he was awarded the *Croce de Guerra* with three citations and the *Medaglie d'Argento al Valore Militare*, which was the second highest Italian military decoration and carried with it a pension from the government of about fifty dollars a year.

The wound is one of the most vital concepts in all of Hemingway's writing. The wounds of the Hemingway hero seem based on those of Hemingway the man. Young Hemingway and young Nick Adams were wounded by unhappy homes, Indian camp experiences, and the brutalities of life. This World War I wound is the chief physical wound that Hemingway has received and has transmitted to the Hemingway hero. Hemingway himself has discussed this in the Introduction to *Men at War*.

When you go to war as a boy you have a great illusion of immortality. Other people get killed; not you .... Then when you are badly wounded the first time you lose that illusion and you know it can happen to you. After being wounded

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severely .... I had a bad time until I figured it out that nothing could happen to me that had not happened to all men before me. Whatever I had to do men had always done.

At another time Hemingway told his friend Guy Hickok how he felt at the moment he was wounded by saying, "I died then. I felt my soul or something coming right out of my body, like you'd pull a silk handkerchief out of a pocket by one corner. It flew around and then came back and went in again and I wasn't dead any more." 8

Fenton evaluates this experience by recognizing the fact that being wounded, and seriously wounded as Hemingway was, had immense psychological implications for him; these implications quite naturally converged on his artistic position and work. The wound permitted him to assume the role of semi-professional soldierhood at the very least, with the privileges and responsibilities attending that role. His front-line service was brief and unmartial, but the wound qualified him as a combat man and deepened his absorption in war as a temporary arena for the study of men and the practice of his creative energy. Hemingway had enough war experience in the early summer of 1918 to give him confidence in his judgments and a sound base for the acquisition of further experience through observation. In the hospital at Milan he talked to men who had also survived

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the front, and he learned from that, too. Because of the
shock of the wound and the three months of enforced idleness,
Hemingway was able to evaluate, even if only in an elementary
way, the experiences he had observed and endured. Hemingway
later concluded that the brevity of his service was an advan-
tage to him as an artist, for he said in 1952, "Any experience
of war is invaluable to a writer. But it is destructive if
he has too much."10

Another effect of this wound which is a recurrent theme
in the writing of Hemingway, and thus obviously vital to the
man, was the inability to sleep at night. The Hemingway
hero suffers while lying awake at night, as Jake Barnes in
The Sun Also Rises and as Lieutenant Henry in A Farewell to
Arms; this is the principal theme in the well known short
story, "A Clean, Well Lighted Place," and sleeplessness is
an element of many other stories and novels. For a long
time after being wounded, Hemingway was afraid to sleep
except by daylight, because he had been blown up at night.
He thought that if he ever again closed his eyes in the
darkness, the soul would go out of his body and not come
back.11

Hemingway, though wounded, wanted to get back into the
war he had not asked to leave. A few weeks after his

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9Fenton, Hemingway, p. 67.
10Ibid., p. 67.
convalescent leave ended in the early fall, he managed to get himself assigned to the Italian Infantry. He served with them during October and until the Armistice in November. With this experience, he was a bone fide fighting man when the war ended. He was then recommended for and received the Silver Medal of Valor of the United States for his conduct at Fossalta; because he earned the medal the hard way, he has always had a combat soldier's sensitivity to both the significance and limitations of this ribbon of his. This infantry duty was the added experience Hemingway needed; he was satisfied when he was discharged by the American Red Cross on January 4, 1919. Just a few days later, he sailed for New York, taking with him a mass of experience to be drawn on the rest of his writing days.

After the war, Hemingway found that he could be disillusioned like everybody else, but he had some sort of an ideal to search for. The letters and postcards Hemingway sent home from Italy in 1918 showed that his excitement at first overcame any tendency toward skepticism about the war. However, after he had been wounded, his attitude began to change. He was consciously shaping himself and his attitudes in 1918. Hemingway learned many things in many different ways. "I learned about people under stress and before and after it." That has been, after all, one of

12 Fenton, Hemingway, p. 67.
13 Ibid., p. 64.
the fundamental themes of all his creative work. Six days in the heavily engaged lines along the Piave only a few yards from the Austrian positions provided an excellent basic training in stress. Hemingway further commented that "Also I learned considerable about myself."\textsuperscript{14} He was interested in the situation, not the forces behind the war; the letters he wrote home showed his concentration on the reality around him in the trenches, which was the true war for him. In addition to the extension of his education, Hemingway had acquired a personality and a role. Having been a foot soldier, he would forever hold a blunt contempt for what he once called "the military politicians of the rear."\textsuperscript{15} Because of the nature of this first Italian chapter, his judgments about men at war would always be deeply felt and very accurate. Upon coming home, Hemingway discovered that one did not shed the horrors and disillusionments of war when he picked up his discharge papers.

After being discharged, Hemingway went home to Oak Park. As a local war hero, he was invited to speak at the high school. He discussed the war in lucid terms and held up a pair of shrapnel-riddled trousers to emphasize his story. During this time, he was restless, disillusioned, and rather bitter; as usual, Oak Park did not help. A good friend, Carl Edgar, said that Hemingway came back figuratively as well as literally shot to pieces. Edgar

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 65. \textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 69.
concluded that the intensity of Hemingway’s desire to write
was directly connected with the war, for he seemed to have
a tremendous need to express the things that he had felt
and seen.16 While on this visit home, Hemingway retreated
to Michigan, where he was visited by another friend, Bill
Horne, who commented that Hemingway "to my own certain
knowledge, never threw off his experiences in the war."17
In Michigan, Hemingway had time to assess the force of his
war experiences.

Daiches sums up nicely the value of Hemingway's war
experience and disillusionment by showing how these fit
Hemingway's youthful background of football, boxing, hunting
with his father in Northern Michigan, and working on rough
jobs. Daiches feels that Hemingway entered the feverish
and disillusioned 1920's with baggage of a kind different
from that brought by the intellectuals and the bohemians
who were his contemporary writers; Hemingway had acquired
something of a personal tradition that was less troublesome
than an education and more concrete than a mood.18

Four years later, in October, 1922, Hemingway received
his second major lesson in war when he covered the Greco-
Turkish War as a war correspondent for the Toronto Star.
Hemingway watched the Turks prosecuting their real-estate
war against the Greeks. The flight of the Greek Christian

16 Ibid., p. 72.  
17 Ibid., p. 73.  
refugees through eastern Thrace was an impressive sight, for here political science was at its worst. The refugees on the quay at Smyrna were pitiable, with the brown-uniformed Turks ruthlessly hastening their departure from the captured city. Beyond all the rest of what he saw in Asia Minor, this spectacle of refugee misery left the most permanent scar on Hemingway. He had neither seen nor imagined human suffering such as he saw along the road to Adrianople.

From Italian soldiers and officers in 1918 and from other wounded men in the Milan hospital, Hemingway had heard the stories about Caporetto; now, four years later, he was about to see his own variation of the Italian retreat in Eastern Thrace, where a large body of men withdrew through hostile country. The experience illuminated everything he had read of all wars, what he had heard of the American Civil War from his own grandfather, and what he had sensed and witnessed in Italy. The things he found in Eastern Thrace told him precisely what an army looks like during an evacuation. Probably, from the frequency with which he writes about this, one specific experience left the most burning mark on Hemingway. He learned about horror from watching the evacuation of Smyrna when the Greeks broke the forelegs of their baggage animals with clubs and dumped them to die by the hundreds in the shallow water.

The conclusions he drew from the Asia Minor campaigns were made possible because of his initiation in Italy. He
was able to learn quickly and accurately in Thrace and Macedonia because he had been exposed to war and wounded at Fossalta. He thinks that he really learned about war from watching the battles in Asia Minor. Hemingway told Malcolm Cowley, in fact, that he did learn about war there; the civilian suffering gave a new dimension to his determination to be a writer. He always had been generous and quick in his response to grief, and his decent anger had already been displayed in his indignation about Italian fascism. When Hemingway got back to France after finishing his Greco-Turkish assignment, he made on the base of it a decision about his career. His indignation made the decision a difficult one: "I remember coming home from the Near East ... absolutely heartbroken at what was going on and in Paris trying to decide whether I would put my whole life into trying to do something about it or to be a writer ... I decided, cold as a snake, to be a writer and to write as truly as I could all my life."

Much has been written about the Hemingway code; this code had its birth in the war experiences early in Hemingway's life. There is always the background of war and the despair consequent upon it; it is this which distinguished the code sharply from the ones which it might seem to resemble very much, the codes of the gentleman, of chivalry, of sport, and

19Fenton, Hemingway, p. 183.
of the past. The Hemingway code is restricted grimly by the urgencies of war; the morality of his characters is harshly pragmatic; what's moral is "that you feel good after." This code is directly related to and summarizes the virtues of the soldier. It is epitomized as "grace under pressure." It is made of the controls of honor and courage which in a life of tension and pain make a man a man and distinguish him from the people who follow random impulses, let down their hair, and are generally messy, perhaps cowardly, and without inviolable rules for "how to live holding tight." The Hemingway characters who live by this code have all been in war by either fighting, living, or loving.

Another favorite theme of Hemingway's is death; he learned most about death from war. Lewis feels that Hemingway is interested in the sports of death, in the sad things that happen to those engaged in the sports of love in war, but not in the things that cause war or the people who profit by it, or in the ultimate human destinies involved in war. Lewis says that Hemingway lives, or affects to live, submerged. Bishop feels that the most tragic thing to Hemingway about the war was not that it made so many dead men, but that it destroyed the tragedy of death. This

20 Young, Hemingway, p. 35.
seems a hard statement; definitely Hemingway is interested in death as a tragedy as seen in war, yet this does not naturally mean that he had no feeling for the individuals he observed suffering in war. Hemingway as a child had been exposed to death; however, it was war that presented to him the complete horror of death.

It is true that "war and rumors of war" is Hemingway's constant background. Atkins justifies this for the critical by saying that Hemingway likes war because he is a writer, and to him war is a landscape or a milieu. Yet Hemingway does not treat the issues of war in the way made familiar by other writers. Accepting the existence of war, he is chiefly concerned with its physical impact on the individual soldier, and then with those decisions which, far away, cause the impact on this soldier. Hemingway and other writers of this period were led to distrust abstractions and ideologies; these writers viewed the first World War with the same horror and dismay, the same doubts as to what inspired it and led to our participation in it. The commercial spirit which was so largely responsible for it was regarded with loathing. These writers looked at life in an unflattering light, as they had become uncompromising realists. Beach feels that their disillusionment with human nature which was already so common among intellectuals before the war, became universal.

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24 Ibid., p. 114.
with them as a result of it. This certainly seems true of Ernest Hemingway and World War I.

The value of his experiences and growth in World War I can never be calculated. Hemingway has always valued enormously his learning obtained in this war. Even at eighteen he sensed instinctively its potential utility as material and as an area for self-discipline as an observer and student. Also, his behavior during this period was neither ghoulish nor abnormally farsighted in terms of his future vocation. As Hemingway's formative adult years were spent on the battlefields of Europe during the First World War, it would scarcely be too much to say that Hemingway's special type of outlook is a product of the battlefield. Geismar feels that with Hemingway the impression was so deep, so natural and final as to make it seem that the war experience released his energies rather than inhibited them. Further, he says that if there had been no war, it would have been necessary for Hemingway to invent one. The war, quite clearly, was a genuinely compulsive factor in all Hemingway's attitudes in 1920. His instinct toward satire had been sharpened by his experiences in Italy. Gregory Clark of the Toronto Star Weekly felt that Hemingway was enduring a chaotic interlude.

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26 Fenton, *Hemingway*, p. 64.
of adjustment. "He was lost in the lovely confusion of trying to understand his past. He was trying to orient himself to the experiences he had been having." This orientation took Hemingway many, many years and many, many thousands of written words.

Hemingway's determination to write only those aspects of experience with which he was personally acquainted gave a number of the first forty-nine stories, in In Our Time, Men Without Women, and Winner Take Nothing, the flavor of fictionalized personal history. He was always prepared to invent people and circumstances, says Baker, to choose backgrounds which would throw his people into three-dimensional relief, and to employ as symbols those elements of the physical setting which could be psychologically justified by the time and place he was writing about. But, he was unwilling to stray very far from the life he knew by direct personal contact, or to do any more guessing than was absolutely necessary. In Our Time is made up of two alternating series: a set of short stories dealing chiefly with the growing-up of a boy, Nick Adams, in the American Northwest, and sandwiched in with these, a set of brief and brutal sketches of happenings mostly connected with the war. In the Introduction to In Our Time, Edmund Wilson states that the sensitiveness and candor of the boy strike a sharp

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26 Fenton, Hemingway, p. 84.

discord with the cold-bloodedness and barbarity of the exec-
tutions, the police shootings, and the battles; but though the boy appears in one of the intermediary sketches as a wounded soldier, it does not require this to establish a relation between the two series. Candor and cold-bloodedness both belong to the same humanity, and Wilson asks, "Was not life back in the Michigan woods equally destructive and cruel?" It seems to have been Hemingway’s intention that the war should set the key for the whole. Wilson also says that this undruggable consciousness of something wrong seems never to arouse Hemingway to passionate violence, but it poisons him and makes him sick. Wilson feels that in his sketches of the war, where the steady, cheerful tone wakens such strange qualms of insecurity and anguish, Hemingway catches as they have never yet been caught the blind, excited emotions of the American of 1917 and thereafter.

Like Hemingway, Nick went to war. The earliest glimpses of his career as soldier come in the sixth and seventh miniatures of In Our Time. In Chapter VI, Nick is wounded in the spine and is with his friend Rinaldi. Nick turned his head and looked down at Rinaldi: "You and me we've made a separate peace." Rinaldi lay still in the sun, breathing with difficulty. ‘We’re not patriots.' Nick turned his head away, smiling sweatily. Rinaldi was a disappointing

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30 Edmund Wilson, Introduction, In Our Time, Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1925), pp. ix-x.
31 Ibid., p. xiii.
32 Ibid., p. xv.
audience."

33 Of course this could be taken to mean only that for these two the war is over, but the remark "not patriots" implies much more than that. Young says a "good soldier" would still be fighting the war in spirit if no longer in body, but Nick has decided to hell with it. He is not a patriot, and at this precise point begins the long break with society that is to take the Hemingway protagonist into his expatriation. 34 Nick's serious injury furthers the development of the character of the Hemingway hero in that the wound culminates, climax es, and epitomizes the wounds he has been getting as a growing boy. Life was really like this up in Michigan where Nick was already well on the way to becoming a casualty; this wound is of the pattern of the Jackknife Cesarean. This is the wound that remains with the hero; it is with Jake Barnes, Lieutenant Henry, Colonel Cantwell, and maybe even Santiago. The parallel to Lieutenant Henry and his friend Rinaldi is obvious.

The little sketch, Chapter VII, shows the fear of the man who prays to Jesus to be saved, and promises to be saved for life. 35 He is saved, yet his cowardice prevents him from even mentioning his petitioning promises.

*In Our Time* contains in "A Very Short Story" the germ of the plot of *A Farewell to Arms*. It is the ironic story
of a soldier and his nurse; they part, she is jilted by another, and he contracts gonorrhea.

The most famous war story of *In Our Time* is "Soldier's Home" which is about Harold Krebs, the Marine from Oklahoma. Harold arrives home too late for the hero's greetings; the reaction had set in, and people seemed to think it was rather ridiculous for Krebs to be getting back so late. He grows to have a distaste for the war because of the lies he must listen to when he meets and talks with other soldiers. The old-soldier-among-soldiers pose of having been badly, sickeningly frightened all the time made him despise everything. Also, Krebs wanted a girl, but he did not want to work or to tell more lies to get her; it was not worth it. He wanted to live without consequences, but at home it was all too complicated. Krebs enjoyed reading all about the engagements of the war he had been in; he had been a good soldier, and that made a difference. Here again the mother is religious, and the son suspects that the mother rules the father. Kreb's mother wants him to pray; they do, and he is embarrassed and resentful. In desperation he says that he loves no one. Finally he lies, says he loves her, and promises "I'll try to be a good boy for you." Finally, "He had tried so to keep his life from being complicated. Still, none of it had touched him. He had felt sorry for his mother and she had made him lie... He would go to Kansas City and get a

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job and she would feel all right about it. . . . He wanted his life to go smoothly."

Geismar feels that nowhere more clearly than in the story of Krebs has Hemingway given his underlying attitude toward living alone without consequences, the emotional withdrawal from experience and moral renunciation of life's responsibilities, of looking at things henceforth from a variety of porches rather than participating in all the streets of life. Four years after Krebs, A Farewell to Arms gives the unified history of the events which led up to such a conclusion. Kreb's passivity and lack of ambition are founded in the statement that he had "acquired the nausea in regard to experience that is the result of untruth or exaggeration." Warren feels that Krebs is a casualty, not of bullet or bayonet, but of the big, abstract words.

The conclusion of In Our Time is "Big Two-Hearted River" in which Nick, who is said to have been away for a long time, is in fact a returned war veteran going fishing both for fun and for therapeutic purposes. The destroyed town of Seney and the scorched earth around it carry the tinge of war, and are the area of destruction Nick must pass through in order to reach the high, rolling, pine plain. The swamp symbolizes an area of the sinister which Nick wishes to avoid, at least

37 Ibid., p. 101.
38 Geismar, Writers, p. 46.
39 Hemingway, In Our Time, p. 93.
for the time being. Yet it is easy to recognize the wounded hero; he has the same troubles. One is that he does not want to think: "His mind was starting to work. He knew he could choke it because he was tired enough."\(^{41}\)

The predominant mood of *In Our Time* is one of utter and complete negation, almost nihilism. It seems that all ties must be broken; one must get away and love no one. Nick sincerely feels this attitude of negation to all things outside himself; he achieves complete renunciation.

*Winner Take Nothing* contains more war stories. "In Another Country" deals with Nick's physical recuperation in Milan from his wound. A fellow patient is a major whose wife has just died; here for the first time the wound goes outside the hero to involve another, as in the relations of Jake and Brett in *The Sun Also Rises*. In "A Way You'll Never Be" Nick cannot sleep, does not want to think, and seems crazy. He wears a simulated American uniform to cause the Italian troops to feel that the Yanks are coming. He says: "It's a hell of a nuisance once they've had you certified nutty."\(^{42}\)

The hero, Nick, again says that he cannot sleep in "Now I Lay Me" in *Men Without Women*. Nick is still in uniform, but he is not fighting. He cannot sleep for thinking, and he tries to occupy his mind thinking of trout streams.

\(^{41}\)Hemingway, *In Our Time*, p. 177.

He is asked by his friend, "'Say, Signor Tenente, what did you get in this war for anyway?' 'I don't know, John. I wanted to, then.' ' Wanted to,' he said. 'That's a hell of a reason.'"\(^{43}\) Here Nick even explains why the hero cannot sleep.

\[\ldots\] I myself did not want to sleep because I had been living for a long time with the knowledge that if I ever shut my eyes in the dark and let myself go, my soul would go out of my body. I had been that way for a long time, ever since I had been blown up at night and felt it go out of me and go off and then come back. I tried never to think about it, but it had started to go since, in the nights, just at the moment of going off to sleep, and I could only stop it by a very great effort.\(^{44}\)

Geismar says that perhaps no other contemporary writer has brought us so many vivid studies of the war's impact on the defenseless human temperament; the almost unbearable episode which closes "A Natural History of the Dead," which is included in Winner Take Nothing, is typical of these. Geismar also defines Hemingway's thesis as: the suffering of the war, the resistances and defenses of his people, their ways of ignoring the scene around them which apparently they cannot control.\(^{45}\)

Ernest Hemingway's first novel was The Sun Also Rises, 1926, which is about the years after World War I and what has been called the lost generation. His second novel, A Farewell to Arms, 1929, is about World War I, Italy, and

\(^{44}\) Ibid., p. 156.
\(^{45}\) Geismar, Writers, p. 45.
a "separate peace." Chronologically, then, *A Farewell to Arms* comes first in war events and will be discussed first.

*A Farewell to Arms* has as its hero Lieutenant Henry, who experiences parallel relationships in war and love. He is an American serving as an ambulance driver in Italy during World War I. Through Henry, the most pertinent observations, comments, and denunciations of war are made.

Just why Henry is fighting in Italy for democracy is never clear to the reader, and one wonders if it were ever clear to Lieutenant Henry. Henry does not have a hard life in the Italian Army, for his grandfather allows him sight drafts for his money for a better-than-average life. At one time Henry explains, "I live by sight drafts. Can a grandfather jail a patriotic grandson who is dying that Italy may live?" This statement seems to show little respect from this individualistic soldier for the grandfather or Italy. At one time Catherine Barkley says, "What an odd thing to be in the Italian Army." And Henry, "It's not really the army. It's only the ambulance." Again Catherine, "It's very odd though. Why did you do it?" His answer is "I don't know. There isn't always an explanation for everything." At another time Henry's confused direction is shown by a conversation in the mess. "I had drunk much wine and afterward coffee and Strega and I explained winefully,

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how we did not do the things we wanted to do; we never did such things." \textsuperscript{48} Beach feels that Henry may have entered the ambulance service in Italy as the most available means of serving the cause of democracy, but Henry was early impressed with the seamy side of the whole undertaking as seen from the Italian front. \textsuperscript{49} And even from the first, Henry was detached from the struggle which is shown by his "Well, I knew I would not be killed. Not in this war. It did not have anything to do with me. It seemed no more dangerous to me myself than war in the movies." \textsuperscript{50}

Lieutenant Henry is wounded almost exactly as Hemingway was wounded. Again, the wound has a great effect on the outlook of the wounded one. Henry describes his wound with:

My legs felt warm and wet and my shoes were wet and warm inside. I knew that I was hit and leaned over and put my hand on my knee. My knee wasn't there. My hand went in and my knee was on my shin. I wiped my hand on my shirt and another floating light came very slowly down and I looked at my leg and was very afraid. \textsuperscript{51}

Henry was carried to the dressing station and, like Hemingway, was dropped many times on the way. He was sent to the hospital in Milan to recover, as was Hemingway. There his Italian friend Rinaldi visited him and asked if he were a hero. "Didn't you carry anybody on your back? Gordini says you carried several people on your back, but the medical

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., p. 13.
\textsuperscript{49} Beach, \textit{American Fiction}, p. 84.
\textsuperscript{50} Hemingway, \textit{A Farewell to Arms}, p. 39.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., p. 59.
major at the first post declares it is impossible. He has to sign the proposition for the citation." Also, Rinaldi wants to be sure that Henry gets a medal. While Henry was in the hospital, he also received a letter from his grandfather containing family news, money, and patriotic encouragement. Also Henry's friend the priest visited him; their serious conversation was:

"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 the 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."
"What do you believe in?"
"In sleep," I said. He stood up.53

For Henry, as for Hemingway, the wound caused sleeplessness.

After a convalescence in Milan, Lieutenant Henry had recuperated sufficiently to return to action; he also was bitter about the society responsible for the war as a result of thinking about the war and talking with the other wounded in Milan. At the front he was caught up in the Italian retreat from Caporetto and lost his ambulances and his men. Later he found himself in a situation in which he had to

52 Ibid., p. 68. 53 Ibid., p. 190.
desert or be shot; thus he broke completely with the army in which he had been an officer.

You had lost your cars and your men as a floor-walker loses the stock of his department in a fire. There was, however, no insurance...

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 honor. 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 Miami and I would eat and stop thinking. I would have to stop.54

Geismar's comment here is that following his personal objectives, Henry abandons his friends, his responsibilities as an officer, the entire complex of organized social life represented by the army and the war. This farewell to arms is accomplished without request or permission. Henry, in fact, deserts, and his action is prophetic of his author's own future movement.55

This desertion most commonly is referred to as Henry's "separate peace." On the train while he is trying to get back to Catherine, he says, "I had the paper but I did not read it because I did not want to read about the war. I was going to forget the war. I had made a separate peace. I felt damned lonely and was glad when the train got to Stresa."56 He has done it; he is glad, yet he is not sure. Later, "Then I

54 Ibid., p. 248.
55 Geismar, Writers, p. 47.
56 Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 260.
57 Young's. Kamikaze, p. 64.

57 Ind. I. p. 262.

...realized it was over for me. But I did not have the feeling that it was really over. I had the feeling of a boy who thinks of what is happening at a certain hour at the school-house from which he has played truant. "57 Young sums up Henry's affair with the war by saying that Henry goes from the Englishwoman who had lost her lover early in the war, gaining money from her. Then there is Catherine Barkley, the priest who shares a friendship with Henry feels that the war is made by those amenable drivers are socialists. The priest who shares a definite contribution to the theme of war. (c) The other characters of A Farewell to Arms make a...
"It could not be worse," Passini said respectfully. "There is nothing worse than war."
"Defeat is worse."
"I do not believe it," Passini said still respectfully. "What is defeat? You go home."

"I think you do not know anything about being conquered and so you think it is not bad."
"Tene te," Passini said. "We understand you let us talk. Listen. There is nothing as bad as war. We in the auto-ambulance cannot even realize at all how bad it is. When people realize how bad it is they cannot do anything to stop it because they go crazy. There are some people who never realize. There are people who are afraid of their officers. It is with them that war is made."
"I know it is bad but we must finish it."
"It doesn't finish. There is no finish to a war."

"Yes there is."
Passini shook his head.
"War is not won by victory."
"We think. We read. We are not peasants. We are mechanics. But even the peasants know better than to believe in a war. Everybody hates this war."
"There is a class that controls a country that is stupid and does not realize anything and never can. That is why we have this war."
"Also they make money out of it."

Young feels that a whole nation could read its experience in Henry's complicity, bitterness, escape; it was becoming clear that in Hemingway as elsewhere "hero" meant not simply "protagonist" but a man who stands for many men. Thus, when historians of various kinds epitomize the temper of the American twenties and the reason for it, they quote the most famous passage from A Farewell to Arms. Adams states that the disillusionment which took hold of Hemingway's generation, described as lost, is more consistently and consciously set

59 Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, pp. 53-54.
60 Young, Hemingway, p. 62.
forth in Hemingway's work than in that of any of his contemporaries. 61 Lieutenant Henry sounds the keynote of that disillusionment in these famous words:

I did not say anything. I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain. We had heard them, sometimes standing in the rain almost out of earshot, so that only the shouted words came through, and had read them, on proclamations that were slapped up by bill posters over other proclamations, now for a long time, and I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices were like the stockyards at Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it. There were many words that you could not stand to hear and finally only the names of places had dignity. Certain numbers were the same way and certain dates and these with the names of the places were all you could say and have them mean anything. Abstract words such as glory, honor, courage, or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates. 62

From this feeling, it was an easy and understandable step to the distrust of all emotion, except on the simplest, most primitive plane. Adams feels that refuge was to be found only in the physical satisfactions, in eating, drinking, making love, in the pursuit of action for action's sake. 63

A Farewell to Arms represents the suffering, defeat, and struggle of war. When Hemingway says through Henry that the life of man is no more than the struggle of ants on the burning log of a camp fire, the inference is only too plain: he is indeed the spokesman for the lost generation. 64 In the

61 J. Donald Adams, "Ernest Hemingway," The English Journal, XXVIII (February, 1939), 89.

62 Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 196.

63 Adams, "Ernest Hemingway," p. 89.

64 Ray B. West, Jr., "Ernest Hemingway," The Sewanee Review, LXXV (January-March, 1925), 120.
emotional experience of the novel, Catherine's dying is directly associated and interwoven with the whole tragic pattern of fatigue and suffering, loneliness, defeat, and doom, of which the war is itself the broad social manifestation. It is important to remember the title of *A Farewell to Arms*, states Daiches, because the book is in a sense a tribute out of the wasteland to the departed glory. Hemingway is far from glorifying war as such. It is not the war that is glorious, but the general physical and emotional background which is capable of giving intensity and vividness to experience.  

Warren says that this book told a truth about the first world war, and a truth about the generation who had fought the war, and whose lives, because of the war, had been wrenched from the expected pattern and the old values.  

A *Farewell to Arms* served as the great romantic alibi for a generation, and for those who aped and emulated that generation. It showed how cynicism or disillusionment, failure of spirit or the worship of material success, debauchery or despair, might have been grounded in heroism, simplicity, and fidelity that had met unmerited defeat. The early tragedy could cast a kind of flattering and extenuating afterglow over what had come later. The battlefields of

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A Farewell to Arms explained the bars of The Sun Also Rises. 67 Baker points out that nearly all the important characters in the first two novels are "displaced persons," either men fighting a war far from their former home-environments, or aliens in foreign lands whose ties with nearly everything they have known before are now severed, for better or for worse, but severed. 68 Hemingway's characters want to take nothing on authority or tradition, but to find out for themselves and to make their own code, a practical problem of learning to live according to their own feeling of good and bad. The characters of The Sun Also Rises are of the war, the lost generation; they have lived through times of violence and disorder, been disillusioned, formed habits suitable to war times, and been made unfit for the peaceful routines of civil life. Beach says that they have been shaken loose from their moorings, saddened in their outlook, made restive and skeptical; above all they have been made unwilling to submit to any authority but of their own creation. 69

Jake Barnes was emasculated in the war; here the wound, again with its literal and symbolic meanings, is with the hero. He is a writer living in Paris in the twenties, transplanted from midwestern America to the Austro-Italian front. Jake is the protagonist who has broken with society, with

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69 *Beach, American Fiction*, p. 83.
the usual middle-class ways. It is in connection with his wounding that he made the break. He has little use for people; at times he has little use for himself, as he exists on a fringe of the society he has renounced. However, Jake is just about the only reasonably happy person in *The Sun Also Rises*. His philosophy is not bitter; he explains it with "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 out how to live in it you learned from that what it was all about."70 Jake Barnes is also an insomniac, for he says he could not sleep; his head started to work with the old grievances. Once he said, "I figured that all out once, and for six months I never slept with the electric light off. That was another bright idea."71 Jake speaks of the war in comparison with his lost friends, "It was like certain dinners I remember from the war. There was much wine, an ignored tension, and a feeling of things coming that you could not prevent happening. Under the wine I lost the disgusted feeling and was happy. It seemed they were all such nice people."72 Jake continues to have his feeling of hopelessness.

In one way or another, the tragic war and its aftereffects tend to disrupt the normal course of love. Brett Ashley and her fiancé Mike Campbell are both casualties from

ordeal similar to those which damaged Jake. Mike's whole character was shattered by the war. To fill in gaps for these two, *A Farewell to Arms* gives some of Brett's past in Catherine and most of Jake's in Henry. There is a short history behind Brett's alcoholism and her constant, restless shifting from male to male. During the war she was a nurse; her lover died, and she married a psychotic British baronet who maltreated her. In the book she is getting a divorce so that she can marry Mike Campbell. The terrible thing is that she is in love with Jake, though they realize the hopelessness of the situation. Her wrecked life is a direct result of the war.

Practically all the characters are what they are because of the war. Robert Cohn, the Jew, wants to escape and begs Jake to go to South America with him, but Jake tells him: "Listen, Robert, going to another country doesn't make any difference. I've tried all that. You can't get away from yourself by moving from one place to another. There's nothing to that."73 The wealthy Count Mippipopolous says, "I have been in seven wars and four revolutions." "Soldiering?" Brett asked. "Sometimes, my dear. And I have arrow wounds. Have you ever seen arrow wounds?"74 Jake's good friend, Bill Gorton, tells them all exactly what they are: "You're an expatriate. You've lost touch with the soil. You get precious. Fake European standards have ruined you. You

drink yourself to death. You become obsessed by sex. You spend all your time talking, not working. You are an expatriate, see? You hang around cafes." 75 In The Sun Also Rises all are expatriates as defined by Bill Gorton.

Baker feels that in order to write this book, Hemingway had found it necessary to dissociate himself in a moral sense from the idea of lostness. He might tell Fitzgerald that The Sun Also Rises was "a hell of a sad story" whose only instruction was "how people go to hell." But the point of the book for Hemingway, as he wrote Maxwell Perkins, was "that the earth abideth forever." He had a "great deal of fondness and admiration for the earth, and not a hell of a lot for my generation," and he cared "little about vanities." Hemingway says: "The book was not meant to be a hollow or bitter satire, but a damn tragedy with the earth abiding forever as the hero." 76 Daiches feels that in this work Hemingway's sense of the inevitable actuality of life develops into a more clearly pessimistic attitude. Actuality as such cannot provide any standards of value. Looking at the post-war world with eyes that had accepted the violence and the color of the frontier and the war, Hemingway could not but find something lacking. He came to realize acutely the bitterness of belonging to the lost generation. Experience

75Ibid., p. 118.

76Baker, Hemingway, p. 81.
had lost its sharp edge, and a cynical and distrustful generation drifted through life instead of marching through it. In 1932 Ernest Hemingway wrote *Death in the Afternoon*, a non-fiction book of bull fighting in which Hemingway is an aficionado. The book describes the art and artists of bull fighting and includes the opinions of Hemingway on this subject. In it he occasionally mentions war, and there is a story of war entitled "A Natural History of the Dead." The old lady with whom the author talks in this book wants a story, and he tells her about a wounded soldier with his head broken as a "flower-pot." This soldier is placed with the dead before he is dead, upsetting the stretcher bearers and an artillery officer. There is a brutal fight over what to do, and in the mean time the soldier dies. This story shows the futility of life and the horror of living; it also shows the bitterness of Hemingway at this time. In "A Natural History of the Dead," Hemingway says:

A naturalist, to obtain accuracy of observation, may confine himself in his observations to one limited period and I will take first that following the Austrian offensive of June, 1918, in Italy as one in which the dead were present in their greatest numbers, a withdrawal having been forced and an advance later made to recover the ground lost so that the positions after the battle were the same as before except for the presence of the dead.

In other words, war only accomplished dead soldiers. Hemingway

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also speaks of the remembered horrors of Smyrna with great bitterness and disgust. Young feels that in *Death in the Afternoon* the hero, here Hemingway himself, is to be found pretty much at the end of his rope. It represents him in complete escape from the society he renounced in his first war novels. It is not a simple coincidence that it also finds him in the depth of his pessimism. 79

In 1935 Hemingway wrote another non-fiction book; this time it was a true story of one of his big game hunting expeditions into Africa, *Green Hills of Africa*, in which war is many times an important topic. He speaks of the great value of war to a writer:

> I thought . . . about what a great advantage an experience of war was to a writer. It was one of the major subjects and certainly one of the hardest to write truly of and those writers who had not seen it were always very jealous and tried to make it seem unimportant, or abnormal, or a disease as a subject, while, really, it was just something quite irreplaceable that they had missed.

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*Just as civil war is the best war for a writer, the most complete. . . Writers are forged in injustice as a sword is forged.*

Also he has much to say about his "separate peace" and "home." The "separate peace" was lonesome, even to him: "If you serve time for society, democracy, and the other things quite young, and declining any further enlistment make yourself responsible only to yourself, you exchange the pleasant, comforting stench

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79 Young, Hemingway, p. 67.

of comrades for something you can never feel in any other way than by yourself." He knows that his actions have been frowned on at home; and he seems little worried, for he feels that if ever the desire arises, "you could always come back."

... 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. I would go, now, somewhere else 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. And to conclude his argument, he defines home as: "Where a man feels at home, outside of where he's born, is where he's meant to go." He is still not happy about leaving home and society in general; there seems to be a tinge of guilt, and he has his hero's trouble of not wanting to think. These attitudes are clearly shown in a conversation with a fellow hunter, Kandisky:

"Then you are happy?"
"Except when I think of other people."
"Then you think of other people?"
"Oh, yes."
"But you do nothing for them?"
"No."
"Nothing?"
"Maybe a little."
"Do you think your writing is worth doing — as an end in itself?"
"Oh, yes."

Young contends that in this true account the author repeats that he is doing what he likes most, is enjoying

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\(^{81}\) Ibid., p. 148. \(^{82}\) Ibid., p. 285. \\
\(^{83}\) Ibid., p. 284. \(^{84}\) Ibid., p. 26.
himself and is happy, until the reader unavoidably infers that something is most certainly wrong.\textsuperscript{85}

What I had to do was work. I did not care, particularly, how it all came out. I did not take my own life seriously any more, anyone else's life, yes, but not mine. They all wanted something that I did not want and I would get it without wanting it, if I worked. To work was the only thing, it was the one thing that always made you feel good, and in the meantime it was my own damned life and I would lead it where and how I pleased.\textsuperscript{86}

It seems that the truant is wondering what is happening back at school, and whether he ought to be there. Young's conclusion is that Hemingway has so completely cut himself off from the roots that nourish, since that separate peace, that he has developed a vitamin deficiency.\textsuperscript{87} Wilson sums up the alarm at \textit{Green Hills of Africa} by saying that it is not only that, as his critics of the Left had been complaining, he shows no interest in political issues, but that his interest in his fellow beings seems actually to be drying up.\textsuperscript{88}

Hemingway's defiance focuses the turmoil, the disillusion, and the bitterness which flooded Europe after her first great imperialist civil war. To D. S. Savage, Hemingway seems to epitomize a phase of culture in which all the inward values which have sustained that culture in the past are vanishing, and nothing much is left but the empty shell of

\textsuperscript{85}Young, Hemingway, p. 69.

\textsuperscript{86}Hemingway, Green Hills of Africa, p. 72.

\textsuperscript{87}Young, Hemingway, p. 70.

\textsuperscript{88}Edmund Wilson, The Wound and the Bow (Cambridge, 1941), p. 228.
civilization, the shell of technique. Hemingway's characters reflect accurately the consciousness of depersonalized modern man of the totalitarian era, from whom all inward sources have been withdrawn, who has become alienated from his experience and objectivized into his environment. 89

In the 1930's Hemingway's views of man and society were determined by three vital experiences. First, he was a veteran of World War I and really knew war. Second, he was a war correspondent who had watched with hatred the postwar scramble of the diplomats and dictators of Europe for power. Third, in Cuba he became familiar with the two extremes of the behind-the-scene planners and the killing in the streets of the actual fighters. 90

Much questioning has been done about Hemingway's politics as expressed in his work; Hemingway's belief was that the writer in politics who was dogmatic on the course of contemporary history would always betray his real artistic purposes. In Esquire Hemingway wrote that "Books should be about the people you know, that you love and hate, not about the people you study up about. If you write them truly they will have all the economic implications a book can hold." 91

According to Geismar, the basis of Hemingway's early writing is a total renunciation of all social frameworks,

90 Baker, Hemingway, p. 198.
the separation of the writer from the common activity of his time, and the acceptance of a profound isolation as the basis for the writer's achievement. Nick Adams, Jake Barnes, and Lieutenant Henry all agree in repudiating social organization; living as close to a natural life as possible, they refuse to concern themselves with political or economic structures. In his early writings, Hemingway presents his views that politics are unreal, that the great phrases have no meaning, that common values are useless, and that the ideals for which so many died were shabby and shameful.

CHAPTER III

SPANISH CIVIL WAR

From 1928 to 1939 Ernest Hemingway lived mostly at Key West, more in the public eye than ever before. He was busy establishing his reputation as a sportsman. During this period he wrote for Esquire rather unpretentious and workmanlike journalism including several pieces which showed a clear (though, at this time, isolationist) view of the impending world war. One was an effective defense against the complaint which was current in the thirties that his own work was not political. In this piece Hemingway states: "Not a critic will wish you luck or hope you will keep on writing unless you have political affiliation."¹

In 1933 Hemingway was embarrassed by an article calling him in bold capitals "The Friend of Spain." The country, he pointed out, was split wide open and was "inhabited by too many politicians for any man to be a friend to all of it with impunity." Also at this time Hemingway stated that "war is being prepared and brought closer each day with all the premeditation of a long planned murder."²

¹Young, Hemingway, pp. 112-113.
Hemingway's isolationism and apoliticality were not to last for long. The Spanish Civil War broke out in 1936, and more than anything else it seems to have brought him wholly back to the world. Until the invasion of Spain by France, Hemingway had never shown any political allegiance, at least not in his writing. He had loved Spain for a long time, and when he saw what was happening to Spain he changed. He pledged allegiance to the Loyalists, people who were being invaded and having their lives' work ruined. In 1936 he raised $40,000.00 to help the Loyalists purchase ambulances (undoubtedly due to his own work in World War I). In 1937 he became chairman of the Ambulance Committee, Medical Bureau, American Friends of Spanish Democracy. The name of the organization fully described Hemingway's position and reasons behind it. For his own interests, love, and desire to help the Loyalist cause both with money and publishing of facts, he worked for the North American Newspaper Alliance reporting the war. He spoke in June of 1937 before the Second National Congress of American Writers on the problem of Spain and the necessity of defeating fascism. His labors took him into the heart of the war on four separate occasions. The first began on February 27, 1937, when he sailed to report the war for the NANA, and ended in May. His second trip was from August 14, 1937, to January of 1938. On this trip he found Madrid a tangle of bitter and cynical intrigue. It was this trip that produced his play, The Fifth Column.
After the third trip, March, 1938, to May, 1938, he told American reporters that the Loyalists would win though they were now clearly on the defensive. The fourth was the gloomiest of all. It began in September, 1938, and lasted for the entire winter. Barcelona fell late in January, and Madrid followed at the end of March.

As an artist whose books had been burned in Fascist Italy, and as the friend of many honest Spaniards who had suffered heavily in trying to inaugurate and consolidate the Republic, Hemingway had personal reasons for hating fascism. Russian style communism was scarcely better, though friends of the Spanish Republic, once war broke out, had no choice but to work with this wing of the popular front coalition. Thus did Hemingway.

In Spain, Hemingway mixed with the soldiers while others talked the sun down with political speculation. He did not chew the cud of theory like the intellectual, but he got his teeth into everyday details as the soldier was compelled to do. Though politics had brought on the war, it had little to do with the comradeship among the Loyalist soldiers in whose company Hemingway now moved. They were of all political persuasions, from militant Comintern communism to the point around the center where Hemingway stood as artist, American, semi-detached observer, student of war, and supporter of the Spanish Republic. The Eleventh and Twelfth Brigades were

\[3\] Atkins, Hemingway, p. 97.
his chief centers of operation. Truly, his heart was with the Twelfth Brigade, a mixed group politically, a memorably gay assemblage as comrades. One staunch friend was Werner Hielbrun, the medical officer of the outfit. He could always provide transportation, good cheer, hot meals. He was killed in battle; Hemingway donated to his widow the proceeds from the printed version of the film, The Spanish Earth.

The Spanish Civil War might have been made to order for Hemingway; it embodied most of the features he had been working with for fifteen years: two sides fighting with unbridled ferocity, every known variety of cowardice and heroism, characters who were aficionados and characters who were not, and a backdrop of great events. He felt that he should decline further writing until the war could be won and the fascist menace, with its enmity towards all honest writers, could be reduced in scale. It was, however, a reasonably happy period for him, because it was something like the old times in Italy where he had served nearly twenty years earlier. There was also the reasonable expectation that if one survived, with all that he had learned about the art of writing during the long armistice, he had a chance of writing a book about this war which would be better than any of the earlier books.

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5Baker, Hemingway, p. 232.
Hemingway presents his views, in *Scholastic*, on war by saying in effect that the only way to combat the murder that is war is to show the dirty combinations that make it, to show the criminals and swine that hope for war, to show the idiotic way these criminals run the war when they get it. In this light an honest man will distrust war as he would a racket and refuse to be enslaved into it.⁶ He tried sincerely to do this in his reporting for the North American Newspaper Alliance. The story of the peasants, the poor sufferers, is always present in his reporting. He shows the importance of the struggle, the Civil War, to them. In one of his reports from the front, he gives a touching account of the Alicante recruits celebrating their enlistment and their victory over the Italian regular troops on the Guadalajara front.⁷ All along the coast to Valencia the celebrating of these true Spaniards reminded Hemingway more of fiestas than of war; it was the life of the peasants.

With all his interest in the Spanish Civil War, Hemingway found some time for writing. In Madrid he wrote the short stories "The Killers," "Today is Friday," "Ten Indians," and "Old Man at the Bridge." Also he worked on *To Have and Have Not* and *The Fifth Column*. From the Spanish outlook, the outstanding story is "Old Man at the Bridge," which he finished

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in Barcelona in April, 1938. This story is a record of the better things Hemingway had learned in Spain, an intimation of a Hemingway who had found the thwarted ideal clear and radiant again through the martyrdom of the Spanish masses. The Old Man is the last refugee from the village of San Carlos where he took care of animals from which he has been separated by the Fascists. He says: "I am without politics."8

The first book in which Hemingway showed signs of a political conscience was *To Have and Have Not*. It is the contrast between wealth and poverty, to the moral disadvantage of the former. We see an incipient political attitude forming among Hemingway's men who have always avoided such things in the past. If Harry and Al had lived, they would have complained, they would have demanded liberty and equality, but their early training and aversion to thought and feeling had made them enemies of both.9 Kazin feels that the Hemingway of *To Have and Have Not* was not a "new" Hemingway; he was an angry and confused writer who had been too profoundly disturbed by the social and economic crisis to be indifferent; yet he could find no clue in his education by which to understand this confusion.10

Hemingway had been working on *To Have and Have Not* for several years, at least since 1933. It ends in a mood of


bitter discouragement. When Hemingway returned from Spain full of enthusiasm for the Spanish Loyalists, however, he must have felt dissatisfied with what he had written. At any rate he destroyed huge parts of it. At the conclusion, Harry Morgan says, "A man alone ain't got no bloody f--ing chance."\textsuperscript{11} This might be the message that Hemingway carried back from Spain, his own free translation of Marx and Engels: "Workers of the world unite; you have nothing to lose." The entire final scene of Harry's death is beautifully done, but it does not grow naturally out of the text that has gone before.\textsuperscript{12} Thus one finds the first fruits of the Spanish Civil War in the writing of Hemingway to be his love of man and brotherhood, his realization that no man is alone.

As a friend to the Spanish Republic, Hemingway was ready to help with the development of a documentary film with a group called Contemporary Historians. The members included John Dos Passos, Archibald MacLeish, and Lillian Hellman. This group wished to present the true facts of Spain's history to all. The film, The Spanish Earth, was to show the peasants trying to reclaim a land neglected through generations of misuse. The message of the film was "Get rid of war!" During April and May of 1937, Hemingway joined the young Dutch director, Joris Ivens, and his

\textsuperscript{11}Ernest Hemingway, \textit{To Have and Have Not} (New York, 1937), 225.

cameraman, John Ferno, working in and near besieged Madrid. Wearing a Basque beret, windbreaker, and heavy field boots, the American guide made a picturesque figure. Besides being the guide, Hemingway was to write the commentary for the film. The film makers daily exposed themselves to enemy fire, taking the risks of regular infantry officers. These men set up an observation post only ten minutes' walk from the heart of Madrid. From there they watched the war, or they photographed the mangled bodies of the Madrilenos in the streets and squares. Like every other Loyalist sympathizer who saw the results, Hemingway resented the totalitarian tactics of murdering non-participant citizenry with high explosives. The Rebels, as he told the Writer's Congress in June, had been beaten in every major engagement up to that date; what they could not win by military tactics, they sought to win by mass-murder of the civilian population.  

This killing of the common citizens seems to have been to Hemingway the most distressing horror of the war. In all of his writing of the Spanish Civil War the fact is stressed that the innocent suffer and often do not know why.

The film makers enjoyed their task. They were doing it for a good cause, one they sincerely believed in. Every day the men went out to film, and every day they carried a large silver flask of whiskey for battle thirst. As it was always

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empty by four in the afternoon, they had the wisdom to bring along an auxiliary bottle. Hemingway distressed his companions by carrying strong Spanish onions in his pockets as a means of assuaging his hunger. (This habit of Hemingway's is found in Robert Jordan of For Whom the Bell Tolls. Robert disturbed his peasant friends by eating these strong onions for breakfast.) In looking back to the spring of 1937, Hemingway said, "The period of fighting when we thought that the Republic could win was the happiest period of our lives."\textsuperscript{14}

On July 8, 1937, the film was ready, and that evening, on invitation from the White House, Ivens and Hemingway showed it to President and Mrs. Roosevelt. Later showings brought thousands of dollars in voluntary contributions to Loyalist Spain. Of the film, Jasper Wood in the Introduction to the printed volume of The Spanish Earth says: "It is a vital picture, and much of its vitality comes from the Hemingway personality which was injected into it."\textsuperscript{15}

In the Preface to The Fifth Column and the First Forty-Nine Stories, Hemingway tells his readers why he went to Spain and was active in the Spanish Civil War:

\begin{quote}
In going where you have to go and doing what you have to do, and seeing what you have to see, you dull and blunt the instrument you write with. But I would rather have it bent and dulled and
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 231.

know I had to put it on the grindstone again and hammer it into shape and put a whetstone to it, and know that I had something to write about, than to have it bright and shining and nothing to say, or smooth and well-oiled in the closet, but unused.16

This "something to write about" from the Spanish Civil War is fully found in the play The Fifth Column. The title refers to the Spanish Rebel statement in the fall of 1936 that they had four columns advancing on Madrid and a fifth column of sympathizers inside the city to attack the defenders of the city from the rear. The play was written in the Hotel Florida in a dollar a day room (low price, high danger) exposed to the German batteries on Garabitas Hill. Hemingway in the Preface to The Fifth Column and the First Forty-Nine Stories tells his readers that the front, at its closest to the Hotel, was 1500 yards away. He kept the manuscript sliped inside the inner fold of a rolled up mattress, and was always pleased to return in the evening to find the room intact. The play was completed and sent out of the country late in December of 1937.

The Fifth Column has not been produced. In 1937 one producer was going to put it on the stage, but he died. Another producer had trouble raising money. Hemingway, therefore, put The Fifth Column in a volume with the short stories because "I thought it read well, no matter how it might play, and so decided to put it in with this book of stories. ... Later someone may want to produce it."17

16Hemingway, The Fifth Column, "Preface."
17Ibid., "Preface."
Hemingway's recognition of an actual wartime situation was later to bring upon him fierce accusations by critics who assumed that recognition of a situation implied support of a policy. Whatever the inner complexion of the change, a Hemingway hero was now openly supporting a political movement.\textsuperscript{18} The play sought to present Hemingway's tough-minded apprehension of the state of things in Madrid that fall: bombardments killing the citizens, food scarce, hopes of lifting the siege growing dim, and the malignant growth of treason deep in the city. Whatever its dramatic shortcomings, \textit{The Fifth Column} was an attempt to draw the actual Madrid of the fall of 1937 as it might have appeared in the uncensored dispatches of an objective war correspondent. Like \textit{The Spanish Earth}, the play showed that war is hell. Unlike the film, the play showed that at some levels and out of necessity, war is waged by demons. Though Hemingway was sympathetic to the Republic, \textit{The Fifth Column} could hardly be described as a vehicle for Loyalist propaganda. This was a play about the regrettable necessity of fanaticism, written in the nature of an on-the-spot report and a prediction of things to come. Hemingway did not pretend that it was much more than that.\textsuperscript{19}

\textit{The Fifth Column} is melodrama. Carlos Baker calls it a "cloak and pistol, spy and counter-spy struggle of the most ruthless and melodramatic kind." The theme is home against

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18} Atkins, \textit{Hemingway}, p. 30.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Baker, \textit{Hemingway}, p. 234.
\end{itemize}
war. The hero is Philip Rawlings, a counter-espionage agent of the Stalinist underground in Madrid who is fighting against the fascist infiltration. The woman is Dorothy Bridges, a war correspondent, who is in love with Philip, but who loses to the cause. Max, the scarred scout officer, says that he is in the war "so everyone will have a good breakfast like that, ... no one will ever go hungry, so all will work in dignity and not as slaves."²⁰ The maid Petra says "I have no politics. I only work."²¹ Petra also comments on the fifth column people who fight from the inside and kill working people. Hemingway here also gets in his blows at the politicians. He compares the soldier with the politician to the latter's disadvantage. The politician captured in the play hopes to save himself with floods of words; the man shot and left by the wayside is described by "he was a soldier and he would never have talked."

Hemingway meant business in The Fifth Column. Philip says: "Where I go now I go alone, or with others who go there for the same reasons I go."²² This is the region of man at work, man without woman. Baker admits that the hero has fought his way out of defeatism. Rawlings, soldier of fortune, has given up the pursuit of happiness for pursuit of the enemies of liberty.²³

²⁰Hemingway, The Fifth Column, p. 79. 
²¹Ibid., p. 29. 
²²Ibid., p. 98. 
²³Baker, Hemingway, p. 236.
Of the play, Hemingway feels "it has the defects of having been written in war time, and if it has a moral it is that people who work for certain organizations have very little time for home life."24 Also death now is not for death's sake alone or as a gesture; it is death for a cause. Edgar Johnson says that in The Fifth Column Hemingway has rejected his philosophy of atomic individualism and irresponsibility, yet he has retained the strength in his thinking in a new synthesis of honorable emotion fortified by intellectual charity.25

The most complete product of Hemingway and the Spanish Civil War is For Whom the Bell Tolls. Here is presented a historical point of view which he has learned from his political adventures. He has attempted to reflect in this book, says Edmund Wilson, the whole course of the Spanish Civil War and the tangle of tendencies involved in it.26 Frohock feels that For Whom the Bell Tolls is Hemingway's chance to write on a subject he has lived in his full maturity, and it may be regarded as a full dress performance.27

Robert Jordan is continually emphasizing that the Spanish Civil War is his education. It is part of one's education,

24Hemingway, The Fifth Column, "Preface."
he feels, and it will be quite an education when it is finished. In terms of Hemingway's own development, we may surmise that the Spanish Civil War was also a central part of his own education, or re-education, as a member of society. For Whom the Bell Tolls is within the entire pattern of Hemingway's own renunciation, exile, and return, writes Geismar. 28 In the study of Pablo is found a new theme for Hemingway. With Pablo's statement after his desertion from his fellow Spaniards ("Having done such a thing there is a loneliness that cannot be borne") one perceives that Hemingway has come near the source of much of his own previous feeling of corrosive solitude. Geismar also believes that the good Anselmo most sharply contrasts the old and new Hemingway as he rebukes the guerrilla leader Pablo. Anselmo fumes: "Now we come for something of consummate importance and thee, with thy dwelling place to be undisturbed, puts thy foxhole before the interests of humanity." 29

One of Hemingway's major themes has always been man against war. Earlier in his books his heroes had blundered, just for the hell of it, as they say, into wars which they did not understand. Robert Jordan's war is one that he understands. It is fought by a man of disciplined sensibility for a completely altruistic and idealistic purpose. Jordan was helping the Republic because he loved Spain and believed

that a fascist victory would make life unbearable for those who believed in the Republic. But he had no politics, that is, no body of political doctrine, only a momentary desire to help one side in an existing conflict against the other. Jordan has by now thought more about politics than Philip Fowlings had, and he has come to a kind of position. The American college instructor in Spain as a Loyalist guerrilla is, he makes clear, not a communist. Maria asks him: "Are you a Communist?" "No, I am an anti-fascist." "For a long time?" "Since I have understood fascism." But his position is always a fluctuating one, and when Pilar asks if he has her great religious faith in the Republic, he answers "Yes," hoping that it is true. When he himself inquires into his politics, he is at times able to reply that he has none.

What about a planned society? That was for the others to do, felt Jordan. He fought now because the war started in a country he loved, and he believed in the Republic. In Spain the communists offered the best discipline, and he accepted their discipline for the duration of the war. Jordan is pessimistic about the possibilities of socialism. He says, "If you had three together, two would unite against one, and then the two would start to betray each other."31

However, despite Jordan's doubts and the confusion in the Party line, the final impression of the book is one of

30 Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls, p. 66.
31 Young, Hemingway, pp. 75-76.
at least tentative affirmation of a just cause and of the goodness of life. Jordan has come to love the world and life: "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."\textsuperscript{32}

This novel has not over-simplified the issues or overlooked objections which are the pitfalls of propagandistic fiction. To Jordan there is nothing black and white about his enemies and his friends; as in life, there are shades of gray. The most barbaric atrocity in the novel is perpetrated by Jordan's Republicans, the killing of the Fascists as told by Pilar. This irony looms so large, says Young, that it alone would protect the book against the charge that it had falsified the complexity of the problems by stacking the moral cards.\textsuperscript{33}

Of the value of \textit{For Whom the Bell Tolls}, Geismar feels that the novel hardly reaches into the depths of its theme. The protagonist, Robert Jordan, is fighting for "the dignity of man," for the Spanish Loyalists against the oppressive forces of native and foreign fascism. But beyond this broad outline of the Spanish Civil War, Geismar says we are given relatively little of the impact of the struggle in either sociological or personal terms.\textsuperscript{34} Howard Mumford Jones

\textsuperscript{32}Hemingway, \textit{For Whom the Bell Tolls}, p. 467.
\textsuperscript{33}Young, \textit{Hemingway}, p. 77.
\textsuperscript{34}Geismar, \textit{Writers}, p. 183.
believes that *For Whom the Bell Tolls* has done for the Spanish Civil War the sort of thing Tolstoy did for the Napoleonic campaigns in *War and Peace*. At the end of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, the reader has not lived in Spain, he has lived Spain.\textsuperscript{35}

Hemingway's experiences in the Spanish Civil War were a vital education for him, both in his writing and in his personal life and views. In this period he grew and matured, and from this period he produced a book expressing the terrible struggle of mankind for peace and a good life. Hemingway himself further states his affirmation in a commonplace metaphor saying in effect "... the Gulf Stream flows unceasingly and is never contaminated by the garbage that is thrown into it — the stream of life is similarly passing by all the various systems of government and remaining unchanged."\textsuperscript{36} As to the future, Hemingway comments: "There is a future for little else except the fundamental conception of individual freedom and liberty and the universal brotherhood of man."\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{35}Howard Mumford Jones, "The Soul of Spain," *The Saturday Review of Literature*, XXIII (October 26, 1940), 5.

\textsuperscript{36}Atkins, *Hemingway*, p. 21.

\textsuperscript{37}*Ibid.*, p. 41.
CHAPTER IV

WORLD WAR II

Hemingway could not remain at home during World War II. When the invasion of Southern France was undertaken in 1944, Hemingway managed to get attached to the Third Army as a Collier's correspondent. As usual, however, he did not like the role of nonparticipant and did very little work at being a correspondent.

After the breakthrough in Normandy at St-Lo, he attached himself instead to an infantry division of his liking, the Fourth of the First Army. With this outfit Hemingway saw a great deal of action. One of his major adventures was climaxed at Hurtgen Forest, where the regiment he was operating with sustained such appalling casualties that it lost, in eighteen days, over eighty per cent of its officers and men. Hemingway was in the slaughter from start to finish, and it was his disgust over a "stupid frontal attack," tactically unfeasible but ordered from above and dutifully carried out, which chiefly animated the bitterness of Richard Cantwell, the protagonist of Across the River and Into the Trees. Hemingway was also at Schnee Eifel and in Luxembourg with the Fourth Division.

1 Young, Hemingway, p. 114.
With a flair and a flamboyant air, Hemingway was exceptionally active and impressive in World War II. The French irregulars who put themselves under Hemingway's wing in the war had difficulty comprehending the fact that the reporter was not a general. It is easy to understand their confusion, which was widespread among the entire army, because, like a general, Hemingway had a lieutenant as an "aide," a "personal-relations officer," a cook, a driver, a photographer, and a special liquor ration. Young says that Hemingway's outfit must have been colorful enough in actuality to give support to any legends that might spring from it.² Hemingway was frequently shot at, and he so endeared himself to the command that its members copied even his ways of walking and talking, and the French irregulars even issued short sentences in their own tongues.

Because of Hemingway's fascination with war, there was plenty of color in his wartime adventures, which, to be truthful, were less distinguished for great reporting than for other activities. At one point in a battle, from the statement of the two-star commander of the Fourth Division, Hemingway was sixty miles in front of anything else in the First Army. With Germans on both flanks and before him, he was sending back intelligence and asking for tank support in order to hold out. His most famous action in World War II

²Ibid., p. 122.
came at Rambouillet to the southwest of Paris. On that occasion he took charge of a group of French irregulars, set up headquarters in a hotel, and conducted full-scale operations. Hemingway guarded the roads, dispatched patrols to attract the fire which would reveal the German positions, and sent out civilians on bicycles who returned with similar information on the Germans. When Leclerc arrived in town to begin his official march on the French capital, Hemingway presented the general's chief of staff with the sketches and other particulars he himself had assembled. In the opinion of an OSS colonel, it was this material that made the Frenchman's famous undertaking a success. Hemingway made his own entrance and his own liberating gestures. At the head of his personal army, now motorized and over two hundred strong, he followed Leclerc until the attack bogged down momentarily at the spot where Hemingway had anticipated it would, and then he took off on his own route. When Leclerc's army was at the south bank of the Seine, Hemingway's was in a skirmish at the Arc de Triomphe. This thoroughly upset many important people, and after the Rambouillet affair there was an argument in army circles as to whether Hemingway should be decorated for an outstandingly good example of intelligent reporting, or whether he should be summarily court martialed for having violated the Geneva Convention, which governs the conduct of war correspondents. Finally agreement was reached that

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Hemingway had performed a great service for his country within his legal bounds as a war correspondent. The decoration came much later in the form of a Bronze Star.\(^4\) At one time a Fourth Division commander said: "He's been sending back information. But now what do you think he says? He says that if he's going to hold out where he is, he'll need tanks."\(^5\)

Courage has always been a vital question with Hemingway himself and with the Hemingway hero, who is continually striving to be brave and courageous. The Nick Adams who drank ether to get through an attack, confessed his terrors to be rid of them, and fastened a chin strap across his mouth to keep his lips from getting out of control, correlates with Hemingway's long recital of his personal fears in war and of the means whereby he tried to overcome them. The idea that a sudden precipitation into action could cure a man wholly and for good seems mystical. But, says Young, the fact is that in Spain and elsewhere in the late thirties and forties several experiences apparently did cure Hemingway. Veterans, among them professional soldiers, have testified that in the Second World War Hemingway seemed to them quite simply the bravest man they had ever seen.\(^6\) Interesting examples of this remarkable bravery are told by the artist,


\(^5\) Ibid., p. 37.

\(^6\) Young, Hemingway, p. 132.
John Groth, who first met Hemingway early in September, 1944, with the First Army in Germany. Groth was at the front with "Task Force Hemingway" as it was officially called. Hemingway, who was quartered in a farm house in the Siegfried Line, was in charge of the defense, and was on guard all night. Groth tells of his own excitement when going to bed in his clothes, while Hemingway stood guard downstairs with a tommy gun and with grenades hanging from his belt. One night Hemingway and Groth were eating dinner with some officers when suddenly the German 88's began to break their way in. An explosion broke the window, cutting loose the lamp from the ceiling: "When candles were lighted, we were all—officers and correspondents—on the floor, making ourselves small, and groping for helmets. All, that is, except one: Hemingway was still seated at the table, his broad back to the window, helmetless, eating." Groth also relates that the GI's all loved Hemingway as a man respected for abilities and bravery. It seems these GI's seldom knew his literary fame, and some of these soldiers thought of him as "more important than a general." Hemingway liked to share the life of the ordinary soldier and was always as pleased as a child to be hailed by the soldiers.

In this war Hemingway was also a part of the United States Navy. In 1942 he had volunteered himself and his

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boat, the Pilar, for various projects to the Navy. For two years he cruised off the coast of Cuba with a scheme for the destruction of enemy U-boats. The Pilar had a crew, radio equipment, and some high-powered munitions. The idea was to get hailed by a submarine, and then when alongside it, blow it up. The mission had been authorized by Spruille Braden, then United States Ambassador to Cuba. Although Hemingway's somewhat suicidal plan never had a chance to prove or disprove itself, he did help to locate submarines which the Navy is presumed to have subsequently sunk. For his naval actions, he was recommended by Braden for a decoration. 8

Across the River and Into the Trees is the book that developed from World War II. In reality, it is the continuation and resumption of the Hemingway hero in his fears, wars, wounds, courage, loves, and desire to live unafraid of life. One recognizes the hero in the early pages of this novel: "That winter the Colonel, who was a lieutenant then, and in a foreign army, which had always made him slightly suspect afterwards in his own army, and had done his career no good..." 9 The theme here is that of death met gracefully under pressure. Colonel Cantwell is a professional soldier of fifty who realizes that he is dying. He has lived a full life loving his way of life, and is determined to fight his last battle gloriously yet without fanfare. The symbolic

8Young, Hemingway, p. 114.

title calls to mind a life that has crossed many rivers with only one remaining to be crossed. Stonewall Jackson said when he was dying, "Let us cross over the river and rest under the shade of the trees." The book is, in fact, one long, disjointed story or composite of war fragments. Baker comments that even as late as 1949, when Hemingway turned aside from his major task to work on his novel of Venice and World War II, the traumatic effects of his life in that war still rankled in his mind. The story of Colonel Cantwell emerged as a way of exorcising what for Hemingway still had the aspect and the terrorizing atmosphere of a recent nightmare. Across the River and Into the Trees was a necessary first step in the process of objectifying not only World War II, comments Baker, but also the other wars and the periods of armed truce between the wars which Hemingway had personally known.¹⁰ Young sees the old autobiographical qualities, too, in this novel. He notes that when the book was published, ex-General Cantwell had Hemingway's age to the year. Also, Hemingway believed himself to be dying. The hero has grown into his middle period from the hero we once knew particularly as Lieutenant Henry, for it was Henry, "a lieutenant then, and in a foreign army," who fought and was wounded as were Cantwell and Hemingway at Fossalta. This eccentric, battered soldier, with high blood pressure, says Young, who chases the mannitol-

¹⁰ Baker, Hemingway, p. 266.
hexanitrite tablets with alcohol, and stays, in Venice, at
the Gritti, is Hemingway.\textsuperscript{11}

The wound is again the central point in the hero's life,
and is itself the gauge of life. The Colonel's driver, T/5
Jackson says, "If he was any good as a B.G. why didn't he
hold it? He's been beat up so much he's slug-nutty."\textsuperscript{12}
Young admits that this may seem a very offhand diagnosis,
but the fact of the matter is that Hemingway's body, too,
must retain the record of about as many blows as a man could
take and live. Like Cantwell, he is scarred from top of
head to sole of foot.\textsuperscript{13} The wound is so vital to the Heming-
way hero and his wars because most of Hemingway's own scars
have been picked up in warfare and commemorate actual battles.
In combat alone he has been shot through both feet, both knees,
both arms, both hands, and the scrotum, and has been wounded
in the head six times. Readily one sees why the wound carries
such an impact for Hemingway; it is something he knows, its
effects and the lessons it brings.

Twenty years of fighting in the professional army of the
United States had marked Colonel Cantwell with the almost
innumerable scars he bore. True to the pattern, it was the
first killing wound that caused the great change in him:
"Finally he did get hit properly and for good. No one of

\textsuperscript{11}Young, \textit{Hemingway}, p. 88.
\textsuperscript{12}Hemingway, \textit{Across the River}, p. 27.
\textsuperscript{13}Young, \textit{Hemingway}, p. 134.
his other wounds had ever done to him what the first big one did. I suppose it is just the loss of the immortality, he thought. Well, in a way, that is quite a lot to lose."

At another time the full impact of the importance of the wound is recognized by Cantwell when he says, "And all the wounded were wounded for life." Cantwell calls Venice his town, his home; he loves all of Venice and knows it thoroughly. The Venetians recognize him as "part owner," even though all of them do not know that he took out a mortgage on a piece of Venice in 1918, depositing his blood and his right knee-cap (the wound is in the knee again) like permanent collateral at the bank of the Basso Piave near Fossalta. Cantwell is possessive of Venice, for it is something he loves; it is a part of him for which he has fought and bled.

War is Cantwell's life, and he has a definite attitude toward life. Critic Oldsey sums up this attitude by saying that professional soldiers leave the human problems of war to sociologists; they leave the selection of the enemy to the politicians; they just fight when the time comes. Cantwell's philosophy, or desired state of mind, is that he should have learned by now not to give a damn about anything. Renata, the lovely young countess who loves Cantwell, helps

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15 Ibid., p. 242.

draw out his attitude. "Every day is a disillusion," says the very young Countess. "No. Every day is a new and fine illusion. But you can cut out everything phony about the illusion as though you would cut it out with a straight-edge razor."17 This seems more nearly Cantwell's belief. Baker says that Cantwell has the marked ability to combine a mature intellectual toughness and resilience with a deeply felt love for the world. He faces with courage and equanimity the evils that surround him and are even inside him.18 Though his fifty-year-old modern world is out of joint, he never imagines that he was born to set it right, acknowledges Baker. Cantwell has only contrived to do his best along the way. The best, as the rule runs, was none too good, and he knows all about the bitterness of remorse.19 Cantwell himself admits, "Maybe you make wrong decisions. Christ knows I've made a few and too many men are dead from when I was wrong."20 Later in the pages of the novel he says, "It is the mistakes that are no good to sleep with. But why the hell sleep with them anyway, It never did any good. But they can certainly crawl into a sack sometimes."21 War may be his life, and he may be calloused to its horrors, yet Cantwell has not lost his feelings for his fellow man; he feels life is worth the struggle, even the struggle of war.

17Hemingway, Across the River, p. 283.
20Hemingway, Across the River, p. 94.
21Ibid., p. 188.
Cantwell is completely occupied, and preoccupied, with war. Even when he is with his beautiful Renata, he is telling her war stories either of his own desire or because she wants to know all about him; therefore, she wants to know war. Also T/5 Jackson serves as a patient listener to his past battles. War to him is a personal thing, for once he thinks, "He knew how boring any man's war is to any other man, and he stopped talking about it."\(^{22}\) Cantwell's attitude to war itself is, "If you ever fight, then you must win it. That's all that counts. All the rest is cabbage, as my old friend Dr. Rommel put it."\(^{23}\)

The Hemingway code is more clearly drawn in *Across the River* and *Into The Trees* than in any other of his novels. Here the characters either "belong" and are "one of us," or they simply are not of the "Order." The Gran Maestro is one of the Order and one who gives meaning to much of the past life of Cantwell. When these two meet, they shake hands:

Thus contact was made between two old inhabitants of the Veneto, both men, and brothers in their membership in the human race, the only club that either one paid dues to, and brothers, too, in their love of an old country, much fought over, and always triumphant in defeat, which they had both defended in their youth.\(^{24}\)

The Order's attitude toward war and the reason for its being founded are that: "They had this knowledge shared between them and it was for this reason and for a true, good hatred

\(^{22}\)Ibid., p. 21. \(^{23}\)Ibid., p. 286. \(^{24}\)Ibid., p. 55.
of all those who profited by war that they had founded the
Order."\(^{25}\) Only a few were true members of the Order and
their selection was strict; Cantwell defines them in this
way, "He only loved people, he thought, who had fought or
been mutilated. Other people were fine and you liked them
and were good friends; but you only felt true tenderness and
love for those who had been there and had received the casti-
gation that everyone receives who goes there long enough."\(^{26}\)

The climax of *Across the River and Into the Trees* actually
comes in the beginning pages of the novel. More than this,
it is the climax in the life of the Hemingway hero, and even
Hemingway himself. Biographer Young calls this almost Heming-
way's most revealing book. It is this early passage of the
novel, not the denouement, that is all important to the history
of hero, code, Hemingway, and war.

A few weeks ago he had gone through Fossalta
and had gone out along the sunken road to find
the place where he had been hit\(^{27}\) also Hemingway
and Adams and Henry\(^{1}\), out on the river bank. It
was easy to find because of the bend of the river
and where the heavy machine gun post had been, the
crater was smoothly grassed. It had been cropped,
by sheep or goats, until it looked like a designed
depression on a golf course. The river was slow
and a muddy blue here, with reeds along the edges,
and the Colonel, no one being in sight, squatted
low, and looking across the river from the bank
where you could never show your head in daylight,
relieved himself in the exact place where he had
determined, by triangulation, that he had been
badly wounded thirty years before.\(^{27}\)

\(^{25}\)Ibid., p. 59.  \(^{26}\)Ibid., p. 71.
\(^{27}\)Ibid., pp. 17-18.
"Now I'll complete the monument." He buried a brown ten thousand lira note in the hole and tamped it down and put the grass that he had cored out, over it.

"That is twenty years at 500 lira a year for the Medaglia d'Argento al Valore Militare. The V.C. carries ten guineas, I believe. The D.S.C. is non-productive. The Silver Star is free. I'll keep the change."

"... my right kneecap. It's a wonderful monument. It has everything. Fertility, money, blood, and iron."

Young says that at this point as never elsewhere, Hemingway confronts and acknowledges the climax of his life, after a pilgrimage which binds this book to his first one with an iron band. In his effort to come the full circle before he is done, the hero does not end his journey at the place where first he lived, but at the place where he first died. Then in the most personal and fundamental way possible to man, he performs this primitive ceremonial, which is revelation as nothing else can ever be of his mingled disgust and reverence for that event of his life by which the whole may be known, and by which it was unalterably determined.  

**Across the River and Into the Trees** is evidence that not only Cantwell but also Hemingway and his hero have learned much of life in fifty years. To one reader at least, one of the most poignant, if not the most poignant, lines in all of Hemingway is found in this novel; it is retrospective and all inclusive:

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29Young, *Hemingway*, pp. 92-93.
Now when you look past Murano you see Venice. That's my town. There's plenty more I could show you, but I think we probably ought to roll now. But take one good look at it. **This is where you can see how it all happened.** But nobody ever looks at it from here. 30

And the answer Cantwell receives to this revelation is blind and inane from driver T/5 Jackson, who says: "It's a beautiful view. Thank you, sir."

Critics generally concede that *Across the River and Into the Trees* bogs down under Cantwell's endless talk of war. Yet this novel is essential in understanding the life of Hemingway and his hero in reference to life, to them really war. This has been probably Hemingway's most talked about novel and the one on which there has been the least agreement. Critic Redman comments on this controversy and presents the views of several others. Orville Prescott called it a bitter novel. Harrison Smith hopes "this novel is an act of cleansing, and that the future may see a different man and a different writer." Alfred Kazin says Cantwell is Hemingway, "It is not a satiric portrait; the Colonel is too full of Hemingway's pettiest, most irrelevant opinions." And M. D. Zabel says it is the "poorest thing the author has ever done." 31 Young sums his view of the book by deciding that the delusion under which Hemingway labors throughout the novel is that he is being interviewed, for when obliging reporters are not

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about, Hemingway interviews himself. Thus one gets an estimate of prominent writers, generals, presidential candidates, the Russian and Tito situations, and "inside" bits about various battles of World War II. Young thinks most of this is not very interesting to read.32

That this novel has something to say and comes to a definite statement is obvious. Baker sees Cantwell first as a youth who thinks that life will be better than it is. Then comes the man of experience who finds that it is sometimes, or often, worse than he had anticipated. Finally, there is the man who reaches the age and status when death may come at any time through causes that are generally called natural. As he looks back along the closing circle of his days, he is ready to concede that since it might have been worse, it was on the whole good enough, and he is glad (though with certain reservations) to have had it.33 Gurko feels that Hemingway is convinced that the condition of man is incurable; thus he describes how human beings are forced to live. In his novels and short stories, it is Gurko's opinion that Hemingway has expressed an attitude toward the contemporary world as relevant at mid-century as when he first announced it in the 1920's.34 Acceptance and endurance are the attributes with which the Hemingway characters who

32Young, Hemingway, p. 89.

33Baker, Hemingway, p. 266.

34Leo Gurko, "The Achievement of Ernest Hemingway," The English Journal, XLI (June, 1952), 291.
know the score make their pacts with an implacably hostile world. They are stoics, says Gurko, because it is possible for them to endure evil while preserving courage and dignity.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 293.} What the book really has to say has been neatly condensed by Gurko:

\begin{quote}
In a hard world, the novel suggests to us (however awkwardly), it is still possible to develop individual standards of honor, courage, and loyalty and to find in them a deep-seated self-realization. Indeed, nothing is possible but this. Efforts in other directions -- to change the nature of the world or to operate outside a personal system of fixed rules and attitudes -- are futile.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 297.}
\end{quote}

In \textit{Across the River and Into the Trees} Hemingway has not taken a step back but a definite step forward in his awareness of life and the kindredship of all men. The Hemingway hero has realized that he is not alone and that his life is important to others, if only in consequences. Life is hard, but one must live and make the best he can out of whatever his lot may be. All people are individual beings, but a few are true friends because they also live by the code. Cantwell, the professional soldier, has lived his life with dignity and grace under pressure even to the end; he knows that life is worth even the struggle of war, and it is war that has taught him this life-giving lesson.
CHAPTER V

HEMINGWAY AFTER WAR

After his war experiences, Hemingway settled on his beloved Finca Vigia near Havana, Cuba, where he continues to live today. There he wrote The Old Man and the Sea, first published in Life on September 8, 1952. This beautiful story of simple life won for Hemingway the Pulitzer Prize in 1953; largely because of it he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954.

In many ways this is not a typical Hemingway work. In Santiago, the ancient fisherman of Cuba, we see the Hemingway hero who has finally grown up. Santiago is brave, honest, noble, sincere and loving. He has never fought in war; his only battles have been with fish, and this book tells of his greatest battle. The young boy who loves Santiago as a father and a hero is reminiscent of the young Nick Adams. Manolin, the boy, has trouble with his parents' domination, his own loves and desires, and his learning about life. The love here is the pure love of the man for the boy; there is no sex. There is no war, but there is the chase and the battle with the fish. The theme is not man against man; it is man against the sea, man against nature, man against himself, man against fate. The hero has been strong all his life, loves the sports of
fishing and baseball, and is wounded. Christian symbolism is obvious; it plays a definite part in the life of Santiago and the entire story of *The Old Man and the Sea*.

Santiago is the latest and greatest character in the development of the Hemingway hero. Bernard Oldsey says that Santiago has the same patience as his predecessor in the story, "Old Man at the Bridge," from the Spanish Civil War period; he has the same kindliness, loneliness, misfortune, and above all, the same feeling of primitiveness that unites him with lower forms of animal life. This makes him feel sympathy even for the giant fish he must kill; his is the story of Coleridge's ancient mariner, who learns to love all things both great and small.¹ Santiago is a man heroic even in his bad luck. Santiago, too, is wise. He sees that man is not the all-great; man is lesser than the great birds and beasts in Santiago's evaluation.²

The faith of Santiago and the boy is not just alluded to but verbally expressed. Manolin says, "He hasn't much faith." "No," the old man said. "But we have. Haven't we?"³ This is a tremendous acknowledgment for the Hemingway hero to make. Not only is the faith of Santiago evident, but also his self-confidence and his courage. In his youth, he had been the champion at the hand game. After one match of

¹Oldsey, "Hemingway's Old Men," p. 34.


³Ibid., p. 11.
twenty-five hours with a huge Negro of Cienfuegos, he decided that he could beat anyone if he wanted to badly enough, but he also decided that it was bad for his right hand for fishing. His faith and courage extend to others, as when he said, "Take a good rest, small bird. Then go in and take your chance like any man or bird or fish."

Santiago carries his faith and courage with him into the battle with the giant marlin. The hero this time is going to kill a fish, not a man. In this story the hero meets defeat. Defeat has brought only bitterness or disillusionment or, at best, stoicism to Hemingway's earlier heroes; this is not true with Santiago, who says:

"But man is not made for defeat," he said. "A man can be destroyed but not defeated." I am sorry that I killed the fish though, he thought. Now the bad time is coming and I do not even have the harpoon. The dentuso is cruel and able and strong and intelligent. But I was more intelligent than he was. Perhaps not, he thought. Perhaps I was only better armed.

Santiago knows why he is beaten. He does not brood or rave; he does not say that the evil world and mankind were against him. The fault is his alone: he went out too far. "He lay in the stern and steered and watched for the glow to come in the sky. I have half of him, he thought. Maybe I'll have the luck to bring the forward half in. I should have some luck. No, he said. You violated your luck when you went too far outside." Later he longs for sleep and is

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4Ibid., p. 78.  
5Ibid., p. 61.  
6Ibid., p. 113.  
7Ibid., p. 128.
surprised at his own readiness to give in. "It is easy when you are beaten, he thought. I never knew how easy it was. And what beat you, he thought. 'Nothing,' he said aloud. 'I went out too far.'"\(^8\) He is naturally sorry that he lost his greatest fish, yet he sees that the responsibility is his, both for his loss and the fish itself.

No hate is found in this story, only love. The man and the fish struggle with each other to the death but without animosity or hatred. On the contrary, the Old Man feels a deep affection and admiration, even love, for the fish. Here is found the brotherhood of all life. At one time Santiago thinks, "I wish I could feed the fish, he thought. He is my brother. But I must kill him and keep strong to do it."\(^9\) He loves his fish; he fights the cruel sharks not just to save the fish for money but because he loves the fish and does not want to see it torn into little pieces. Gurko says that a sense of brotherhood and love, in a world in which everyone is killing or being killed, binds together the creatures of Nature, established between them a unity and an emotion which transcends the destructive pattern in which they are caught. In the eternal round, as shown in The Old Man and the Sea, each living thing becomes a part of the profound harmony of the natural universe.\(^10\) It is harmony, certainly, that produces the beauty of this story.

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\(^8\) Ibid., p. 131.

\(^9\) Ibid., p. 65.

The love of Santiago admits a dependence on others; he is not forever self-sufficient. He experiences loneliness, yet even loneliness is resolved into faith and love:

He looked across the sea and knew how alone he was now. But he could see the prisms in the deep dark water and the line stretching ahead and the strange undulation of the calm. The clouds were building up now for the trade wind and he looked ahead and saw a flight of wild ducks etching themselves against the sky over the water, then blurring, then etching again and he knew no man was ever alone on the sea.11

Previous Hemingway characters have been concerned about others only as others were important to their own happiness and well-being. Again Santiago is not true to the pattern; he is anxiously concerned because he wants no one to worry. "I cannot be too far out now, he thought; I hope no one has been too worried. There is only the boy to worry, of course. But I am sure he would have confidence. Many others too, he thought. I live in a good town."12 He is not only brave, faithful, and loving, but also he is happy and even proud of his humble life of fishing. When Santiago returned, he noticed how pleasant it was to have someone to talk to instead of speaking only to himself and the sea. "I missed you," he said. "What did you catch?"13

Before Santiago, the Hemingway hero seldom mentioned Christianity and even less frequently admitted being a Christian. Some Hemingway characters prior to The Old Man

11Hemingway, The Old Man, p. 67.
12Ibid., p. 127.      13Ibid., p. 137.
and the Sea nominally were Christian, but their religion was never vital and contained no faith. Often the minor characters were devoted Christians, as the peasants of For Whom the Bell Tolls. In The Old Man and the Sea, however, it is the Old Man himself who is a sincere and active Christian. While he is alone with the fighting fish, Santiago prays ardently, and promises more prayers, when he has the strength, in return for help in conquering the marlin.

The old problem of thinking bothers Santiago; however, he continues to think because it is important to him and his very life. One of the things he thinks about is sin, which again shows his Christianity.

I have no understanding of it and I am not sure that I believe in it. Perhaps it was a sin to kill the fish. I suppose it was even though I did it to keep me alive and feed many people. But then everything is a sin. Do not think about sin.

But he liked to think about all things that he was involved in and since there was nothing to read and he did not have a radio, he thought much and he kept on thinking about sin. You did not kill the fish only to keep alive and to sell for food, he thought. You killed him for pride and because you are a fisherman. You loved him when he was alive and you loved him after. If you love him, it is not a sin to kill him. Or is it more? "You think too much, old man," he said aloud. 14

Thinking is important to his sanity, for he argues with himself, "Don't think, old man," he said aloud. 'Sail on this course and take it when it comes.' But I must think, he thought. Because it is all I have left." 15 He does not want to think, and yet his thinking fascinates him; he

continues: "What can I think of now? he thought. Nothing. I must think of nothing and wait for the next ones. I wish it had been a dream, he thought. But who knows? It might have turned out well."\textsuperscript{16} He is understanding and satisfied; it does not hurt his conscience to think.

Not the least of Santiago's greatness lies in his humility and his pride. "He was too simple to wonder when he had attained humility. But he knew he had attained it and he knew it was not disgraceful and it carried no loss of true pride."\textsuperscript{17} He has pride in his ability and in his wounded hands. The typical Hemingway wound appears here in Santiago's hands, which are a mush of flesh and blood from fighting the fish; it is to be expected that the wound is acquired through battle, even though that battle is not between men. With humility and pride he continues his fight: "He took all his pain and what was left of his strength and his long gone pride and he put it against the fish's agony and the fish came over on to his side and swam gently on his side, his bill almost touching the planking of the skiff and started to pass the boat, long, deep, wide, silver and barred with purple and interminable in the water."\textsuperscript{18} Santiago has achieved his happy state in life because he has been able to absorb knowledge from experience; he has never been too old to learn. The experience with his

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 123. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{17}Ibid., p. 14. \\
\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., p. 103.
giant marlin is his greatest experience; in it he uses all his well-learned abilities; but he went out too far. The greatness of the experience and the inevitability of the loss are bound up together, says Gurko. Nature provides us with boundless opportunities for the great experience if we have it in us to respond. The experience carries with it its heavy tragic price. No matter. It is worth it. Santiago's great experience is a seeming defeat, yet everyone has somehow been uplifted by the experience. Even on the lowest, most ignorant level, (the tourists think the skeleton is that of a freak shark), the marlin and Santiago create a sensation.19

The Old Man and the Sea is affirmative. Santiago is the first of the main figures in Hemingway who is not an American, and who is altogether free of the entanglements of modern life. It is toward the creation of such a figure that Hemingway had been moving, however obscurely, says Gurko, from the beginning. Gurko states further that The Old Man and the Sea is the culmination of Hemingway's long search for disengagement from the social world and total entry into the natural world. Gurko explains this search as the attempt to get out of society and its artifices. This search is not motivated by the desire to escape, but by the desire for liberation. Hemingway seeks to immerse himself totally in nature, not to evade his responsibilities,

but to free his moral and emotional self. Most of the works of Hemingway have emphasized what man cannot do, especially in war; this is remarkable, for it stresses what men can do, and affirms that the world is here for heroic deeds. Santiago's universe is full of tragedy and pain; however, tragedy and pain are transcended, and the affirming tone is in direct contrast to the pessimism of *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms*.

Gurko feels that this theme of affirmation began in *Across the River and Into the Trees*. The difference, however, is significant. Colonel Cantwell is forever talking about his heroism; Santiago acts his out. To some degree the world has recovered from the gaping wounds that made it so frightening a place in the early stories. The world which injured Jake Barnes so cruelly, pointlessly deprived Lieutenant Henry of his one love, destroyed Harry Morgan at the height of his powers, and robbed Robert Jordan of idealism, love, and life, has now begun to regain its balance. It is no longer the bleak trap within which man is doomed to struggle, suffer, and die as bravely as he can. No, says Gurko, it is a meaningful, integrated structure that challenges one's resources; it holds forth rich emotional rewards for those who live in it daringly and boldly, though it continues to exact heavy payment from them in direct proportion to how far they reach out.  

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Practically the entire criticisms of The Old Man and the Sea have been favorable, mostly laudatory. Frederic Carpenter has written a perceptive article entitled "Hemingway Achieves the Fifth Dimension." His concept of a fifth dimension is that of a perpetual now. This perpetual now is an intensification of experience under the emotional stress of love or war, resulting in an ecstasy transcending the traditional limitations of time and of self, and producing a system of belief verging on the mystical. This was the subject of For Whom the Bell Tolls, and in a sense it has always been the subject of all Hemingway's fiction. In The Old Man and the Sea the idea became at last incarnated and the mysticism completely naturalized. Santiago performs realistically the ritual techniques of his trade, and goes on to identify the intensity of his own suffering with that of the great fish that he is slaying. In this story, Hemingway has achieved that synthesis of immediate experience and mysticism which is the fifth dimension.22

Critics generally acclaim The Old Man and the Sea as a tremendous step forward, if not the completion, of the Hemingway hero and of Hemingway himself. Burman says that this work is only the first step toward larger works to come, works which will, like those of great masters of the past,

surmount the limitations of a special culture and penetrate to the heart of whatever is truly eternal. 23 Backman feels that in the relation between man and boy, Hemingway achieves a new gentleness. To Backman it is important that this turning to male companionship seems characteristically American. 24 This is a provoking thought, for Santiago is the first Hemingway hero who is not an American.

Young's comment is that Hemingway gives this story without irony, without patronizing his character, and without unkindness, because he profoundly respects his characters, and writes this book with a tenderness that is new to him and to his work. 25 Young comes to a realization that is worthy of this beautifully told story:

Santiago's respect for his foe, the marlin, which is love, actually, as for a brother, is surpassed by Hemingway's respect for both that fish and Santiago himself, and for the whole of life which this battle epitomizes, and the world that contains it. An extraordinary thing has happened for somehow or other a reverence for life's struggle, for which Santiago stands as a possibility, has descended on Hemingway like the gift of grace on the religious. This veneration for humanity, for what can be done and endured, and this grasp of man's kinship with the other creatures of the world, and with the world itself, is itself a victory of substantial proportions. It is the knowledge that a simple man is capable of such decency, dignity, and even heroism, and that his struggle can be seen


25 Young, Hemingway, p. 102.
in heroic terms, that largely distinguishes this book.

Hemingway has reached a point in *The Old Man and the Sea* where he has been able to affirm without forcing, or even apparent effort, certain things about brotherhood, man, and life which he tried and crucially failed to affirm in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. 26

Hemingway has shown in *The Old Man and the Sea* that he and his hero have matured to a most impressive stature. Of all the heroes, Santiago is without doubt the oldest; yet assuredly he gives the freshest, most appealing, most inspiring view of life.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Hemingway's childhood was marred by painful experiences and violence in his home life with his parents, in his boyhood adventures in the Michigan woods with his doctor-father and the Indians, and in his keen observations of life. As a child, he and his family lived with his maternal grandfather in a large, old house. From Hemingway's total writings, one deduces that it was his grandfather who first told him of war, probably the Civil War of the United States. Hemingway became fascinated by war, feeling that in it he could understand the mysteries of human conduct under pressure, himself, war, and even life.

As a youth of nineteen, Hemingway got into war, and was almost immediately disillusioned and overcome by bitterness at the hollow hypocrisy. After this first war experience, he felt that civilization was only a shell of life, that there must be a better way than living as the conforming mobs lived. [His life and his works both showed his feelings of separation and isolation.] Hemingway was embarrassed with the world for making such a fool of itself in empty phrases and empty wars.

In the Spanish Civil War, Hemingway felt a kinship with the peasants battling for their country and their lives; he
matured into a fuller understanding of life, of its problems, and of how one must sometimes fight even losing battles. At that time he realized that it was not governments that are important; they come and go periodically, but life itself goes on unchanged forever. Hemingway also realized that there can be freedom, liberty, and brotherhood. Moreover, he acquired a distinct respect for life.

These ideas were carefully protected and dissected, and they grew until finally Hemingway realized that all men are important. Since one must live, he decided, the only way to live is to be brave and to make the best of life that one is capable of doing. Most significantly, one must always live with dignity and grace under pressure. Hemingway no longer thought of war as the understanding of life, but rather of life's being worth even the struggle of war.

After all of his experiences of war, Hemingway sat back, rested, and meticulously considered all that he had learned. He concluded beyond doubt that humble, simple life is beautiful. War was his education and school of life; it was confusing and difficult, but Hemingway learned to live with dignity and grace under pressure, and he found his own values.

Today Hemingway seems peacefully contented, settled at home in Cuba. He writes constantly. Like Santiago, he sleeps only in the dark and automatically arises with the sun. He must be happy now, for living with the terrors of war during much of his life, he could sleep only in the light.
There is quite a mystery concerning the work that occupies Hemingway's time at the present. He started it long ago, before Pearl Harbor, and he is taking his time to finish it. He interrupted this novel of great size and scope to write and publish both *Across the River and Into the Trees* and *The Old Man and the Sea*. He has told the curious that its subject is the land, the sea, and the air. Baker says that although the book would by no means confine itself to the Second World War, his experiences in that war must inevitably affect, in various ways, the development of this major work. As always, it would deal with what Hemingway knew.\(^1\) Hemingway knows land war from the First World War in Italy as an ambulance driver, from the Greek-Turkish War as a correspondent, from the Spanish Civil War as a correspondent and film maker, from the Cuban revolutions as a correspondent and home lover, and from the Second World War as a correspondent, soldier, and loyal American. In the Second World War, he was active on the sea with his own *Pilar*. In the air war, he flew a number of missions over Europe with British and American aviator in the spring of 1944. Hemingway is capable of a land-sea-and-air war story of such magnitude because he knows war from the inside, which he has always felt is imperative for his own life as well as for his work.

\(^1\)Baker, *Hemingway*, p. 265.
Cowley is certain that this work will contain more first-hand accounts of combat than any of the war novels that have so far appeared. Further, this book will be great because not only his passion for adventure will go into it, but also the feeling of comradeship that he found among the American soldiers at the front. Hemingway proudly said of this new feeling of comradeship: "Most of this last war made sense, while the first one made little sense to me. Also I had such good companionship. I had never known such fine people and it was the first time I ever had a chance to fight in my own language."\(^2\) Cowley is convinced that when the "smoke has cleared," it will be found that Hemingway, now grizzled and paternal, has written the best novel of this war.\(^3\)

Much has been written and argued over Hemingway's seeming lack of social concern. Baker feels that this is a conspicuous irony in the present age of irony; Hemingway is not irresponsible because he has failed to carry the banner of any particular social group and to write his works in terms of that group's special thinking. He has done all in his power by expending money, time, and energy to ameliorate the evil conditions which other writers may be attempting to overcome through various forms of propaganda art. If one defines the artist's social responsibility as the presentation of the reality of man's experience, no


\(^3\) Ibid., p. 35.
artist of our time has been more responsible than Hemingway both to art itself, and to the strong foundation of esthetic and moral conviction on which that art is built.\(^4\) Colvert expresses his opinion that the Hemingway heroes rebel against a society which relies upon traditional moral attitudes and beliefs which are no longer expressive of life's real nature. The hero can discover in these traditional attitudes no relevancy to moral realities; therefore, he renounces the traditional moral attitudes as well as their underlying principles.\(^5\) Hemingway's characters have had little faith in life, but those who have faith are treated sympathetically, which indicates, says Hertzel, that the author is not asserting or denying the validity of belief so much as he is exploring the problem of those who either do not or cannot believe. These novels are a true presentation of the search of modern society for secure values, concludes Hertzel.\(^6\) Baker says that the tragic view of life comes out in Hemingway's perennial contrast of the permanence of nature and the evanescence of man. But Hemingway does not repine.\(^7\) Life is evaluated not in duration but in intensity. Gurko comments on Hemingway's social awareness that one

\(^4\)Baker, Hemingway, p. 296.


\(^6\)Leo J. Hertzel, "Hemingway and the Problem of Belief," The Catholic World, CLXXXIV (October, 1956), 33.

\(^7\)Baker, Hemingway, p. 278.
aspect of nature fully presented in all the Hemingway works is its changelessness. The round of nature, which includes human nature, is not only eternal but eternally the same.8

Finally, Hemingway is interested not in man's society, but in man himself. Always, Hemingway has been interested in man; yet it has been difficult for him to find what man is, what makes man great, what gives man grace and dignity. Grandfather Hill, who had the stature of a man, and who had been matured in war, was Hemingway's first hero. As a child, Hemingway was impressed with Civil War tales told by his grandfather.

War, he decided, was the best place to learn about life and man. In World War I, Hemingway was overwhelmed by what he learned, becoming disillusioned and bitter. After the war, he concluded that there were few admirable men, and that these, who were products of war, were often lost and unable to find their place or even their way in a crass society. In the aftermath of his war experiences, he rejected modern society and modern man.

Later, experiences in the Spanish Civil War restored to him some faith in man's struggle for a better world. The people in For Whom the Bell Tolls are fighting for liberty. The old man, Anselmo, is an affirmation of moral values; Robert Jordan, the hero, is willing to sacrifice his life for a cause.

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World War II gave Hemingway his chance to fight for his own country and with his fellow countrymen. Comradeship was a drastic revelation to him. In this war, he achieved both complete courage and a complete desire to fight for what he believed in. And he was happy. This was his final war experience.

Santiago, the latest of the Hemingway heroes, personifies the final Hemingway virtues: courage, simplicity, honesty, dignity, respect for himself as well as for others, and love. Santiago is the realization of the ideal toward which Hemingway has been striving all his life. In Santiago we find the merging of the grandfather, the hero, and Hemingway himself. Beyond war, and largely because of war, Hemingway has at last realized in the character of Santiago those virtues which he considers essential to a life of dignity and grace.
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