

DOMINANT THEMES IN THE NOVELS  
OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY

APPROVED:

*Ralph D. Eberly*  
Major Professor

*Jack B. Scroggs*  
Minor Professor

*E. S. Clifton*  
Director of the Department of English

*Robert B. Toulouse*  
Dean of the Graduate School

DOMINANT THEMES IN THE NOVELS  
OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY

THESIS

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James Bert Davis, B. A.

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## PREFACE

This thesis proposes to show that Hemingway's novels reveal a change of attitude which culminates in an increased faith in the ultimate goodness and dignity of man. The Hemingway of 1926, the year that The Sun Also Rises was published, is not the Hemingway of 1952, the year that his last novel, The Old Man and the Sea, was published. Each of the intervening novels shows a slow, gradual philosophical change.

(The conduct and behavior of the characters in the novels are the key to the growth and maturity of Hemingway's work.) The author's attitude is clearly revealed in the behavior of the protagonists in each novel as they react to the physical and emotional challenges that life presents.) Hemingway "wanted to concern himself with the ultimate crises of human experience, to surprise the human soul (if there was a soul) naked as it faced up to an ultimate challenge."<sup>1</sup>

(Each of the novels presents challenges which the protagonist must meet:) Jake in The Sun Also Rises faces a world about which he knows nothing, but in which he must

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<sup>1</sup>Edward Wagenknecht, Calvacade of the American Novel (New York, 1952), p. 373.

live; Lieutenant Henry in A Farewell to Arms endures a series of defeats which culminate in Catherine's death; Harry Morgan in To Have and Have Not loses his struggle to retain his individuality in a world shattered by economic depression; Robert Jordan in For Whom the Bell Tolls dies for a cause in which he does not totally believe; Colonel Cantwell in Across the River and into the Trees dies embittered by his war experiences. In Hemingway's last novel, The Old Man and the Sea, the protagonist Santiago is defeated by creatures of the sea; but he emerges strengthened and dignified by his ordeal. He is the only Hemingway hero who triumphs over the forces which bring about defeat, except, perhaps, Robert Jordan.)

(With the creation of each successive protagonist, however, Hemingway has gradually unfolded his change of attitude toward man and the world in which he lives.)

All the principal Hemingway heroes, it has often been observed, are one and the same person, and they are largely modeled upon Hemingway himself. So that, as the novels successively appeared, we could watch the growth and maturing of their author, and we could see that the Hemingway time sense continued in its unabated acuity, catching the basic values of the decades as they wore on.<sup>2</sup>

During the decade beginning in 1925, "Hemingway's withdrawal from experience and denial of human responsibility, in short, are to run their course in his work. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>George Snell, The Shapers of American Fiction 1798-1947 (New York, 1947), p. 158.

<sup>3</sup>Maxwell Geismar, Writers in Crisis (Boston, 1942), p. 47.

(By 1937, Hemingway had written To Have and Have Not, which, with its social and economic implications, ends his period of isolation and revolt; and with the advent of For Whom the Bell Tolls in 1940, Hemingway presents a protagonist who believes, partly at least, in a cause. With the publication of The Old Man and the Sea in 1952, Hemingway enters the natural world toward which he has been moving, however obscurely, from the beginning.)

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## CHAPTER I

### BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

For a thorough understanding of Hemingway's early fiction, it is necessary to give a short biographical sketch of his early life, for environmental influences noticeably affected his early writing. One of the dominant factors conditioning his early life was the Chicago suburb of Oak Park, where he was born on July 21, 1899, and where he lived until he was eighteen years of age. "Oak Park has always been a fundamental element in his attitudes. It conditioned certain of his values in a way that is almost a parody of popular concepts about the importance of heredity and environment."<sup>1</sup>)

Oak Park was not just an ordinary suburb of a large city, nor were its inhabitants average. It was a special milieu in which everyone was not only wealthy but conscious of moving in a social stratum that he considered enviable.

The community was more than respectable. It was respectable and prosperous. It was also Protestant and middle class. It exulted in all these characteristics. Its citizens experienced the same sense of community membership as occurs in such suburbs as Brookline, Massachusetts; they thought of themselves

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<sup>1</sup>Charles A. Fenton, The Apprenticeship of Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1954), p. 1.

as specifically living in Oak Park rather than Chicago, just as one lives in Brookline rather than Boston. "Oak Park," a contemporary of Hemingway once said, without satire, "has prided itself on being the largest village in the world."<sup>2</sup>

Community pride centered in churches and schools.

The neighborhood was righteously dry, and the open saloons of the surrounding suburbs were a menace to parents with adolescents. The irreverent have described the boundary between Chicago and Oak Park as the place "where the saloons ended and the churches began."<sup>3</sup> (The Hemingways attended the First Congregational Church, and as a teenager Ernest was "enthusiastic about the sermons of the famous Dr. William E. Barton."<sup>4</sup>)

In this community, education was stressed as much as religion, and Oak Park High, with its curriculum built around the liberal arts, was one of the most outstanding schools in that area. The teaching was of such excellence that it was not unusual for Oak Park students to dominate the competitive tests for the ten scholarships the University of Chicago awarded annually to students of that area.<sup>5</sup> As many as two thirds of a graduating class went to college, and "residents of the town were likely to maintain, with justification, that four years at Oak Park

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>Edward Wagenknecht, Calvacade of the American Novel (New York, 1952), p. 370.

<sup>5</sup>Fenton, op. cit., p. 4.

High were the equivalent of two years of college."<sup>6</sup> In English I, three of the classics stressed were H. A. Guerber's Myths of Greece and Rome, Rhodes' Old Testament Narratives, and One Hundred Narrative Poems. Popular novels of the period were outlawed, fictional outside reading being limited to classics such as Ivanhoe.

It was nonetheless as sound a reading background as one could ask of a freshman English course, and superior to the average curriculum. It becomes less lugubrious in terms of Hemingway's mature work when we recall that he subsequently said, "That's how I learned to write--by reading the Bible," adding that by the Bible he meant particularly the Old Testament.<sup>7</sup>

It was here in this religious, educational, and socially staid suburb that Hemingway's parents, who belonged to two of the locally prominent families, reared their children. The Oak Park atmosphere was "calculated to both irritate and attract a boy who was proud, competitive, and intelligent, particularly if his intelligence were of a satiric and inquiring kind."<sup>8</sup> Hemingway was not always acquiescent to the strict decorum demanded by Oak Park, and he showed his irritation by running away from home and by being regarded as a "tough guy."<sup>9</sup> That Hemingway's early life was not altogether happy is borne

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>9</sup>Wagenknecht, op. cit., p. 370.

out in his statement "that the best training for a writer was an unhappy boyhood."<sup>10</sup>

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 spartan 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 and bitterness for a boy as responsive as their oldest son.<sup>11</sup>

Hemingway's father was a prominent physician in Oak Park and a devoted amateur sportsman who instilled in his son, at an early age, a lasting affinity for hunting and fishing. The family maintained a summer camp at Walloon Lake in northern Michigan, a region inhabited primarily by Ojibway Indians. It was here that Hemingway unconsciously stored up knowledge and experiences to be used later in his book of short stories, In Our Time.

On the other hand, his mother, a deeply religious woman, did not share the father's enthusiasm for outdoor life. Her temperament favored the artistic, and she was talented in both music and painting. She even insisted that Ernest remain out of school for a year and study cello. He did, but they both realized that he had no musical talent.

Returning to Oak Park High after the musical fiasco, Hemingway encountered two teachers who were to influence his life considerably. They were Margaret Dixon and

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<sup>10</sup>Fenton, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

Fannie Briggs, English teachers who were severe critics of his early attempts at writing. Margaret Dixon was a "frank, straightforward, honest, down-to-earth person, though within the standards of decorous respectability that were favored in Oak Park. She had a temper, and her class was never a dull place."<sup>12</sup> Her honesty and mild iconoclasm were complemented by the imagination of Fannie Briggs, who took a personal interest in Hemingway, listening to his personal problems as well as to his academic problems. Under these two teachers he emerged as an amateur writer, contributing regularly to the high school paper, Trapeze. They criticized, corrected, and disciplined his early attempts at short story writing, and by the end of his senior year he had published several short stories in the school magazine, Tabula. He graduated in 1917.

Hemingway's career as a student at Oak Park High was highly successful--in the school yearbook it took eight inches of type to list his activities--and there he met teachers who were interested in him not only as a student but also as a person (especially Miss Briggs). Although Hemingway underwent some emotional travail as a boy, "to think of his adolescence in terms of misery and maladjustment is to misunderstand his Oak Park experience and his personality as a whole."<sup>13</sup> The surroundings that he was

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

reared in have prompted Charles Fenton to comment that "the forthcoming shock of contact with the ugliness of, for example, journalism and war, would be intense and memorable for a young man raised in such a relatively sheltered world."<sup>14</sup>

Still, there is evidence that Hemingway came in contact with ugliness and violence while he was still quite young. In some of the Nick Adams stories Hemingway relates incidents which must have made a lasting impression on a small boy. In "Indian Camp" Nick, who corresponds to Hemingway,<sup>15</sup> is taken by his father, a doctor, to aid an Indian woman in childbirth. In the presence of Nick the father performs a jackknife Caesarean section without anesthetic in order to deliver the baby. Nick assists his father. After the operation is completed, the doctor discovers that the husband, lying in a bunk bed above, has cut his throat from ear to ear: he had been unable to bear the screams of his wife. And Nick was a witness to all this.

The ugliness of family disharmony underlies the short story "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife." "The End of Something" shows the disillusionment of an adolescent love affair. In "The Battler" Hemingway tells the story of a young boy who has run away from home, has been kicked off a freight train, and while walking down the railroad

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>15</sup>Philip Young, Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1952), p. 32.

tracks, meets a punch drunk prizefighter and his companion, a negro. One critic has indicated that there was a perverted attachment between the fighter and the negro.<sup>16</sup> Such stories in In Our Time present "evidence that he encountered horror and terror in his boyhood, at least on the hunting and fishing trips he made with his father in Michigan, and that he never thereafter quite got them off his mind."<sup>17</sup>

After graduating from Oak Park High, Hemingway decided not to attend college. By this time the United States had entered World War I, and Hemingway tried several times to enlist in the army, only to be turned down because of an eye injury he had received while boxing. Since he restlessly talked of making his own way in the world, his father allowed him to go to Kansas City to get a job. There through the influence of an uncle he found a job as a reporter for the Kansas City Star, where he worked for seven months and where he learned the craft of accurate reporting.

As a reporter Hemingway was introduced to a variety of experiences. His contemporaries remembered him "in terms of his energy, his charm";<sup>18</sup> they recalled him

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>17</sup>Wagenknecht, op. cit., pp. 373-374.

<sup>18</sup>Fenton, op. cit., p. 34.

"as someone who wouldn't sit still."<sup>19</sup> Hemingway's boss, Pete Wellington, 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 without letting the city desk know that he was leaving the post uncovered. He always wanted to be on the scene himself, and I think that trait has been evident in his later writings.<sup>20</sup>

Wellington was widely known in the journalistic world, and as an editor on the Star was greatly respected by everyone. Hemingway was never more pleased than when he had done something to merit the approval of Wellington.<sup>21</sup>

Hemingway's "beat" offered variety. In 1952 he recalled,

I covered the short-stop run, which included the 15th Street police station, the Union Station and the General Hospital. At the 15th Street station you covered crime, usually small, but you never knew when you might hit something larger. Union Station was everybody going in and out of town . . . some shady characters I got to know, and interviews with celebrities going through.<sup>22</sup>

Such an assignment gave him numerous experiences which were later to appear in his writing. His short stories abound with "shady characters" derived from the real ones he met as a reporter. Wilson Hicks, one of Hemingway's contemporaries, recalled that "Ernest was conscientious about his work, but he would also come back from a story laughing

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

about the people involved, and characterizing them in ways he couldn't write in the paper."<sup>23</sup>

While he was working on the Star, Hemingway met Ted Brumback, another reporter, who had just returned from Italy, where he had served with the American Field Service as an ambulance driver. When a new call came for ambulance drivers to serve in Italy, Brumback and Hemingway applied and were accepted. They sailed for Europe late in May, 1918, and upon their arrival they were sent almost immediately to the Italian front. There Hemingway received his first baptism of fire and was seriously wounded on July 8, 1918, only two weeks before his nineteenth birthday. He spent three months in the American Red Cross Hospital at Milan recovering. When he was dismissed from the hospital, he joined the Italian infantry; later he was given the country's highest award for bravery.

Hemingway's war experiences made a great emotional and psychological impact on him. Bill Horne, one of the ambulance drivers who knew Hemingway in Italy, has said, "Hemingway, to my own certain knowledge, never threw off his experiences in the war."<sup>24</sup> Although Hemingway was eager to get into the world conflict and, once in, comported himself with outstanding bravery, what he saw disillusioned and embittered him for years to come. His coverage of the Greco-Turkish war in 1922 augmented his horror considerably.

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

The inter-chapters of In Our Time reflect the brutality of both wars: the shooting of the Greek cabinet ministers, Nick shot in the spine and making his own separate peace, the barricade where the Italians potted the Austrians as they came over, the woman having a baby unaided during a retreat, the breaking of the horses' legs so they would be of no use to the enemy--all this senseless brutality made a deep impression on Hemingway.

The impact that Hemingway's war experiences had on his early writing is evident in his first two novels, The Sun Also Rises and A Farewell to Arms. In these novels critics point out his rebellion against the old values and existing social mores; they point out the isolation of his characters from society in general; they point out his unwillingness to create characters who, after the war, take up the threads of pre-war living. In these early works Hemingway's characters live and move in a world which is their own creation, even living and dying by their own code.

It has been the common view to attribute his solitary position which is at the bottom of his work to the post-war reaction, and to class him with other social rebels as the English D. H. Lawrence, the French Jean Giono, or the German Rainer Maria Rilke, those who during or after the World War moved away from a society whose international murder they could no longer tolerate.<sup>25</sup>

Hemingway's solitary position is well stated in The Sun Also Rises, which gives "the picture of the dislocated

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<sup>25</sup>Maxwell Geismar, Writers in Crisis (Boston, 1942), p. 42.

life of young English and American expatriates in the bars of Paris, the 'lost generation,' as the phrase from Gertrude Stein defined them."<sup>26</sup> A Farewell to Arms tells 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."<sup>27</sup> "Soldier's Home" shows young Krebs, devoid of any faith in the old values, coming home after the war to accept his own slow disintegration. The "basis of Hemingway's early writing is a total renunciation of all social frameworks; the separation of the writer from the common activity of his time; the acceptance of a profound isolation as the basis for the writer's achievement."<sup>28</sup>

Wagenknecht, who was a classmate of Hemingway at Oak Park High, has explained Hemingway's attitude as it is revealed in his fiction.

The brutality of the Hemingway fiction has led many readers to think of the author as a kind of cave-man of literature. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Hemingway has the sensitive modern's interest not only in literature, painting, and music, but in the problem of the meaning and values of human life. . . . Hemingway gives the impression of being a phenomenally sensitive man who has been terribly hurt by life, and who dwells upon horrible things partly to convince himself that he "can take it," and partly because he does not dare ever let life catch him "off guard" again.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Robert P. Warren, Introduction to Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms (New York, 1953), p. vii.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. vii.

<sup>28</sup>Geismar, op. cit., p. 39.

<sup>29</sup>Wagenknecht, op. cit., p. 373.

That Hemingway is greatly concerned with the meaning and values of human life has already been shown. "His insistence on the attempt to write truly of the things as one felt about them, not as one was supposed to feel,"<sup>30</sup> permitted him to reveal his sensitivity toward the brutality, suffering, and cruelty that he saw in life. A study of the characters in his novels as they move in worlds of their own making should determine to what degree Hemingway's attitude toward life was shaped by his experiences as a youth, as a reporter, and as a soldier.

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<sup>30</sup>George Snell, The Shapers of American Fiction 1798-1947 (New York, 1947), p. 157.

## CHAPTER II

### THE SUN ALSO RISES

Although many Americans went to Paris after World War I primarily because living was inexpensive and casual, the city attracted many serious writers because to them Paris was a great center of literature and art. Young American intellectuals read T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, who had been influenced by French poets; they read imagist discussions in the early years of Poetry and The Little Review; and they read translations of the French poets in the reviews. It was above all the tradition of the nineteenth century in France that "attracted the young American intellectual of the twenties because it had done earlier and more successfully what he seriously thought needed to be done."<sup>1</sup> But "when they landed in Paris they were prepared not only to follow the older masters but to seek out new masters in contemporary French literature. It was often not so much the art of the French but their attitude toward it that impressed the American visitors."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Frederick Hoffman, The Twenties (New York, 1949), p. 33.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

In 1921 Hemingway, who was working on the Toronto Star Weekly, felt that he had come to an artistic standstill in the United States and Canada; when his editor offered him the position of roving correspondent in Europe for the Star, with headquarters in Paris, he readily accepted. Sherwood Anderson, Hemingway's friend and critic of his early writing, had just returned from France, and "his conversation was full of the opportunity for literary and cultural enrichment which existed in Paris."<sup>3</sup> This whetted Hemingway's desire to leave immediately. His "compulsion to go to Europe was a genuine one. The mass expatriation of young American artists had not yet begun. There was nothing imitative in his impulse toward Paris. It was at that moment a necessity in his personal and artistic life. . . . Hemingway had to be moving on, physically and professionally."<sup>4</sup>

In Paris Hemingway met Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, Ford Madox Ford, and William Bird, who later published Hemingway's first small volume of short stories, in our time.<sup>5</sup> With the help and advice of these people, especially Miss Stein, Hemingway began his most productive period of writing. In Paris he found the stimulus necessary to literary creativity; and after resigning as foreign

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<sup>3</sup>Fenton, op. cit., p. 117.      <sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>5</sup>in our time (small letters), of 1924, is not to be confused with the expanded In Our Time (capital letters), of 1925.

correspondent for the Toronto Star Weekly, he began the first draft of The Sun Also Rises, on his twenty-sixth birthday.

That The Sun Also Rises is set in Paris is not coincidental. The sense of place is "clearly a passion with Hemingway,"<sup>6</sup> who said, "Unless you have geography, background, you have nothing."<sup>7</sup> The Parisian setting is relevant because the cafes and bistros of Montparnasse were gradually being overrun with the expatriates whom Hemingway depicted in the novel. Although there was a small group of serious writers in Montparnasse, Paris had become a mecca for Americans and British to whom the casual attitude toward morality was a relief from the puritan influence of their respective lands.

Yet the theme of The Sun Also Rises is not amorality; it is Hemingway's rejection of and isolation from the world after World War I. The characters created in the novel show their disillusionment with a war which they considered a monstrous hoax, and they express their rejection by isolating themselves from a world and society whose traditions and values they no longer believe in. They form their own milieu in which they find escape from their frustrations in alcohol, sex, and fiestas. The rejection and isolation

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<sup>6</sup>Carlos Baker, Hemingway, The Writer as Artist (Princeton, 1952), p. 48.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 49.

presented in the novel has been attributed to Hemingway's reaction against the brutality and useless slaughter that he witnessed as a participant in World War I.

Hemingway was severely wounded in both knees in the Italian campaign when a mine exploded near him, killing three Italian soldiers. "The most important consequence of a traumatic shock is that the experience that caused it is recalled again and again."<sup>8</sup> Hemingway's protagonists, from Nick Adams in the early short stories to Colonel Cantwell in Across the River and Into the Trees, bear evidence of some wound, either emotional or physical. It has already been noted that Hemingway's protagonists are modeled largely upon him and that his experiences as a youth and as a soldier made a deep impression on him. Hemingway's wounded protagonists seem to be his attempt to rid himself of the trauma suffered during the war.<sup>9</sup>

The Hemingway wound, with its literal and symbolic meanings, manifests itself in the battle-wound emasculation of Jake Barnes, the protagonist of The Sun Also Rises. Jake is the protagonist "who has broken with society and with the usual middle-class ways; and he has made the break in connection with his wounding. He has very little use for most people. At times he has little use even for his

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<sup>8</sup>Hoffman, op. cit., p. 68.

<sup>9</sup>Young, op. cit., p. 179.

friends; and at times he has little use for himself."<sup>10</sup>  
 The nature and extent of his wound necessitates an existence on the fringe of the society he has renounced; and having lost hope for any kind of normal life, Jake evolves his own code of conduct by which to live and yet retain his sanity in a world that seems disproportional and unjust. This code "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 their hair down and are generally messy, perhaps cowardly, and without inviolable rules for how to live holding tight."<sup>11</sup>

The code is one of the important isolating factors in Hemingway's fiction. It replaces the values by which his characters lived in the pre-war world, bringing them to an acceptable existence in the disillusioned post-war world. The code and the discipline it demands "are important because they can give meaning to life that otherwise seems to have no meaning or justification ; . . . in the God-abandoned world of modernity, man can realize an ideal meaning only in so far as he can define and maintain the code."<sup>12</sup> One must either accept the code and live

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>12</sup>Warren, op. cit., p. xiii.

by it or become one of those people who follow random impulses and who consequently do not belong.

Two of the more important characters in The Sun Also Rises, Robert Cohn and Pedro Romero, live outside the Hemingway code. Romero, the young bullfighter whom Brett Ashley seduces, lives by the somewhat different code of the sportsman; he lacks the frustrations and disillusionments which characterize the others because he moves in the disciplined and orderly world of the sportsman. On the other hand, Cohn is the foil by which is seen through his "messy" behavior in relation to the other characters, the manner in which the code works for them and upon him.

Robert Cohn was a member of one of the oldest and richest Jewish families in New York. As a student at Princeton University, he first encountered prejudice, and the experience left him bitter. To counteract his feeling of inferiority, he took up boxing and became the school's middleweight boxing champion; the ability to handle his body well compensated for his being treated as a Jew. After leaving school he married the first girl who showed him any affection.

Cohn and his wife were married five years and had three children. Losing most of his inheritance and chafing under the domination of a rich wife, he decided to leave her; however, before he could carry out his decision, she left him. After the divorce, Cohn became acquainted

with literary people, and since he had some money left, he began backing a review of the arts and discovered that he liked the authority of editing a magazine. When it became obvious that the magazine was going bankrupt, Cohn was taken in hand by Frances Clyne, who had become his mistress and who decided that they should go to France so he could write. He produced one novel, which critics considered poor, and then began another. At the beginning of The Sun Also Rises, he and Frances have been living in Paris for nearly three years.

Cohn's generally "messy" life is one that follows random impulses. In Chapter II of the novel, Hemingway relates that Cohn has been reading The Purple Land, which Jake describes as a "very sinister book if read too late in life. It recounts splendid imaginary amorous adventures of a perfect English gentleman in an intensely romantic land, the scenery of which is very well described."<sup>13</sup> Cohn is highly impressed with the book and reads and rereads it. The book creates the desire to visit its setting, South America, and he offers to pay Jake's expenses if he will go with him. Cohn wants to go because he feels that life, even in Paris, is not lived to its fullest, and that full living lies in another land. Jake tells him, "Listen, Robert, going to another country doesn't make any difference.

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<sup>13</sup> Ernest Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises (New York, 1926), p. 9.

I've tried all that. You can't get away from yourself by moving from one place to another. There's nothing to that."<sup>14</sup> Cohn, without any sustaining rules of life, does not understand. When Jake reminds him that he has a substantial allowance from his mother and can go wherever he wishes, Cohn replies, "I know. But I can't get started."<sup>15</sup>

That Cohn lacks the discipline the code demands and is cowardly is evident in his refusal to marry Frances Clyne, his mistress of three years, although he has openly announced his intention to marry her. She is bitter toward his refusal and quarrels with Cohn before Jake. This quarrel is precipitated by Cohn's wanting to leave Frances, by sending her to live in England; Frances, her beauty and desirability lessening, begs him to marry her, but he refuses. At this point in the novel Cohn has just met Lady Brett Ashley.

Cohn is infatuated with Brett from the time he is first introduced to her and questions Jake at length about her. Jake's blunt summation of her is "She's a drunk."<sup>16</sup> This makes no impression on Cohn; believing that he is in love with her, he asks her to go to San Sebastian with him, and Brett agrees. "One of the ironies in the portrait of Brett is her ability to appreciate quality in the circle

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 38.

of her admirers. After the trip to San Sebastian with Cohn she quickly rejects him. She does not do so slut-tishly, merely to take up with another man, but rather for what to her is the moral reason that he is unmanly."<sup>17</sup>

Cohn's unmanly behavior culminates in the fight between him and the young bull-fighter, Romero, with whom Brett has become familiar. Finding them alone in Romero's room, Cohn knocks the bull-fighter down again and again, and each time Romero gets up. Finally Cohn, becoming ashamed, refuses to hit Romero again and begins to cry, offering to shake hands with Romero; however, Romero turns and knocks Cohn down. Cohn's untoward behavior completely alienates him from the group, and he leaves.

Hemingway does not expose the actions of any other character in the novel so thoroughly as he does those of Cohn, who, because of his lack of stoic qualities and his inability to conduct himself properly, is never accepted into the isolated circle of expatriates. He is the butt of jokes, he suffers indignities because he is Jewish, he is cruelly exposed for what he is by Frances Clyne, and he is rejected by Brett for being unmanly.

That Cohn is the foil by which one sees the stoicism of Jake Barnes is evident. Jake, living on the fringe of society because of his emasculation, is the protagonist

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<sup>17</sup>Baker, op. cit., p. 92.

who has evolved the rules by which he must live in "Hemingway's world, . . . the world with nothing at center."<sup>18</sup> It is the world of nada, about which the insomniac speaks in "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place." Philip Young has noted a parallel between The Sun Also Rises and T. S. Eliot's Waste Land.

And yet The Sun Also Rises is still Hemingway's Waste Land, and Jake is Hemingway's Fisher King. This may be just coincidence. . . , but once again here is the protagonist gone impotent, and his land gone sterile. Eliot's London is Hemingway's Paris, where spiritual life in general, and Jake's sexual life in particular, are alike impoverished. Prayer breaks down and fails, a knowledge of traditional distinctions between good and evil is largely lost, copulation is morally neutral and, cut off from the past chiefly by the spiritual disaster of the war, life has become mostly meaningless.<sup>19</sup>

Holding tight, the facet of the Hemingway code which makes it possible for Jake to bear his mutilation, becomes an important part of Jake's daily living. It is what sustains him when he realizes that he is something less than a man. This becomes especially acute at night after he has gone to bed, and frequently causes insomnia. "I blew out the lamp. Perhaps I would be able to sleep. My head started to work. The old grievance,"<sup>20</sup> Jake remembers. His worst attacks of insomnia and frustration result from

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<sup>18</sup>Warren, op. cit., p. xiv.

<sup>19</sup>Young, op. cit., pp. 54-60.

<sup>20</sup>Hemingway, op. cit., p. 30.

his hopeless love for Brett; and during these moments holding tight does not always work:

I lay there thinking and my mind jumping around. Then I couldn't keep away from it, and I started to think about Brett and all the rest of it went away. I was thinking about Brett and my mind stopped jumping around and started to go in sort of smooth waves. Then all of a sudden I started to cry. Then after a while it was better. . . .<sup>21</sup>

Jake cries alone in the night, but he has disciplined himself never to expose his feelings openly before others as Cohn does. The code and his sexual inability combine to intensify his isolation from society and partly from the initiates who live by the code.

The almost meaningless life, set in Hemingway's sterile land, is heightened by the love affair between Jake and Brett. Jake met Brett when he was sent to England to recuperate from the wound he suffered during the war. Brett had lost her lover in the war and had married a man who abused her and whom she is divorcing. As an escape from the misery and unhappiness which the war thrust upon her, she turns to alcohol and nymphomania. Although she loves Jake, she is engaged to Mike Campbell, a veteran of the war who drinks heavily and who has lost most of his money through bad business.

Brett's excessive drinking, which frequently incapacitates her, makes bearable the tedium of her existence; and when the alcohol fails, nymphomania becomes the outlet

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

through which her frustrations are channeled. Mike and Jake are aware of Brett's promiscuity with other men, since she does not try to conceal the fact from them; however, they accept it as an integral part of their way of life; and Jake even helps arrange the affair between Brett and Romero. Brett's romances reveal Jake's stoicism toward his impotence: when she tells him that she has been to San Sebastian with Cohn, Jake congratulates her. Jake is not without desire to live with her, despite his impotence, and asks her,

"Couldn't we live together, Brett? Couldn't we just live together?"

"I don't think so. I'd just tromper you with everybody. You couldn't stand it."

"I stand it now."

"That would be different. It's my fault, Jake. It's the way I'm made."<sup>22</sup>

Brett realizes her limitations as a woman, and living with a man who is incapable of the sexual act is one of them.

Hemingway parodies love in the novel when Jake, thinking it would be nice to dine with someone, takes Georgette, a young prostitute, to dinner. When she makes advances to Jake, he tells her that he is of no use to her, and she asks him if he is sick. He replies that he is, and she answers, "Everybody's sick. I'm sick, too."<sup>23</sup> Through their conversation, they imply that their sickness emanates from something more than impotence and disease.<sup>24</sup> Later

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>24</sup>Hoffman, op. cit., p. 81.

they join some of Jake's friends at a dance, and Jake, to heighten the encounter with the prostitute, introduces her as his fiancee.

At the dance the atmosphere of sterility reaches its climax when Brett, making her first appearance in the novel, enters accompanied by several homosexuals. As if to augment their effeminacy, Brett is dressed in tight-fitting clothes, has a mannish coiffure, and wears a mannish felt hat. The homosexuals, recognizing that Georgette is as sterile as they, all dance with her in the most satirical scene in the book. To Jake the scene is disgusting and he leaves.

Thus Hemingway sets up the moral and spiritual wasteland in which his characters move, and one by one he introduces them to claim their share of misery. The escape they seek is found in the bars and restaurants of Paris, and the consumption of alcohol rises proportionately as the days pass. "The night-life of Paris, whose casualness is murderous and chaotic, has no reasonable explanation; it 'happens' and the events have a quality of aimless sequence."<sup>25</sup> To the expatriates, Paris is a city in which time is suspended, and everyone is intent on living for the moment; there is no yesterday, and tomorrow is a promise taken for granted because it has always come.

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

Book I of The Sun Also Rises aligns the characters by their stoic qualities, with the exception of Robert Cohn, who acts as their foil. It reveals the frustrations that each suffers, the code by which they live, and the means they use to escape reality; for "in a broader sense, they are all disaffiliates, all men and women who have cut themselves off from conventional society and who have made Paris their permanent playground." Jake Barnes has introduced them, and we have been able to test them against his stoic attitudes toward life in a moral wasteland."<sup>26</sup>

In Book II, the scene moves away from the night life of Paris to the trout stream of Burguete, where Jake and Bill go fishing for a few days, and later to the fiesta at Pamplona. With the change of scene the tedium of the expatriate world dissolves into a mood of camaraderie as Jake and Bill make their way through the Spanish mountains. Here they become irresponsible and playful; they catch a number of fish in the cold stream, and after a good lunch with much wine, Jake, usually insomniac, sleeps in the warm sun on the bank; at night they play three-handed bridge with Harris, the Englishman on holiday. The outing has considerable therapeutic value; Jake recalls, "After supper we went upstairs and smoked and read in bed to keep warm.

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<sup>26</sup>Mark Spilka, "The Death of Love in The Sun Also Rises," cited in Charles Shapiro, Twelve Original Essays (Detroit, 1958), p. 245.

Once in the night I woke and heard the wind blowing. It felt good to be warm and in bed."<sup>27</sup> The Jake on holiday in the mountains is far removed from the Jake of Paris, who has trouble sleeping and sometimes cries in bed. Away from Cohn and his trivial existence, the alcoholism and promiscuity of Brett, and the barren life of the Paris crowd, life takes on renewed meaning. Jake and Bill partly rediscover the lost technique of living, "but hardly have they done so when they are dragged back into the life of the lost generation again."<sup>28</sup>

After leaving Burguete, Jake and Bill go to Pamplona for the fiesta and are joined by Brett, Mike, and Robert Cohn. The fiesta is a religious celebration in which the image of San Fermin, the patron saint, is translated from one church to another, and the Spanish peasants come from the surrounding countryside to participate in the ceremony. Juxtaposed to the religious atmosphere of the fiesta is the barren spiritual life of the expatriates. Jake, who is a professing Catholic, is the only one who has any religious affiliation; although he considers himself a very poor Catholic, he goes to church several times to pray. Brett tells Jake that she wants to hear him go to confession, but he tells her it is not interesting, and besides it

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<sup>27</sup>Hemingway, op. cit., p. 111.

<sup>28</sup>David Daiches, "Ernest Hemingway," College English, II (May, 1941), 730.

would be in a language that she does not understand. "The language Brett does not know is Latin; it is also Spanish; but it is especially the language of the Christian religion."<sup>29</sup> During one of the religious processions Jake and Brett decide to enter the church, but they are stopped because Brett's head is not covered; Baker points out that "for one sufficiently awake to the ulterior meaning of the incident it strikingly resembles the attempt of a witch to gain entry into a Christian sanctum."<sup>30</sup> Back in the street, the pagan riau-riau dancers want Brett as an image to dance around, and they encircle her; when the dance is finished, they rush her to a wineshop and seat her on an up-ended wine-cask. Here Brett is perfectly at home.

The drinking interlude in the wineshop, where Jake and Brett meet Mike, Bill, and Robert, sets the tempo for the fiesta: they start drinking just after arising, and they drink until bedtime or until they pass out. Their drunkenness precipitates a fight between Cohn and Jake, whom Cohn calls a pimp for helping Brett seduce the young bullfighter, Romero; Mike intercedes in the dispute, and Cohn fights the two of them. Cohn knocks both of them down and then goes to Romero's room where he finds Brett. The severe beating he gives the bullfighter completely alienates Cohn from his friends and he leaves.

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<sup>29</sup>Baker, op. cit., p. 89.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 89.

Book III of The Sun Also Rises begins with the end of the fiesta. Brett and Romero have gone to Madrid, and the others go their respective ways. Jake goes to San Sebastian because it is quiet there and the swimming is good; however, he is there only a short time when he receives a telegram from Brett asking him to come to Madrid. He goes to her and finds that she has given up Romero because she does not want to be one of those "bitches that ruins [sic] children."<sup>31</sup> Alone, Brett is helpless, and Jake takes her away. The novel ends with the same futility that underlies the whole of it:

"Oh, Jake," Brett said, "we could have had such a damned good time together."

Ahead was a mounted policeman in khaki directing traffic. He raised his baton. The car slowed suddenly pressing Brett against me.

"Yes," I said. "Isn't it pretty to think so?"<sup>32</sup>

In The Sun Also Rises Hemingway presents a world of disillusionment and bitterness which was brought about by the futility of war and the consequent suspension of belief in tradition and accepted values. The characters formulate their own code by which to live, and they create their own milieu in which to move. The constant drinking, the promiscuous fornication, and the unending search for diversion are their efforts to lessen the pain of living in a world whose reality they cannot endure.

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<sup>31</sup>Hemingway, op. cit., p. 243.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 247.

In their barren world love is a possibility only for those who cannot have sexual intercourse; prostitution and homosexuality heighten the theme of sterility; their prayers become that of the insomniac in "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place."

Our nada who art in nada, nada be thy name thy kingdom nada thy will be nada in nada as it is in nada. Give us this nada our daily nada and nada us our nada as we nada our nadas and nada us not into nada but deliver us from nada; pues nada. Hail nothing full of nothing, nothing is with thee.<sup>33</sup>

The nothingness and the futility underlying the action of The Sun Also Rises are evident: "This is motion which goes no place. Constant activity has brought us along with such pleasant, gentle insistence that not until the end do we realize that we have not been taken in, exactly, but taken nowhere; and that, finally, is the point."<sup>34</sup> The title, taken from Ecclesiastes, emphasizes the circuit: the sun rises and goes down again, completing the circle; one generation passes away and another comes; but the earth abides forever. Hemingway has said that The Sun Also Rises was meant to be a "tragedy with the earth abiding forever as the hero."<sup>35</sup> In Hemingway's wasteland, devoid of any

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<sup>33</sup>Ernest Hemingway, The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1953), p. 383.

<sup>34</sup>Young, op. cit., p. 59.

<sup>35</sup>Hemingway in a letter to Maxwell Perkins, dated November 19, 1926, as quoted in Baker, op. cit., p. 81.

hero, "there is fun, but there is no hope. No rain falls on Europe at this time, and when it does fall, in A Farewell to Arms, it brings not life but death."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Young, op. cit., p. 60.

## CHAPTER III

### A FAREWELL TO ARMS

It has already been pointed out that Hemingway intended for The Sun Also Rises to be a "tragedy with the earth abiding forever as the hero."<sup>1</sup> In that novel, however, there is no death or grave misfortune which could indisputably be defined as tragic; this fact has permitted Carlos Baker to remark:

The appearance of A Farewell to Arms . . . marked the inception of Hemingway's lengthening career as one of the very few great tragic writers in twentieth-century fiction. . . .

The position occupied by A Farewell to Arms among Hemingway's tragic writings may be suggested by the fact that he once referred to the story of Lieutenant Henry and Catherine Barkley as his Romeo and Juliet. The most obvious parallel is that Henry and Catherine, like their Elizabethan prototypes, might be seen as star-crossed lovers.<sup>2</sup>

The death of Catherine Barkley is caused by a physical malformation which precludes normal birth.

The student of esthetics, recognizing another kind of logic in art than that of mathematical cause-and-effect, may however conclude that Catherine's death, like that of Juliet, shows a kind of artistic inevitability. Except by a large indirection, the war does not kill Catherine any more than the Veronese feud kills Juliet. But in the emotional experience of the novel, Catherine's dying is directly associated

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<sup>1</sup>Baker, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 98-99.

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.<sup>3</sup>

It has previously been noted that Hemingway was deeply concerned with geography and background in his writing. A Farewell to Arms takes on added significance when

we see the figures of the lovers silhouetted against the flame-streaked blackness of war, of a collapsing world, of nada. For there is a story behind the love story. That is the quest for meaning and certitude, in a world that seems to offer nothing of the sort.<sup>4</sup>

Thus the themes of rejection, isolation, and disillusionment begun in The Sun Also Rises are heightened in A Farewell to Arms because of the war background. The novel takes place in the barren and unproductive setting of World War I; the protagonist bears the familiar Hemingway war wound, he has lost faith in tradition and human values, he has rejected social concern and responsibility, he is living as an alien in a foreign land, and he seeks sensuous escape from the horror and brutality of war. Maxwell Geismar points out that "the feeling of tragedy in the novel comes precisely from the struggle to participate in life despite all the odds, from the efforts of the lovers to fulfill themselves in a sterile world. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

At the beginning of the novel, Frederick Henry, an American who has been studying architecture in Italy, is a

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 99.      <sup>4</sup>Warren, op. cit., p. xxvii.

<sup>5</sup>Geismar, op. cit., p. 47.

lieutenant in the Italian army in charge of a group of ambulance drivers who evacuate the wounded during attacks. He lives in a villa with Italian officers, eats with them at their mess, visits the brothels with them, and listens to the captain who nightly baits the young priest by accusing him of being with prostitutes every day. This is a standing joke in the mess; however, Frederick never engages in this verbal exchange, as there is a bond of understanding between the young priest and him.

Despite this friendship the young priest is unable to influence Frederick. When Frederick goes on leave, the priest invites him to visit his family: "I would like you to go to Abruzzi. There is good hunting. You would like the people and though it is cold it is clear and dry. You could stay with my family. My father is a famous hunter."<sup>6</sup> Frederick does not go to the cold, dry land; instead he follows the suggestions of his fellow officers to visit the brothels in the large cities. Later, when he returns, he reflects that he had gone to

the smoke of cafes and nights when the room whirled and you needed to look at the wall to make it stop, nights in bed, drunk, when you knew that that was all there was, and the strange excitement of waking and not knowing who it was with you, and the world all unreal in the dark and so exciting that you must resume again unknowing and not caring in the night, sure that this was all and all and all and not caring.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms (New York, 1929), p. 9.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

Although superficially Frederick appears to be a close companion to his fellow officers, especially his roommate Rinaldi, Edgar Johnson points out that

Lieutenant Henry is in the War, but his attitude toward it is purely that of a spectator, refusing to be involved. He is leading a private life as an isolated individual. Even personal relations, of any depth or intimacy, he avoids; he drinks with the officers and talks with the priest. . . , but all contacts he keeps, deliberately, on a superficial level. He has rejected the world.<sup>8</sup>

Thus Hemingway has created a character like those in The Sun Also Rises, whose isolation from society is deliberate; "even more than Jake, Henry is immuring himself in an ivory tower of trying not to feel."<sup>9</sup>

The isolation from reality, we recognize, is a manifestation of the Hemingway code; for Frederick, like Jake Barnes, has created his own world and has formulated the rules which govern it: he is a disciplined soldier;<sup>10</sup> he refuses to let himself think about things which worry him;<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Edgar Johnson, "Farewell the Separate Peace," cited in John K. M. McCaffery, Ernest Hemingway: The Man and His Work (Cleveland, 1950), p. 135.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>10</sup>That Frederick is a disciplined soldier is evidenced when he seeks a doctor who will operate on his legs immediately in order that he may return to the front as soon as possible.

<sup>11</sup>Frederick refuses to think about his safety as he flees the battle police; he also refuses to think about Catherine's predicament at this time: cf. Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, pp. 241-242.

he limits his feelings to those of primary sensations;<sup>12</sup> he does not become involved in close friendships with his fellow officers. It is these rules of the code which give meaning to life in a world where there is no certainty. Although Lieutenant Henry lives in the shadow of defeat and death, the code demands stoic acceptance or endurance of whatever good or bad fortune comes his way; thus the stiff upper lip means a kind of victory even in defeat. With this attitude Frederick plays the game of war, assured that even in defeat he will emerge the victor.

That he considers the war a kind of game and himself apart from it is clear when he thinks, "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."<sup>13</sup> The code has given him confidence and assurance in the midst of danger and death; yet underlying this confidence there are a deep-seated cynicism and bitterness toward war. This is revealed when a fellow officer remarks to him about the Italian campaign, "What has been done this summer cannot have been

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<sup>12</sup>The limitation of Frederick's feelings to primary sensations is evidenced chiefly by his diction and the characteristic construction of his sentences: cf. Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 13, as quoted supra, p. 34.

<sup>13</sup>Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 38.

done in vain."<sup>14</sup> This prompts Henry to think bitterly of the futility of war:

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 billposters 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<sup>15</sup> nothing was done with the meat except to bury it.

This passage explains his blank refusal to become a part of the war; also it explains his isolation from those who are fighting it.

Frederick, living in a world of bitterness and random appetites, has become so immured in the world he has made for himself that even his relation with Catherine begins merely as a casual wartime seduction. After Frederick returns from his leave, he goes with his friend Rinaldi, an Italian surgeon, to call on two British nurses who are stationed nearby. One of them is Catherine Barkley, whose fiance has been killed in the war; she has become a nurse because she feels that she must do something to help the war effort. Frederick and Catherine get along well, and the second time he visits her the seduction takes place. The third time they meet, as he holds her in his arms, he thinks,

I did not care what I was getting into. This was better than going every evening to the house for

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 191.

officers where the girls climbed all over you and put your cap on backward as a sign of affection between their trips upstairs with brother officers. I knew I did not love Catherine Barkley nor had any idea of loving her. This was a game.<sup>16</sup>

A few days later the love game with Catherine is interrupted when Frederick, evacuating casualties during an attack, is wounded in both legs by an enemy trench mortar.

After Frederick receives first aid for his injuries, he is taken to a field hospital where his friend, the young priest of the officers' mess, comes to see him. In the ensuing conversation between the two men, the priest says that he would like to return to his home in Abruzzi after the war, where God is not considered a dirty joke and where one may love and serve him. Frederick replies,

"I understand."

He looked at me and smiled.

"You understand but you do not love God."

"No."

"You do not love Him at all?" he asked.

"I am afraid of him in the night sometimes."

"You should love Him."

"I don't love much."

"Yes," he said. "You do. What you tell me about in the nights. That is not love. That is only passion and lust. When you love you wish to do things for. You wish to sacrifice for. You wish to serve."

"I don't love."

"You will. I know you will. Then you will be happy."

"I'm happy. I've always been happy."

"It is another thing. You cannot know about it unless you have it."<sup>17</sup>

Robert Penn Warren points out that the above passage contains two important items:

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 75.

First, there is the definition of Frederick as the sleepless man, the man haunted by nada. Second, at this stage in the novel, the end of Book I, the true meaning of the love story with Catherine has not yet been defined. It is still at the level of appetite. The priest's role is to indicate the next stage of the story, the discovery of the true nature of love, the "wish to do things for." And he accomplishes this by indicating a parallel between secular love and Divine love, a parallel which implies Frederick's quest for meaning and certitude.<sup>18</sup>

In Book II of A Farewell to Arms the love story begins to unfold. The setting of this section of the novel is in Milan, where Frederick has been sent for further treatment of his wounds. Catherine arranges to be transferred to the hospital there, and upon her arrival goes into the room to see Frederick. When he sees her, he realizes that he loves her. "Everything turned over inside me,"<sup>19</sup> he recalls. The new-found feeling of love causes him to reflect, "God knows I had not wanted to fall in love with her. I had not wanted to fall in love with anyone."<sup>20</sup> Frederick's reluctance is understandable: in his world of isolation and random appetite there is no place for love; yet the priest's prediction that he will be happy when he finds love comes true.

Frederick's convalescence lasts some three months, during which Catherine and he see each other daily.

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<sup>18</sup>Warren, op. cit., p. xxix.

<sup>19</sup>Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 95.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

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This is not a repetition of earlier casual episodes; he is too much concerned with the object of his affection. The carnal element is no less present; but there is added the circumstance that he is devoted to the woman, wishing to do things for her, seeking her well-being.<sup>21</sup>

Although Catherine has been engaged eight years before she met Frederick, she has never before known such happiness. It is, in fact, the first time in the novel that either experiences any happiness, and the quest for some meaning in life has been partially fulfilled.

Since Frederick lives in isolation from reality, Catherine is soon caught up in his way of life, as if she is jealously guarding the new meaning life has taken on. Their love isolates them not only from the war but also from the people whom they know; Frederick's hospital room becomes their home. Beach points out that they are detached from any fixed social order: "they are living in a social no-man's land. . . ."<sup>22</sup>

The hospital interlude results in Catherine's pregnancy, and Frederick is returned to the front after recovering from what the medical authorities believe to be a case of self-inflicted jaundice.

When Frederick arrives back at Caporetto, he finds that things have been going badly. Men and equipment have

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<sup>21</sup> Joseph W. Beach, American Fiction 1920-1940 (New York, 1941), p. 86.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

been lost, the winter rain has begun, and the river is already high. It is at this part of the novel that rain becomes portentous of the impending disastrous retreat from Caporetto; ~~also it is later to become symbolic of flight and death.~~ Frederick is ordered to evacuate ambulances and hospital equipment over roads already congested with vehicles, carts, and pedestrians. The rain and mud turn the retreat into chaos. Frederick's convoy becomes hopelessly bogged down; and the drivers, the two soldiers whom they have given a ride, and he work hard to free the vehicles. The two soldiers attempt to run away and Frederick shoots one of them. Finally Frederick and the drivers abandon the vehicles and start walking. As they go up a railroad embankment, Aymo is shot by frightened and confused Italian soldiers. And a little later when Frederick crosses the bridge across the flood-swollen Tagliamento river, the battle police seize him.

The scene following Frederick's arrest reflects the horror of the war: the battle police are arresting Italian officers, who, in the chaotic retreat, have been separated from their companies. The officers are given a chauvinistic court martial, then taken outside and shot. Realizing that he too will be executed, Frederick dives into the Tagliamento and escapes.] <sup>1892</sup> Malcolm Cowley points out that "when Frederick Henry dives into the flooded Tagliamento, in A Farewell to

Arms, he is performing a rite of baptism that prepares us for the new life he is about to lead as a deserter from the Italian army."<sup>23</sup> "By this 'baptism' Frederick is re-born into another world; he comes out into the world of the man alone, no longer supported by and involved in society."<sup>24</sup>

Anger was washed away in the river along with any obligation. Although that ceased when the carabinieri 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.<sup>25</sup>

Thus Frederick, like Nick in one of the sketches of In Our Time, makes his separate peace.

After Frederick emerges from the Tagliamento river, he goes to Milan, finds that Catherine is on leave in Stresa, and joins her there. That night, while lying in bed in the dark, Frederick reflects on the futility of life.

If people bring so much courage to this world the world has to kill them to break them, so of course it kills them. The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong at the broken places. But those that will not break it kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Malcolm Cowley, The Viking Portable Hemingway (New York, 1944), p. xvii.

<sup>24</sup>Warren, op. cit., p. xxxii.

<sup>25</sup>Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 241.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 259.

The second night, during a rainstorm, Frederick is awakened by the hotel bartender, an old friend of his, who warns Frederick that he is to be arrested in the morning. With the help of the bartender, Catherine and Frederick row across the lake to Brissago, a Swiss fishing village.

From the fishing village they go to Montreux, where they live in a mountain lodge. The snow comes late that winter, and Frederick and Catherine walk in the frozen countryside, which takes on the general aspect of Abruzzi, the home of the young priest who invited Frederick to visit his family. In the mountain retreat, the two lovers live their happiest months together. With the advent of the spring thaw and rain, they move to Lausanne to be near the hospital.

Catherine's protracted labor results in the delivery of a dead child. As time passes, it becomes apparent that she is dying. Frederick bitterly reflects, "You did not know what it was about. You never had time to learn. They threw you in and told you the rules and the first time they caught you off base they killed you. Or they killed you gratuitously like Aymo."<sup>27</sup> Frederick sees life as inexplicable and unpredictable. It kills some in their youth, and even those who temporarily escape are permanently marred. Life reminds him of a camping incident:

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 338.

Once in camp I put a log on top of the fire and it was full of ants. As it commenced to burn, the ants swarmed out and went first toward the centre where the fire was; then turned back and ran toward the end. When there were enough on the end they fell off into the fire. Some got out, their bodies burnt and flattened, and went off not knowing where they were going.<sup>28</sup>

In A Farewell to Arms, Hemingway presents a war-streaked world in which Catherine and Frederick, in quiet desperation, seek some meaning and certitude. To them civilization has gone bad, values and traditions no longer have meaning, religion has no significance, and life is without hope; in the end they find that the only certainty is death. The rebellion, rejection, and isolation begun in The Sun Also Rises have been intensified in A Farewell to Arms. That Hemingway never quite threw off his war experiences and that he and his protagonists are closely identifiable have been mentioned already; the conclusion can be made, then, that through the character of Frederick Henry, Hemingway reveals his bitterness and sense of futility toward a war whose slaughter of men presented no justification.

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 338.

## CHAPTER IV

### TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT

To Have and Have Not is actually a trilogy. In April, 1934, Cosmopolitan published a Hemingway short story called "One Trip Across," which introduced Harry Morgan, a charter-boat fisherman who took to smuggling ~~as a means of support~~ ing his family. In February, 1936, Esquire Magazine published a companion short story called "The Tradesman's Return," in which Harry Morgan, smuggling contraband liquor, lost his right arm by gunfire and his boat by confiscation. By July, 1936, Hemingway had decided to turn the Morgan story into a novel, with the addition of a companion story about Richard Gordon, whose purpose was to throw "Harry Morgan's masculine virtues into bolder relief."<sup>1</sup>

→ With To Have and Have Not Hemingway first displays a change of attitude toward the world and toward the individual. Through the characters of his ~~two~~ previous novels, (The Sun Also Rises and A Farewell to Arms), Hemingway presented his rejection of the post-war world and his isolation from its society. In these novels he created a barren world where traditions <sup>§ WAS</sup> ~~are~~ no longer valid and where human values

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<sup>1</sup>Baker, op. cit., p. 205.

had  
 have been reduced to a minimum. To Have and Have Not is an attempt to make a new position clear; when the novel first appeared, ". . . critics said that it was Hemingway's weakest novel, but they also said that it showed a broadening of his sympathies and made them feel that he was beginning a new stage in his career."<sup>2</sup> This new stage is not passive acceptance of things that happen but a struggle to overcome <sup>the</sup> obstacles. <sup>of life.</sup>

As a writer in the early thirties Hemingway was criticized for <sup>seems to ignore</sup> (seemingly ignoring) the economic and political situation. To his critics he answered, "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."<sup>3</sup>

About the economic implication in To Have and Have Not, Carlos Baker writes,

This was a treatise in economics and revolutionary politics which chose to present its findings, not in propagandistic set speeches or in interminable discussions between a young organizer and his experienced mentor, but in straightforward, illustrative dramatic terms.<sup>4</sup>

These (illustrative dramatic) terms about which Baker wrote become manifest in Harry Morgan's struggle to make a living for his family and himself <sup>during the</sup> in depression-ridden ~~Key West.~~

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<sup>2</sup>Cowley, op. cit., p. 318.

<sup>3</sup>Baker, op. cit., p. 197.

<sup>4</sup><sup>Baker</sup>Ibid., p. 206.

He is the man-against-the-world . . . like the Garcias and Romeros in the daily risking of his life, the pitting of his wits against circumstance; like Lieutenant Henry in that he stand alone, fighting only for himself and his own, but unlike Henry in that his mood is not passive isolation but struggle.<sup>5</sup>

The isolation theme found in To Have and Have Not is not passive withdrawal; Harry is isolated because his economic struggle leaves no time for personal association. As the title indicated, the plot is a <sup>Comparison</sup> juxtaposition of two worlds: one inhabited by the very wealthy--"the have's"--and the other inhabited by the very poor--"the have not's." These extreme economic factions bring into sharp focus the depression's effects upon the "have not's."

As a "have not" Harry is engaged in a desperate struggle to keep his (wife and two daughters)<sup>family</sup> from going hungry. He is a charter-boat fisherman, and at the beginning of the novel he has been chartered for three weeks; <sup>A</sup> ~~this~~ charter which will bring in a considerable sum of money. But the man who hired Harry leaves without paying. This loss, perpetrated by one of the wealthy, is the initial incident which begins Harry's downfall: he turns to smuggling to make money.

Since Harry is an ex-policeman from Miami, he is acutely aware that smuggling is illegal; nevertheless, when he gets a chance to make twelve hundred dollars smuggling Chinese into Key West, he accepts. Through Mr. Sing, the intermediary, arrangements are made for the trip. After the

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<sup>5</sup>Johnson, op. cit., p. 135.

Chinese come aboard and are concealed in the cabin, Harry murders Mr. Sing to eliminate any chance of his talking, which could cause Harry to lose his boat, his only means of livelihood. Harry escapes detection as a murderer, but his economic need continues.

Although rumrunners made very little profit, Harry, in desperation, attempts to carry a load <sup>of rum</sup> from Havana to Key West. <sup>During the crossing</sup> He is severely wounded in the right arm, which <sup>Later</sup> has to be amputated; and as he <sup>is</sup> <sup>ing</sup> dumps the liquor to escape the authorities, he is caught and his boat is confiscated.

<sup>Because he is</sup> Too proud to work on relief projects for six and one-half dollars a week, Harry turns to a still more desperate measure, that of carrying Cuban revolutionaries to Havana after they have robbed a bank in Key West. He realizes the danger <sup>in which</sup> he is placing himself (in) and thinks as he waits for the Cubans to come to the boat,

I don't want to fool with it but what choice have I got? They don't give you any choice now. I can let it go, but what will the next thing be? I didn't ask for any of this and if you've got to do it you've got to do it.<sup>6</sup>

On this trip Harry's luck runs out. <sup>Having suspicions that</sup> (Because) the Cubans <sup>will try</sup> (threaten) to murder him when they reach Cuba, Harry makes a desperate attempt en route to kill them; <sup>He</sup> he succeeds in killing three, but the fourth Cuban is only wounded, and

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<sup>6</sup>Ernest Hemingway, To Have and Have Not (New York, 1937), p. 105.

as Harry steers the boat, the wounded man shoots him in the stomach. Later the drifting boat is picked up by the authorities; as they question the delirious Harry, he says, "A man. One man alone ain't got. No man alone now. No matter how a man alone ain't got no bloody . . . chance."<sup>7</sup>

Hemingway points out that "it had taken him a long time to get it out and it had taken him all of his life to learn it."<sup>8</sup>

Throughout the novel Harry is almost always unreflective in that he seldom makes wry or ironic comments on life such as those of Frederick Henry; however, like Jake and Frederick,

he has taken the measure of the world--not pessimistically or philosophically, but almost without thinking about it, and gone through life standing alone, for himself, his wife, and their girls. But unlike Henry, he fights the world; it is by trying to win a separate victory that he seeks a separate peace.<sup>9</sup>

To Have and Have Not, like A Farewell to Arms, is a study in doom. Harry Morgan fights a losing battle against the chaos of the times; he never accepts the starvation wage of the relief worker; as an individual he has maintained a certain pride and dignity in his independence; but he "was the individualistic man of action, first crippled and then killed as an indirect result of social corruption."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 225.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 225.

<sup>9</sup>Johnson, op. cit., p. 139.

<sup>10</sup>Baker, op. cit., p. 208.

With Harry's statement that a man alone does not have a chance, the Morgan part of the trilogy ends. Throughout this part of the novel, Hemingway has portrayed a character who is unwilling to accept passively the hardships which he encounters in his struggle for existence; this can unquestionably be interpreted as a manifestation of Hemingway's broadening sympathies toward people.

The last part of the trilogy, which has as its setting the night when Harry dies, consists chiefly of the Gordon story. The purpose of this story, obviously, is to accentuate the masculinity of Harry Morgan. The first scene of this part reveals the unhappy and sexually inadequate marriage of Richard and Helen Gordon; this is in direct contrast to the warm union and sexual contentment found in the marriage of Harry and Marie.

In Marie's soliloquy at the end of the novel, she shows her enduring love for Harry after his death: she reveals that her loss is so great that she can only live her life day by day. The only fear she has is that of forgetting how he looked: this she could not bear, just as she could not bear to attend his funeral. The reader's sense of the love between the two is intensified by <sup>the</sup>(his) memory of Helen Gordon's scathing denunciation of her love for her husband.

Love is just another dirty lie. Love is ergoapiol pills to make me come around because you were afraid

to have a baby. . . . Love is that dirty aborting horror that you took me to. Love is my insides all messed up. . . . Love is all the dirty little tricks you taught me that you probably got out of some book. All right. I'm through with you and I'm through with love. Your kind of picknose love. You writer.<sup>11</sup>

Helen Gordon's tirade on love was <sup>(brought about)</sup> (precipitated) by Richard's affair with Helene Bradley, whose husband is impotent. Helene collects young writers to <sup>(satisfy)</sup> (satiating) her sexual desires. Richard has become her lover; but he has fallen short of her expectations as a man, and she has dismissed him. (The bedroom scene between Helene and Richard in the Bradley home, where the impotent husband watches the two lovers from the shadows, contrasts sharply with the passionate bedroom scene between Harry and Marie.)

Harry's masculinity is sharply outlined when his personality is compared to that of Richard Gordon. As Cohn is the foil by which we see the true portraits of the characters in The Sun Also Rises, Richard is the foil by which we see the real Harry. Gordon and Cohn share several shortcomings: both are mediocre writers, both are failures as lovers and husbands, neither displays any self-discipline, both are unmanly, both are self-centered, and both lead "messy" lives. Gordon's weaknesses contrast noticeably with Harry's courage, discipline, toughness, ingenuity, and manhood.

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<sup>11</sup>Hemingway, To Have and Have Not, pp. 185-186.

The reader's awareness of Harry's toughness is augmented somewhat by the description of the place where he used to drink and the people with whom he had mingled. The place is Freddy's bar, where rummies and shady characters congregate and where the war veterans who are stationed in work camps on the Upper and Lower Matecumbe Keys come on payday to drink.<sup>12</sup>

The veterans' payday orgy is one of the most effective episodes in the novel. This scene, with its drunkenness and brutal fights, constitutes what Malcolm Cowley calls a Walpurgisnacht. The veterans call themselves the desperate ones, the ones with nothing to lose; they are the product of the economic disaster, and their greatest boast is that they can take it. Baker compares the veterans to a kind of "economic driftwood" that has been deposited on the keys.<sup>13</sup>

The idlers whose yachts are moored at the piers in Key West represent the opposite kind of economic driftwood, the affluent. While Hemingway gives us a detailed close-up of these people in their yachts, action in the novel is continuing in two other places: (1) the authorities are towing in

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<sup>12</sup>Hemingway was familiar with the real counterparts of these veterans, and when a hurricane drowned two hundred of them in 1935, he indignantly reported the incident to the communistic New Masses: see Philip Young, op. cit., p. 71.

<sup>13</sup>Baker, op. cit., p. 208.

the Queen Conch, bearing the dying (body of) Harry Morgan, and (2) the Walpurgisnacht is in progress at Freddy's bar. The three-fold action constitutes one of the most poignant scenes in the book. (As the Queen Conch passes the yachts, Hemingway creates intimate pictures of each of the rich people aboard: the unscrupulous grain merchant, who, in his rise to financial power, ruined many of his associates; the narcissistic wife taking refuge in masturbation while her drunken lover lies sleeping; the man who gained his wealth by manufacturing for three cents a quart a product which sold for a dollar a pint; the two homosexuals (one of them is named Johnson; Hemingway leaves us to assume that this Johnson is the same man who cheated Harry out of his charter fee in the beginning of the novel). The total impression of these characters mounts to pure horror.)

Throughout the Gordon part of the trilogy, Hemingway has drawn the most despicable weaklings not only to emphasize the strength, determination, and masculinity of Harry Morgan, but also to emphasize their disparate worlds. The worlds of the rich and the poor touch, but they do not mingle. Had they mixed, each would have lost a part of its identity, and the effectiveness of the juxtaposition would have been lessened.

To Have and Have Not shows that the (impecunious) <sup>poor</sup> have captured Hemingway's sympathy; these are the people that

concern him; he knows the wealthy also, but they are the despicable ones who have allowed wealth to ruin and corrupt them. The author's broadened sympathy toward man's problems becomes clear in his graphic portrayal of Harry's economic struggle; (this concern <sup>thus negating</sup> negates) the attitudes that he expressed in The Sun Also Rises (and continued in A Farewell to Arms.)

60 x 82  
82

## CHAPTER V

### FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

Hemingway's awareness of man's social and economic problems, first seen in To Have and Have Not, is expanded in For Whom the Bell Tolls. Harry Morgan's economic struggle is followed by Robert Jordan's support of the Spanish Republicans' fight for freedom, and for the first time in his novels Hemingway portrays a protagonist who believes that what he is doing is for the good of mankind. Thus the change of attitude which critics perceived in To Have and Have Not is even more readily seen in For Whom the Bell Tolls.

Since 1923, Hemingway has followed with deep interest the political changes which Spain has undergone. When he addressed the Second American Writers' Congress in New York City in June, 1937, he had just returned from a two months' reporting assignment on the Spanish Civil War. In his speech he denounced the fascists, both Spanish and foreign, who were then operating in Spain; this denunciation led some people to suppose erroneously that Hemingway had become a political writer.

Although, as a friend of Spanish democracy, Hemingway believed in the Republican side, his statement did not mean that, as an artist, he was pro-Republican or

pro-Communist. What it emphatically meant was that as artist and man, he was anti-fascist, and had been for years.<sup>1</sup>

Before the end of 1936, Hemingway's interest in the Spanish Republic prompted him to raise forty thousand dollars on personal notes to equip the army with ambulances and medical supplies. By May, 1937, he was engaged in developing a documentary film, The Spanish Earth. "The film itself was designed to show the efforts of the Spanish peasantry to reclaim for agricultural purposes land which had been misused and neglected for many generations. Because of the war, their efforts were defeated and they were betrayed."<sup>2</sup>

The betrayal came not only from the fascists within Spain but also from the intervention of Germany and Italy, both of which gave military equipment to be used against the Republicans. The complexities of foreign intervention and fascist execution of the war presented a difficult problem to Hemingway, who felt that, as an artist, he must write truly of what was happening. "For Whom the Bell Tolls offers many examples of the author's determination to maintain that balance without which art may degenerate into propaganda."<sup>3</sup> Hemingway maintains that balance by adhering to his belief that "the job of the artist is not to judge but to understand."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Baker, op. cit., p. 224.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 230.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 240.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 240.

To present the struggle clearly and impartially, Hemingway was careful to choose not only representative characters, both Republican and fascist, but also an authentic setting for the novel. He chose

as his focal point a group of Republican partisans, drawn from many parts of Spain, and living under very primitive conditions in a cave on the high forested slopes of the Sierra de Guardarramas sixty miles northwest of besieged Madrid and behind the fascist lines. The time he chose was the sixty-eight-hour period between Saturday afternoon and Tuesday noon of the last week of May, 1937.<sup>5</sup>

The nature of the partisans' work quickly establishes the theme of isolation in For Whom the Bell Tolls; the isolation in this book, however, has causes noticeably different from those found in the three previous novels. The partisans operate behind enemy lines, doing the work of saboteurs; periodically fascist cavalry patrol the hills searching for Republicans who might have infiltrated their lines. The survival of the partisans depends upon their ability to isolate themselves from detection by utilizing the mountainous regions. The remote cave of Pablo and his band affords protection from the enemy and from the elements, yet it is within range to harass the enemy.

General Golz, a Russian who is fighting on the side of the Republicans, sends Robert Jordan to this region to carry out a specific mission: that of destroying a bridge the moment the Republicans begin an attack. This destruction

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 238.

is designed to prevent the fascists from getting reinforcements. Robert Jordan joins the partisans, and with their aid he plans the work which lies ahead.

The attributes of the Hemingway protagonist become manifest in Robert Jordan. He has physical courage, tenacity, and sexual stamina; he displays the discipline of the code which makes it possible for him to endure sustained misfortune. He is highly skilled in his work as a handler of explosives.

To all these a new attribute is added: the ability to think analytically. Frederick Henry in A Farewell to Arms enlists in the Italian army for no reason except that he is in Italy and speaks Italian. Jake Barnes in The Sun Also Rises lives and works in Paris; his presence there is never explained. But the presence of Robert Jordan in Spain is not mere chance.

Jordan is convinced that he should fight for the Loyalists. He arrives at this conclusion by analysis, not by instinct. He turns the issues over in his mind at great length, and only after long debate of the pros and cons does he reach a decision. He is, in short, a thinking man, the first full-length thinking man in Hemingway, and the first to believe in a cause.<sup>6</sup>

In the Spanish Civil War, the Republicans represent the faction devoted to the cause of freedom; consequently, Robert Jordan "is . . . in Spain because he believes that

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<sup>6</sup>Leo Gurko, "The Achievement of Ernest Hemingway," College English, XIII (April, 1952), 372-373.

the battle for human freedom is going to be lost or won in this peninsula, and he wishes to be counted against the dragons and with the gods."<sup>7</sup>

As an American fighting for freedom in Spain, Robert Jordan is without politics. He is adamant in not becoming a political thinker; he reminds himself that nobody owns "his mind, nor his faculties for seeing and hearing, and if he were going to form judgments, he would form them afterwards."<sup>8</sup> Working under communist direction, he realizes that he could let himself be influenced by political concepts; however, his attitude toward the individual, society, and communism becomes clear when he thinks:

all people should be left alone and you should interfere with no one. So he believed that, did he? Yes, he believed that. And what about a planned society and the rest of it? That was for the others to do. He had something else to do after this war. He fought now in this war because it had started in a country that he loved and he believed in the Republic and that if it were destroyed life would be unbearable for all those people who believed in it. He was under Communist discipline for the duration of the war. Here in Spain the Communists offered the best discipline and the soundest and sanest for the prosecution of the war.<sup>9</sup>

Robert Jordan is willing to accept the communists' discipline for the duration of the war. He is familiar with and well known at the communists' headquarters:

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<sup>7</sup>Wagenknecht, op. cit., p. 377.

<sup>8</sup>Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls (New York, 1940), p. 137.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 163.

Gaylords, the Madrid hotel occupied by the Russians, who symbolize the cold and ruthless communism; and Velazques 63, which exemplifies the "puritanical and religious communism."<sup>10</sup> Although Jordan is without politics, these places have a marked effect upon him.

At either of those places you felt that you were taking part in a crusade. That was the only word for it although it was a word that had been so worn and abused that it no longer gave its true meaning. You felt, in spite of all bureaucracy and inefficiency and party strife something that was like the feeling you expected to have and did not have when you made your first communion. It was a feeling of consecration to duty toward all of the oppressed of the world. . . .<sup>11</sup>

Robert Jordan carries out his assignments precisely and without display of emotion. He is an expert dynamiter, and the bridge itself is no particular challenge to him; it is only the exact time of blowing it that presents problems. He does not let his love affair with Maria, the young partisan of Pablo's band, interfere when there is work to be done. He takes no risks which might result in his failure to perform his assignments. And although he does not believe in killing, he does it as a necessity and without compunction.

Anselmo, on the other hand, feels that it is sinful to kill a man, even the fascists who must be destroyed. Although communists have "abolished" the church, Anselmo recognizes the need for penance. He reflects:

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 234.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 235.

after the war there will have to be some great penance done for the killing. If we no longer have religion after the war then I think there must be some form of civic penance organized that all may be cleansed from the killing or else we will never have a true and human basis for living.<sup>12</sup>

Anselmo's repugnance toward killing shows his humanitarianism. He would like to discard war and bring about civil reform another way.

That we should win this war and shoot nobody. That we should govern justly and that all should participate in the benefits according as they have striven for them. And that those who have fought against us should be educated to see their error.<sup>13</sup>

Anselmo exemplifies the human norm: his "important function is to serve as a yardstick of human values. . . ." <sup>14</sup>

Robert Jordan reveals his ideas and values in a soliloquy which begins when he asks himself if it is all right to love Maria.

Yes, himself said.

Even if there isn't supposed to be any such thing as love in a purely materialistic conception of society?

Since when did you ever have any such conception? himself asked. Never. And you never could have. You're not a real Marxist and you know it. You believe in Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. You believe in Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. Don't ever kid yourself with too much dialectics. They are for some but not for you. You have to know them in order not to be a sucker. You have put many things in abeyance to win a war. If this war is lost all of those things are lost.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 285.

<sup>14</sup>Baker, op. cit., p. 244.

<sup>15</sup>Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls, p. 305.

Jordan's soliloquy with its abstractions of "Liberty," "Equality," and "Fraternity" reveals a change in Hemingway's attitude when they are juxtaposed to Frederick Henry's soliloquy which begins, "I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain."<sup>16</sup> To Henry these words are obscene; he prefers concrete names like those of villages, rivers, and dates. War to Henry is senseless, but to Jordan it is the means by which those things in which he believes will be preserved.

Jordan, living under communist discipline and propaganda, realizes that his abstractions are contrary to Marxianism; however, unlike the partisans who have been propagandized, he maintains his democratic ideas, which he keeps to himself. He is with, but not of, the communists. Carlos Baker points out that "he remains the free man, the man not taken in, the man doing the necessary job but also making the necessary mental reservations."<sup>17</sup>

One of these reservations is disbelief in the communist doctrine that there is no such thing as love in a "purely materialistic conception of society." Robert and Maria are attracted to each other from their first meeting, and their love quickly takes on the intensity of that between Frederick and Catherine in A Farewell to Arms. However, the affair

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<sup>16</sup>Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 191.

<sup>17</sup>Baker, op. cit., p. 244.

between Robert and Maria becomes one that lives even after Robert's death. Robert, wounded and unable to escape after the bridge is blown, tells Maria that he will always be a part of her.

"Listen to this well, rabbit," he said. He knew there was a great hurry and he was sweating very much, but this had to be said and understood. "Thou wilt go now, rabbit. But I go with thee. As long as there is one of us there is both of us. Do you understand?"<sup>18</sup>

Robert's farewell scene with Maria contrasts sharply to the scene where Frederick took his leave of Catherine, who had just died in childbirth. Frederick asked the nurses to leave him alone with Catherine.

But after I had got them out and shut the door and turned off the light it wasn't any good. It was like saying good-bye to a statue. After a while I went out and left the hospital and walked back to the hotel in the rain.<sup>19</sup>

Thus the note of futility, which had sounded throughout A Farewell to Arms, became the last resonant chord with which that novel ended.

But where Frederick Henry walked off in the rain, Robert Jordan, mortally wounded at the end of For Whom the Bell Tolls, lies hidden on a hill slope waiting to make his final stand against the fascists. Knowing that the end is very near, Robert muses on what his life has been and what it means to him now that he is going to die.

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<sup>18</sup>Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls, p. 463.

<sup>19</sup>Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 343.

He looked down the hill slope again and he thought. I hate to leave it, is all. I hate to leave it very much and I hope I have done some good in it. . . .

I have fought for what I believed in for a year now. If we win here we will win everywhere. The world is a fine place and worth the fighting for and I hate very much to leave it.<sup>20</sup>

Thus Hemingway's rejection of life and the world which sounds the bleak and hopeless undertone of The Sun Also Rises and A Farewell to Arms is negated in Robert Jordan's affirmation that life and the world, after all, are good and worthwhile.

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<sup>20</sup>Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls, p. 467.

## CHAPTER VI

### ACROSS THE RIVER AND INTO THE TREES

War has been a major theme in Hemingway's literary work. Four of his six novels either have a war background or concern people whose lives war has greatly altered. During his lifetime he has had experience in three major military conflicts: first his service as an ambulance driver during World War I, then his work in behalf of the Spanish Republicans, and finally his activities as a news correspondent during World War II, from which emerged his last war novel, Across the River and Into the Trees.

When the allies began the invasion of southern France in 1944, Hemingway was attached to the Third Army as a correspondent for Collier's Weekly; however, being unable to tolerate the Third Army Commander General Patton, he attached himself to the Fourth Infantry Division of the First Army.

With this outfit Hemingway saw a great deal of action. His adventures were climaxed at Hurtgen Forest, where the regiment he was operating with sustained such appalling casualties that it lost, in eighteen days, over 80 per cent of its officers and men. Hemingway was in the slaughter from start to finish, and it is his disgust over a "stupid frontal attack," tactically unfeasible but ordered from above and carried out, which chiefly animated the bitterness of Richard Cantwell.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Young, op. cit., p. 115.

Hemingway could not forget what he had seen as a correspondent in World War II; as late as 1949

the traumatic effects of his life in the second world 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, but also the other wars and the periods of armed truce between the wars which Hemingway had personally known.<sup>2</sup>

That Hemingway's experiences in World War I were an emotional and psychological trauma has been pointed out in a previous chapter. During the action at Fossalta de Piave, he was hit by an Austrian trench-mortar bomb; he was shot twice through the legs, and he lost his right kneecap. Hemingway recalled later, "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 anymore."<sup>3</sup> Frederick Henry received these "Hemingway wounds" in A Farewell to Arms. And Colonel Cantwell (whose age in Across the River and Into the Trees is the same as Hemingway's) has, as a young lieutenant, suffered the same wounds while serving in World War I in the Italian Army.

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<sup>2</sup>Baker, op. cit., p. 266.

<sup>3</sup>Malcolm Cowley, "A Portrait of Mister Papa," cited in John K. M. McCaffery, Ernest Hemingway: The Man and His Work (Cleveland, 1950), p. 47.

Across the River and Into the Trees, set in Italy just after World War II, concerns Colonel Richard Cantwell, a fifty-year-old cardiac victim who has only a short time to live. He is making one last trip to Venice, a city he has loved since World War I, to visit his mistress, an eighteen-year-old countess named Renata. The city brings both wars into perspective for the colonel: battles of the second world war remind him of battles of the first one; he contrasts the present countryside to the scarred countryside of 1918; and the colonel finds that the only thing which has not changed is the horror that he has seen in each war.

Cantwell, older and more cynical than he was as a lieutenant, does not live under any illusions; he examines his past experiences objectively and without rationalization. Realizing that the inevitability of war necessitates armies, he takes pride in his status as a professional whose "trade is killing armed men."<sup>4</sup> Cantwell holds in high esteem those soldiers who display honor and courage, two traits of the Hemingway protagonist; but his abhorrence of the political generals who needlessly destroy human life for their own prestige and his contempt for military stupidity that leads to unfeasible orders from high command motivate his bitterness in the novel.

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<sup>4</sup>Ernest Hemingway, Across the River and Into the Trees (New York, 1950), p. 63.

To purge himself of his association with these murderously stupid officers, Cantwell returns to the exact spot where he was wounded in World War I and performs a primitive cleansing ceremony; then he buries in the ground a ten thousand lira note, the amount of money his military awards have brought him. He figures it all up.

"That is twenty years at 500 lira a year for the Madaglia 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," he said.

It's fine now, he thought. It has merde, money, blood, look how that grass grows; and the iron's in the earth along with Gino's leg, both of Randolph's legs, and my right kneecap. It's a wonderful monument.<sup>5</sup>

This rite seems to relieve his mind from some of the horror he has been through and is "a revelation as nothing else can ever be of his . . . disgust."<sup>6</sup>

This act of expurgation, occurring early in the novel, establishes Cantwell's hostile attitude toward the inept American and British generals who executed World War II. As the plot develops, the reader becomes aware that Hemingway has surrounded Cantwell with characters who continually ask him questions in order that the colonel, Hemingway's spokesman, can give his opinions of generals, battles, the president and the government.

Compared to the "messy" people in the novel, Cantwell emerges as the disciplined, skilled, tough Hemingway

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 18-19.

<sup>6</sup>Young, op. cit., p. 93.

protagonist, endowed with the usual sexual stamina and not given to emotional display. Experienced in his profession, Cantwell has formulated his own rules for courage and honor, and by them he judges men; when they fall short of his expectations, as do the generals who yield to political and journalistic pressure in execution of the war, their worth as men disintegrates: to Cantwell they become objects of scorn.

The only people who hold the colonel's admiration are those who have fought or been mutilated in some way. However, he does not dislike people generally. "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 castigation that everyone receives who goes there long enough."<sup>7</sup>

This aspect of Cantwell's code is important to him; he and an ex-sergeant, an old comrade-at-arms known as the Gran Maestro, form a mystic order with the impressive title of El Ordine Militar, Nobile y Espirituoso de los Cavalleros de Brusadelli. Admittance to this organization is highly selective.

Its regular members are admitted only on unimpeachable evidence that they have received (and gracefully survived thus far) the castigation that flesh is heir to. They are the uncomplaining fardel-bearers, who understand the whips and scorns as part of time's earthly

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<sup>7</sup>Hemingway, Across the River and Into the Trees, p. 71.

business. They are the occupants of the inner circle which always stands at the center of masculine relationships in Hemingway; they have been "hit solidly, as every man will be if he stays." And the<sup>8</sup>Knights of Brusadelli are among those who have stayed.

Cantwell's wounds qualify him to become the Supreme Commander of the Knights. He has suffered ten concussions, "give or take three;"<sup>9</sup> he has been shot twice through the right hand, and he has lost his right kneecap. His driver sums him up accurately: "He's been beat up so much he's slug-nutty."<sup>10</sup>

These wounds, incurred in the line of duty, make Cantwell contemptuous of generals who have never fought on the front lines but have remained in the rear; he tells his mistress Renata, "In our army, you know, practically no Generals have ever fought. It is quite strange and the top organization dislikes those who have fought."<sup>11</sup>

Among the generals, mentioned by name, who are obnoxious to Cantwell are General Dwight Eisenhower, who was a "political general,"<sup>12</sup> General George Patton, who was a bully and who "possibly never told the truth in his life,"<sup>13</sup> and General Walter Smith, who was responsible for ordering the suicidal Hurtgen Forest attack.

<sup>8</sup>Baker, op. cit., p. 272.

<sup>9</sup>Hemingway, Across the River and Into the Trees, p. 10.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 122.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 125.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 116.

The English General Bernard Law Montgomery, in Cantwell's opinion, represented the pseudo-military leader: "He was not [a great general] . The worst part was he knew it. I have seen him come into the hotel and change from his proper uniform into a crowd-catching kit to go out in the evening to animate the populace." Montgomery "needed fifteen [men] to move one, and then moved tardily."<sup>14</sup>

Nor did Cantwell rank General Leclerc, the liberator of Paris, much above Montgomery. Leclerc was "a high-born jerk . . . very brave, very arrogant, and extremely ambitious;"<sup>15</sup> but when the going got rough, his army bogged down. Actually, it was through Hemingway's aid that Leclerc was able to enter Paris without much enemy resistance. Hemingway, violating regulations governing correspondents, set up an intelligence network to find enemy positions situated along the southern route to Paris. He gathered two hundred French irregulars, sent out civil patrols to locate German defenses, and made sketches of enemy strongholds. This information Hemingway gave to Leclerc, who did not especially like American correspondents or French irregulars. Later, while Leclerc was still fighting on the south bank of the Seine, Hemingway and his irregulars had already entered Paris and were fighting a skirmish at the Arc de Triomphe. The army censured

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 125.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 217.

Hemingway for his activities; but after a thorough investigation, he was awarded the Bronze Star instead of being courtmartialed.

After the investigation Hemingway returned to the front in time to cover the Hurtgen Forest campaign, which, with its great loss of life, embittered him. In the novel Cantwell vehemently condemns his superiors for sacrificing his regiment to assure the success of this frontal assault; because of conflicting opinions concerning the attack Cantwell is reduced in rank from brigadier general to colonel. The slaughtered force was a crack regiment which had been trained by one of Cantwell's friends, but the original commander was unable to handle it and had been relieved of his command. Cantwell took great pride in it. Moreover:

he was completely desperate at the remembrance of his loss of his battalions, and of individual people. He could never hope to have such a regiment, ever. He had not built it. He had inherited it. But, for a time, it had been his great joy. Now every second man in it was dead and the others nearly all were wounded. In the belly, the head, the feet or the hands, the neck, the back, the lucky buttocks, the unfortunate chest and the other places. Tree burst wounds hit men where they would never be wounded in open country. And all the wounded were wounded for life.<sup>16</sup>

Cantwell, the disciplined soldier, realizes the importance of following orders. He says, "In our army you obey like a dog. You always hope you have a good master."<sup>17</sup> Realizing that orders come from higher up than generals,

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 242.

Cantwell makes a biting comment about President Truman, whom he calls "an unsuccessful haberdasher."<sup>18</sup> It is the government, however, that receives his most blistering attack: "Now we are governed in some way, by the dregs. We are governed by what you find in the bottom of dead beer glasses that whores have dunked their cigarettes in. The place has not even been swept out yet and they have an amateur pianist beating on the box."<sup>19</sup>

That Cantwell's life is running out fast is obvious from the beginning of the novel; thus his trip to Venice takes on new meaning for him. He feels a great necessity for getting everything off his chest. Venice is a city he has loved since he first saw it in World War I, and he wants to relive once again a nearly perfect weekend there; Hemingway sees to it that he does. Cantwell drinks his favorite wines, eats the best food available, and makes love to his beautiful countess; he has one last perfect duck shoot. This weekend in Venice has for him a special savor, and "the emotional hypertension of the recognized approach of death gives every observed detail of remaining life a special sharpened value."<sup>20</sup> The colonel has his perfect weekend, makes his will, and promptly dies.

The familiar theme of isolation recurs in Across the River and Into the Trees: Cantwell's bitterness toward

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 227.

<sup>20</sup>Baker, op. cit., p. 275.

World War II sets him apart from the other characters in the novel. Green D. Wyrick points out that "Cantwell, certainly, is a man alone. His world is almost as dark as the early novels, but there is one significant difference. Cantwell has in part made his world, and shaped his life as he directed."<sup>22</sup> Like Harry Morgan, Cantwell goes his way alone, and his hostility, like Harry's, becomes the center of his world; but Cantwell appears to derive a certain satisfaction out of his condemnation of things which rankle in his mind.

Thus Cantwell becomes the person through whom Hemingway exorcises the horror and tragedy which he saw in World War II. Like Frederick Henry, Cantwell sees nothing sacred or glorious in war, and Robert Jordan's idealism is noticeably missing in the colonel's portrayal. Since Hemingway affirms in For Whom the Bell Tolls that life is good and worth living, his bitterness in Across the River and Into the Trees is understandable: the stupid egoism of the generals that he despises has not only cost many men their lives, but it has also deprived them of a chance to live in a world whose goodness and worth they were aware of and fought for.

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<sup>22</sup> Green D. Wyrick, The World of Ernest Hemingway: A Critical Study (Emporia, Kansas, 1953), p. 19.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA

The Old Man and the Sea is the expansion of an incident in an article, "On the Blue Water (A Gulf Stream Letter)," which Hemingway wrote for Esquire in April, 1936. The article, which explained the excitement of deep-sea fishing, gave an account of an old Cuban fisherman who caught a huge marlin. The fish pulled his boat far out to sea; after a two-day struggle, the old man landed the fish, only to see sharks destroy it as he sailed home.

The novel reiterates the theme that man cannot be vanquished, a theme which appears, for example, in Hemingway's short story "The Undefeated." There an aged matador, Manuel Garcia, kills a bull in the classical manner before an audience debauched by the theatricality of pseudo matadors. Although the audience misunderstands his actions and thinks he is a coward, Manuel kills his bull well and to his satisfaction; in the process he is fatally gored. The matador is misunderstood by his audience, and the old fisherman of the novel, like his prototype of the Esquire article, loses his fish to the sharks; but each displays heroic qualities in his fight.

In The Old Man and the Sea, Santiago, the heroic Cuban fisherman, is Hemingway's first major character who has grown old. Despite his age, he displays the discipline of his younger predecessors, and he is skilled in his trade as a fisherman. He possesses the tenacity of the code: he endures his bad luck without bitterness or complaint and his personal courage is unquestionable.

Since Santiago is a very old man, however, the sexual activity of previous protagonists is missing in him. This omission leads to the absence of any heroine; the only woman in the novel is the one at the end who walks with her husband along the beach and sees the skeleton of the marlin.

Hemingway is easily identifiable with several of the other protagonists, but the main feature that identifies him with Santiago is a common love of fishing and the sea. The old man ". . . is not Hemingway, and is not the Hemingway hero; he is the code hero, based on the character and experiences of an unfictional Cuban fisherman."<sup>1</sup>

Santiago is Hemingway's first major character who is not American; he is also the first whose life is free of complications caused by his past experiences. Unlike Jake Barnes and Frederick Henry, Santiago has not been permanently wounded in any way, nor has he been disillusioned like Colonel Cantwell. Instead, he has come to love the sea,

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<sup>1</sup>Young, op. cit., p. 97.

upon which he has spent his life: he regards la mar as a woman who either gives or withholds great favors and who is sometimes wild and wicked because she cannot help being that way. On this sea Santiago acts out his heroism.

At the beginning of the novel, the old man has been eighty-four days without taking a fish; but such luck leaves him undaunted: he is a man of resolution, and he knows all the tricks of catching the huge marlin for which he fishes. On the eighty-fifth day, Santiago takes his boat out farther than usual; he baits his hooks precisely and with the proper bait; he fishes at the exact depth where large fish feed; he lets his boat drift only fast enough to keep the lines straight down. When a giant marlin strikes, he is prepared to bring him in.

But the marlin pulls the skiff far out into the sea, and Santiago with the line held across his back, holds on tenaciously for two days and two nights; his back is cut and bent from the line across it, and his hands are bleeding and sore from having the line dragged through them. As the two struggle with each other, the old man feels a deep admiration and affection for the marlin's strength; he becomes conscious of its nobility as the two come closer and closer together in spirit as well as space. In the struggle, his body racked with fatigue and pain, Santiago reflects, "You are killing me, fish. . . . But you have a right to. Never have I seen a greater, or more beautiful,

or a calmer or more noble thing than you, brother. Come on and kill me. I do not care who kills who."<sup>2</sup> A lesser man would have given up the struggle and sailed home to fish another day; but Santiago says, ". . . man is not made for defeat. A man can be destroyed but not defeated."<sup>3</sup>

As Santiago struggles with the fish, he recalls the time in his youth when he defeated a huge Negro from Cienfuegos in the hand game. They had gone one day and one night, their forearms straight up, their hands gripped tight, each trying to put the other's hand down; in a surge of strength, Santiago won and was given the title El Campeon. He also thinks of Joe DiMaggio, the great baseball player who suffers from a bone spur in his heel, and he wonders whether DiMaggio ever suffered such pain as the marlin is subjecting him to. The second night as he dozes, he dreams of the lions he has seen in his youth when he was in Africa.

Santiago at last subdues the fish and lashes it to the side of his boat, but the worst part of his ordeal is yet to come: the sharks soon attack and mutilate the fish for which he worked so hard and suffered so much. Santiago fights them fiercely but uselessly.

The old man reaches port safely--with the skeleton of the marlin still lashed to his boat. Carrying the

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<sup>2</sup>Ernest Hemingway, The Old Man and the Sea (New York, 1952), p. 102.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 114.

heavy mast of his skiff, he staggers up the hill to his hut and lies face down on his bed, his cut and bruised hands turned up.

What Santiago endures in his ordeal with the fish he must endure alone; he must rely upon his own resources and undergo his trial unaided. His isolation upon the sea concentrates the novel into a struggle between the individual man and the natural world. Santiago establishes his final relation with the fish when he thinks:

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.<sup>4</sup>

Leo Gurko interprets Hemingway to be saying in this passage that

a sense of brotherhood and love, in a world in which everyone is killing or being killed, binds together the creatures of Nature, establishes between them a unity and an emotion which transcends the destructive pattern in which they are caught. In the eternal round, each living thing, man and animal, acts out its destiny according to the drives of its species, and in the process becomes a part of the profound harmony of the natural universe.<sup>5</sup>

This natural world of Santiago has attracted Hemingway's characters since the first novel. Jake and Bill in The Sun Also Rises are happy only in the remote countryside of Burguete, where they go to fish; Frederick and Catherine

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 116.

<sup>5</sup>Leo Gurko, "The Heroic Impulse in The Old Man and the Sea," English Journal, XLIV (October, 1955), 378.

in A Farewell to Arms find their chief happiness after they retire to the Swiss mountain lodge, away from the butchery of the war; Robert Jordan in For Whom the Bell Tolls, lying mortally wounded on the pine needles of the cool forest, is "somehow happy"<sup>6</sup> as he covers the escape of his friends.

In his own life, too, Hemingway tends to avoid the highly industrialized countries, including America, and seeks the more primitive places of Spain, Africa, and Cuba. He senses that industrialization tends to stifle individual action, but these remote places afford heroic possibilities which are essential to Hemingway's artistic temperament. This "movement to get out of society and its artifices 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."<sup>7</sup>

The natural world of Hemingway and Santiago are very similar; further, "it is toward the creation of such a figure that Hemingway has been moving, however obscurely, from the beginning."<sup>8</sup> 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."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup>Warren, op. cit., p. xii.

<sup>7</sup>Gurko, "The Heroic Impulse," p. 382.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 382.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 381.

The purposiveness begun in For Whom the Bell Tolls culminates in The Old Man and the Sea. Although this novel is short, its importance in Hemingway's intellectual development must not be minimized;<sup>10</sup> in it "there is no less tragedy than before, but this has lost its bleakness and accidentality, and become purposive. It is this sense of purposiveness that makes its first appearance in Hemingway's philosophy, and sets off The Old Man and the Sea from his other fiction."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Critics have shown a tendency to overlook the importance of The Old Man and the Sea in the development of Hemingway's philosophy; so far, there are only two critical publications of great value: Philip Young, Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1952), and Leo Gurko, "The Heroic Impulse in The Old Man and the Sea," English Journal, XLIV (October, 1955), 382.

<sup>11</sup>Gurko, "The Heroic Impulse," p. 381.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSION

If anyone asked what attitude Hemingway expresses toward life in his work as a whole, no simple answer could be given because his attitude changes perceptibly with each of his novels. In his early work he endorses rebellion against the world and isolation from society; but this attitude of rejection vanishes with the appearance of his last novel. (Each intervening work (except Across the River and Into the Trees) shows a progression toward the maturity that he manifests in The Old Man and the Sea.)

No ① Hemingway is a sensitive person with a great concern for mankind. His writing has become the means by which he exorcises the tragedy he has seen in life; (with the exception of The Old Man and the Sea each novel has been) an attempt to rid himself of some of the horror he has seen-- horror caused by war and economic upheaval.

The search for meaning in life in the post-war world is the resounding note which begins The Sun Also Rises, and the lack of certitude in a world (<sup>"gone bad"</sup>gone to hell) is the cry upon which it ends. Between beginning and ending, the characters, significantly led by the emasculated Jake, stumble blindly and without direction in protest against

the emptiness of life; abandoning their futile search for something whose very existence they come to deny, they soon turn to escape in fiestas, alcohol, and sex. In the barren world which they do not understand they isolate themselves from reality and adopt their own code by which to live.

A sense of the futility of life and a consequent isolation from it are intensified in A Farewell to Arms, which, with its flame-streaked background of war, presents Hemingway's world at its bleakest. In no other novel is the cosmos so indifferent to human suffering, nor do any other characters strive so hard for escape as Catherine and Frederick. But the universe in which they find themselves brings about their inexorable destruction, through Catherine's death and Frederick's total disillusionment.

The theme of futility found in <sup>The Sun Also Rises</sup> (the first two novels) is also manifest in To Have and Have Not, the basis of which is not war but the economic upheaval of the early thirties. Harry Morgan is caught up in the same indifferent cosmos as (Frederick Henry and) Jake Barnes; and in the end he, too, is defeated by forces over which he has no control. Yet his admission that a man alone does not have a chance is a turning point in Hemingway's writing; this is the novel in which the author first expresses social concern for man. ) END

In For Whom the Bell Tolls Hemingway touches on the political world. Although he has never been a "political

writer," he sympathizes with the Spanish Republicans, who fight for freedom in Spain. The protagonist, Robert Jordan, fights under the direction of the communists--yet he is not taken in by their ideology. He represents the first protagonist who thinks analytically; he is also the first Hemingway hero who espouses a cause. This novel culminates in Hemingway's admission that the world is a place worth living in.

Whereas Robert Jordan looks upon war as a means to preserve the things in which he believes, war motivates Colonel Cantwell's bitterness in Across the River and Into the Trees. The colonel is a professional soldier who recognizes and admires able military leaders; but he is embittered by those who ineptly send soldiers to needless death. The frontal attack at Hurtgen Forest, where casualties were alarmingly high, initiated his bitterness. As a correspondent Hemingway had covered this attack; thus, the novel becomes the instrument through which he expresses the repugnance that he feels for World War II.

In The Old Man and the Sea Hemingway portrays the natural and peaceful world toward which he has been moving since he began writing. Santiago struggles heroically with the giant fish; although the sharks tear and mutilate it, the skeleton which he brings into port is a more worthy capture than any other fish he has ever caught: (it is the

(symbol of his tenacity and courage in the face of over-  
powering difficulty. / With the creation of Santiago, who  
emerges strengthened and dignified by his ordeal, Heming-  
way abandons his desolate and war-shattered world.

The Old Man and the Sea indicates that Hemingway has  
at last rid himself of the horror that he has experienced  
during his life; it also indicates that he has at last  
found the peace and contentment that so many of his char-  
acters sought vainly. The despair and rebellion of The  
Sun Also Rises, the sense of futility in A Farewell to Arms,  
and the bitterness of Across the River and Into the Trees  
are supplanted by a sense of brotherhood and love in The  
Old Man and the Sea; the world of nada about which Heming-  
way first wrote comes at last to an end.

Here we have entered a world which has to some  
degree 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 his political idealism 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, but a meaningful, integrated  
structure that challenges our resources, holds forth  
rich emotional rewards for those who live in it dar-  
ingly and boldly. . . .<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Gurko, "The Heroic Impulse," p. 381.

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