HEMINGWAY AND THE ARISTOTELIAN TRAGEDY

THESIS

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Edythe D. Kromi, B. S.
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Because Ernest Hemingway's four major novels are often referred to as tragedies, these novels are checked against Aristotle's criteria for tragedy. *The Sun Also Rises* is not an Aristotelian tragedy because the wounding of Jake Barnes precedes the events in the novel; it is, instead, an extended tragic epilogue. *A Farewell to Arms* is a modern anti-romantic tragedy of irony, a story of disillusionment which does not provide cathartic relief. The most nearly tragic in structure, *The Old Man and the Sea* does not provide a catharsis because Hemingway fails to arouse the necessary emotions. The most tragic of the four in effect, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* lacks the proper structure for tragedy, but is a tragic epical novel. Although all four of these books have elements of the Aristotelian tragedy, all are other types of tragedy.
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To discuss the writings of Ernest Hemingway as tragedy necessarily entails a consideration of the critical reception of those writings. Numerous critics have briefly mentioned that particular works or scenes are tragic. A much smaller number have discussed some particular part of Hemingway's work which, they say, constitutes tragedy. Presumably, then, there should be little difficulty in ascertaining whether Hemingway wrote any tragedies. Such a presumption, however, is incorrect.

The vast majority of critics have done nothing more than refer to some part of Hemingway's work that they call tragic. Almost no one explains why a passage or work is tragic; the reader of the critical work must infer from the content that the critic defines as "tragic" any occurrence which includes grief, unhappiness, regret, or disappointment. Unfortunately, most of the literary critics who have discussed Hemingway-as-tragedian at some length have not done much to clarify the critical consensus. Admittedly, these critics do more than attach labels to parts; they usually show how the various parts fit together and occasionally explain what they believe the structure of tragedy to be. However, their explanations
remain generally inadequate; they do not explain how the combined parts produce a vehicle with a particular function.

Hemingway never published a separate work giving an exact definition of the elements he considered necessary to tragic literature. However, he explains very fully in *Death in the Afternoon* the elements he considered necessary to tragic art (7), and comments in other works, cited throughout this thesis, provide additional information about Hemingway's conception of tragedy. Furthermore, he occasionally refers to particular works of his as "tragic."

In order to answer the question of whether Hemingway produced tragedy, one must first define tragedy, an extremely complex procedure. Different ages have accepted varying definitions, and the first problem is to decide which definition to apply to Hemingway's works. A second problem arises from the very nature of tragedy; regardless of which definition is chosen, an inherent difficulty exists because tragedy is both a literary structure and an emotional function.

Tragedy as an art form and as an emotional function can be traced back to the sixth century B.C. The "widely known and influential" commentaries by Aristotle in his *Poetics* still affect the critics of today (5, p. 91). The twenty-four centuries since Aristotle's lifetime have seen the development of numerous new literary forms, changes in older forms, and resulting confusion about how to classify these forms. The result of the plethora of literature has been the broadening
of literary genres into basic types, such as the drama and the novel, and the division of these types into sub-types.

In this process, tragedy as the separate literary genre of Aristotle's time has almost vanished. The term in general is understood to refer to a type of drama; but it is also used in referring to other genres, often, but not always, in its adjectival form. Fairly general limitations have been placed on tragedy, and the writer is allowed tremendous leeway in meeting these broad specifications.

The question remains: Is Hemingway the author of tragedies? As this paper shows, the Hemingway and Aristotelian conceptions of tragedy are often quite similar; therefore, the question is now restated: Is Hemingway the writer of works which Aristotle would acknowledge as tragedies?

In Aristotle's age, all tragedy was drama. That contemporary definitions of tragedy include literary forms unknown to Aristotle does not invalidate the application of the classic Greek criteria to modern literature; however, the criteria used to judge certain parts of the Greek tragedy cannot be validly applied to modern literature which does not contain those parts. Thus, in order to remove obstacles which block reaching a reasonable decision, one must omit some of Aristotle's criteria when examining modern novels.

Aristotle considered tragedy to contain six necessary but not equally important elements. The two least important are song and spectacle.
Song, the element Aristotle considered of fifth rank in importance, was a necessary part of all Greek drama, wherein the chorus sang part of the story. Aristotle explains the function of song within tragedy:

Tragedy ... is an imitation of an action that is ... in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play. ... By 'language embellished,' I mean that some parts are rendered through the medium of verse alone, others again with the aid of song (1, pp. 22-23).

In tracing the development of tragedy, Aristotle points out that with the introduction of additional actors to the play, the importance of the chorus diminished as the actors' parts became more important (1, pp. 18-19).

What Aristotle called spectacle may now be called visual and sound effects, still considered an important part of any drama, in that the proper use of these helps to create the desired atmosphere. Danziger and Johnson note that in defining the tragic drama, one should probably consider—in addition to plot, characters, and tragic vision—the formal elements, including spectacle. "The dancelike movements of the Greek chorus, the huge masks worn by the chief actors in Greek drama, ... are not merely decorations but an integral part of the total atmosphere," intensifying both the tragic atmosphere and the dignity of the actors (5, pp. 98-99). Of the six elements in tragedy, Aristotle states that spectacle is the least important, dependent "more on the art of the stage machinest than on that of the poet," although he did recognize the "emotional attraction" that spectacle produces (1, pp. 28-31).
The atmosphere created by spectacle and the plot progression supplied by the choral songs in classic Greek tragedy are produced by narration, by description, and sometimes by dialogue in the modern novel. The forms of the two genres are usually very different, and it is unfair to hold one genre at fault because it does not contain elements important only to the other. Therefore, it is unnecessary to point out in the discussion of individual works that there is no song or spectacle in Aristotle's meaning of the terms. Where something in an individual work bears a similarity to either of these elements, the resemblance is noted.

Above song and spectacle, Aristotle ranks diction fourth in importance. He includes a long discussion of the constituent parts of language, starting with sounds and letters and continuing through figures of speech. Many of his remarks concern the employment of a properly serious poetic meter to convey a serious situation. The purpose here could hardly be to ascertain whether Hemingway uses a properly serious poetic meter, and the purpose is not to dissect Hemingway's sentences, a task already undertaken by some critics. The important point in this discussion is the meaning conveyed by the language the author and his characters use. Diction is defined as "the pattern of words," and the discussion is generally limited to whether Hemingway's patterns contribute to the construction of a tragedy.
Language is the poet's "vehicle of expression," which he uses "to imitate . . . things as they were or are, things as they are said or thought to be, or things as they ought to be." The poet is permitted to use contemporary terms, rare words, or metaphors and also to modify the language to suit his poetic purposes. He is to be considered at fault in his use of language only when he imitates incorrectly. As well as whether he uses appropriate language in the narration and the dialogue, the reader must also consider the speaker or the recipient of the action or speech, the circumstances, and the motivation (1, pp. 96-101).

A difficulty in differentiating between diction and thought, Aristotle's third-ranked element, arises from the use of language to express thought. Aristotle explains that thought includes both the effects produced by speech and those produced by dramatic incidents when the author intends to arouse pity or fear or to point up the importance or probability of the events; but whether the passage is narration or dialogue, the necessary effects should be produced by the incidents alone or by the speech alone (1, pp. 68-71).

In this paper, thought is defined as "the appropriateness and believability of the characters' words and actions (their characterizations) and of the occurrences within the particular situation." As far as possible, thought and diction are kept separate; but complete separation is sometimes impossible, for the structure of a character's speech may either detract from
or contribute to thought. Thought is limited to the various effects supposed to be produced by speech and action--proof and disproof; arousal of such emotions as anger, pity, and fear; and the indication of importance or non-importance (1, pp. 68-71). As with diction, thought is judged according to whether the effects aid in making the story a tragedy. Appropriate and believable actions and words alone do not make a tragedy, however; character and plot structure must also be appropriate.

Character is the second most important element in the Aristotelian tragedy. In large measure, Aristotle's remarks must be applied in judging modern literature. It must be noted that at certain times, the only acceptable tragic hero has been a noble man of high birth. To some extent, this requirement has probably seriously hindered discussion of modern authors as tragedians within the Aristotelian framework. Aristotle's remark that tragedy imitates "characters of a higher type" (1, pp. 20-21), has been interpreted to mean at the very least "of far-better-than-average character," a meaning not even implied by Aristotle, who means simply that tragic heroes should be morally good.

As Danziger and Johnson state, Aristotle finds "the most effective [tragic hero] to be neither wholly good nor wholly bad, but somewhere between these extremes." He is usually a man of slightly-better-than-average moral character, but one with a tragic flaw. The tragic flaw, necessary because the
defeat or destruction of a totally good and innocent man is distressing, may be the cause of the hero's downfall, but a more likely cause is fate or the gods (5, p. 92).

The tragic flaw of the Aristotelian hero has been variously interpreted. According to Butcher, the Greek word which is translated as "tragic flaw" has several nuances implicit in its meaning. If the flaw causes the disaster, the hero's error may be due to a lack of knowledge, especially of something he could have known; to a conscious, intentional, but not deliberate act, such as that aroused by passion or anger; or to a character flaw which has no vicious purpose, an interpretation which includes "any human frailty or moral weakness." Butcher theorizes that Aristotle means that either "a single great error, whether morally culpable or not, or a single great defect in a character otherwise noble . . . may carry with it the tragic issues of life and death." Butcher also states that motive is unimportant; the innocent are just as doomed as the guilty (3, pp. 317-321).

As Aristotle describes the poet's goal in creating character, the difficulty of distinguishing between this element and thought arises. The difference is that character concerns the moral fiber of the hero as well as his characterization, the responsibility of thought. In the creation of character, the poet attempts to produce an appropriate, consistent, true-to-life picture of a good person: the person is good if his moral purpose, manifested by speech and actions, is good.
The second aim of character is propriety, which Aristotle illustrates by stating that many valor is an inappropriate trait for a woman. The characterization must be consistent. The individual's actions must always be those which someone of his personality might perform; his words, those which the same person might speak. In presenting a realistic picture, the writer should follow the example of the portrait painter who, "while reproducing the original, make[s] a likeness which is true to life and yet more beautiful." The writer should preserve and, at the same time, ennoble the type of the person with character defects, minimizing the defects without eradicating them (1, pp. 52-57).

Character can be judged only as the individual acts and speaks within a framework, in this case, the framework of the Aristotelian tragedy, wherein character is important not for its own sake but "as a causal element in the plot" (4, p. 28). Aristotle repeatedly indicates that plot, not character, is the most important element in tragedy, thus emphasizing a statement that appears in the first part of the Poetics:

Most important of all [the elements of tragedy] is the structure of the incidents. . . . Dramatic action . . . is not with a view to the representation of character; character [is] subsidiary to the actions. Hence the incidents and the plot are the end of tragedy; and the end is the chief thing of all. Again, without action there cannot be a tragedy; there may be without character (1, pp. 26-27).

The last part of this statement does not mean that tragedy may exist without personae. Butcher explains that the probable
meaning of the statement is that the hero may be morally weak or may be an undistinguished person, perhaps merely a character type (3, p. 345). However, the goals of characterization are not to be eliminated, but merely subordinated to the more important goals of the plot.

Basically, the plot is "the arrangement of the incidents," an arrangement dependent upon thought and character, "the two natural causes from which actions spring. . ." (1, pp. 24-25). Both the incidents themselves and their structure are important. Dramatic actions, as Butcher points out, must be built into a coherent, complete set of events through which the characters "work toward an appointed end" (3, pp. 348-349). The writer may choose any of several ways to get his characters to that end, but the development of the plot must fulfill certain requirements if the story is to be considered a tragedy.

Unity of plot, the first necessary characteristic, has at times had its meaning extended to include requirements that Aristotle does not make. The Neoclassicists, for example, decreed that the actions of all tragedies had to occur within a twenty-four hour period, a requirement which produced some ridiculous results. Although Aristotle does indicate that tragedy should "as far as possible . . . confine itself to a single revolution of the sun, or but slightly . . . exceed this limit," he also notes that not all Greek tragedies fit within this limitation (1, pp. 22-23). In addition, some critics have mistakenly decided that unity of place is another
of Aristotle's rules. Butcher states that Greek drama generally maintained unity of place simply because changing the setting was almost impossible: the same group of actors stayed on stage (3, p. 292), there being no division into the several acts of more modern drama. The choral songs of classic tragedy serve to extend the time between the individual character's words and actions; but as noted earlier, plot progression is now supplied by other means.

The only unity required by Aristotle is unity of plot. The tragic subject should be a complete single action with a starting point, a middle, and an ending. Aristotle's definition of the beginning—"that which does not itself follow anything by causal necessity" (1, pp. 30-31)—has caused some difficulty to those who interpret it to mean that there should be no relationship between the opening scenes of the tragedy and any preceding incident. Butcher assumes that Aristotle means that drama must start at a given point and that although necessary antecedent facts are to be supplied, "we do not trace each of these facts back to its origin, or follow the chain of cause and effect ad infinitum." To do so is to extend the causal chain indefinitely (3, pp. 280-281).

To control his subject, the poet carefully selects the parts that constitute the whole. Aristotle requires all parts to contribute to structural unity in such a way that none can be eliminated without injury to the whole. The poet may choose any subject, including actual events, but he must
remember that he is not a historian or a biographer, and must, therefore, eliminate, add, or change incidents in order to maintain unity (1, pp. 32-37).

The function of the poet is to relate what is possible or probable within the unified framework (1, pp. 34-35). At the same time, the writer of tragedy must exercise care not to introduce ludicrous elements. Aristotle states that "the poet should prefer probable impossibilities to improbable possibilities." Irrational parts are to be excluded, if at all possible, or to be placed so that the action does not occur in view of the audience (1, pp. 94-97). Ludicrous elements do not always hamper unity, but they do ruin the serious atmosphere necessary to the tragic effect.

The tragic effect arises in part from the hero's change of fortune, another necessary characteristic of Aristotelian tragedy and a requirement closely related to the character of the tragic hero. The earlier discussion of the hero notes that his character should not be perfect. Aristotle explains that the downfall of a virtuous man is shocking, not tragic; that the change of fortune of a bad man from adversity to prosperity has none of the qualities of tragedy; and that the fall of a villain satisfies only a moral sense without arousing pity or fear, a necessary arousal in tragedy. Instead, the change must involve the misfortune of a good man and often occurs because of his mistake or weakness (1, pp. 44-45, 56-57).
The change of fortune may occur within either a simple or a complex plot, both of which are sequential in that incidents are interdependent. Either type must present fear- or pity-arousing incidents which surprise the audience but which are most effective when they follow a cause and effect relationship. The perfect tragedy, according to Aristotle, has a complex arrangement. Unlike the change within the simple plot, where action is "one and continuous," the change in the complex plot involves reversal of the situation or recognition or both (1, pp. 38-38, 44-45).

Butcher translates the Greek term for "reversal of the situation" to mean "a change by which the action veers round to its opposite" as a logical sequence of the preceding action (1, pp. 38-41). He states that the Greek term "suggests . . . a series of incidents or a train of action" which will presumably produce a particular end but which has a completely different result. Thus, the character is caught between what might logically be expected to happen or what he hopes will happen and what actually does occur. Butcher indicates also that reversal may involve verbal irony as well as dramatic irony (3, pp. 330-331).

The second element of the complex plot also involves a change--"a change from ignorance to knowledge, producing love or hate between the persons destined by the poet for good or bad fortune"--and may involve a discovery of either people or objects (1, pp. 40-41). Aristotle discusses five forms of
recognition: recognition by signs—birthmarks, scars, or articles worn on the body; recognition through a contrived situation included for no reason other than revelation; recognition dependent upon memory's being aroused by an object or situation; recognition through deductive reasoning, including false inference; and recognition occurring as a natural result of the course of events and involving a "startling discovery." Aristotle finds little artistic merit in the first three types, but implies the acceptability of the fourth, even though it involves, as do the first three, "the artificial aid of tokens or amulets." The last type is the only one he finds completely acceptable (1, pp. 56-61).

Aristotle's comments about recognition superficially seem more applicable to mystery than to tragedy. However, recognition and reversal may occur within the same plot, and Aristotle remarks that the dual occurrence provides the most nearly perfect tragedy, one which produces pity and fear (1, pp. 40-41). This combination occurs in some post-Aristotelian dramas which are notable examples of tragedy, as well as in the plays cited by Aristotle as being the best type. There is, furthermore, in these dramas an additional element which Aristotle, calling it the third part of the plot, defines as "the scene of suffering . . . a destructive or painful scene, such as death on the stage, bodily agony, wounds, or the like" (1, pp. 42-43). Either Aristotle believed his definition of the "scene of suffering" to be
sufficient, or his further explanations have been lost; however, it is obvious that, along with reversal of the situation and recognition, the scene of suffering was considered an important part of classic Greek tragedy.

The classic Greek tragedy is also divided into quantitative parts. According to Aristotle, prologue, episode, exode, and choric songs commonly occurred in all the plays of his time (1, pp. 44-45). A lengthy discussion of these parts is not necessary here; novels almost never contain passages that could be considered choric songs, and the modern novel only infrequently has a separate portion which serves as the prologue. Novels do, of course, generally have episodes, during which action takes place, and an exode, which may be simply the closing scene or, according to Barnet, Berman, and Burto, an epilogue (2, p. 486).

More important than the quantitative parts are those parts which develop the story—the complication and the dénouement. Aristotle explains these very simply: the complication is the action from the beginning to the change of fortune; the dénouement, the action from the time at which the change begins until the end. Additionally, the complication may combine "incidents extraneous to the action"—those of which the audience needs knowledge—with the action taking place (1, pp. 64-65). According to earlier remarks in the Poetics, the opening scenes of the drama should be the start of the complication. Butcher explains the
inconsistency of allowing the inclusion of external incidents by pointing out that some Greek tragedies, such as Oedipus Tyrannus, were so constructed. Butcher goes on to say that this practice frequently makes ancient tragedies similar to the final acts of modern drama: the ancient tragedy "begins almost at the climax: the action proper is highly compressed and concentrated, and forms the last moment of a larger action hastening to its close" (3, p. 283). The unity of the classic Greek tragedy depends to some extent upon this concentration of actions. It is, therefore, important not to fall into the same trap with the Neoclassicists and thus demand an unrealistic foreshortening of the occurrence of the incidents. Aristotle finds that to be beautiful, an object must have magnitude and order; he also says that the plot should be of "a length which can be easily embraced by the memory" (1, pp. 30-33). The complication and dénouement, therefore, must fulfill this requirement; and if unity is to be maintained, the external events must contribute to the action of the tragedy in such a way that excluding them would detract from the plot.

The unified events of the classic tragedy lead inevitably to the scene of suffering, the final catastrophe. All tragedies, nevertheless, are not the same, circumstances and personalities being capable of wide variations, even within the rather narrow limits discussed. Regardless of the circumstances and personalities, however, the story is expected to present universality, to arouse pity and fear within the audience, and to effect a catharsis.
The subject matter of poetry is not simply the story of an individual's life, but "the universal [and] permanent possibilities of human nature" (3, p. 164). The requirement that poetry express these possibilities is closely related to Aristotle's remark that poetry tells not what has actually occurred, as does history, but what may occur. The universal is defined as the probable or necessary actions of a person in a given situation (1, pp. 34-35). The audience must be able to believe unquestioningly that the characters could and would act as they do in the drama. As Daiches explains, the world created by the poet is his own; he is not required to tell the historical truth. The events and actions of the story, however, are not only probabilities within the created world, but "because that world is itself a formal construction based on elements in the real world, [the events and actions are also] an illumination of an aspect of the world as it really is (4, p. 37).

The arousal of pity and fear are necessary to catharsis; and both the arousal and the cathartic effect are closely related to the universality of tragedy. The audience will not feel pity or fear unless the writer has created a believable (not necessarily a realistic) world with credible characters, ones whose feelings the audience can share. Gassner states that tragic art is addressed to humane, responsible adults able to sympathize with the misfortunes of other individuals (6, pp. xlii-xliii).
"Pity is aroused by unmerited misfortune; fear by the misfortune of a man like ourselves." According to the Poetics, the perfect tragedy must arouse both pity and fear, for this arousal is "the distinctive mark of tragic imitation" (1, pp. 44-45). However, this emotional arousal, it should be remembered, is only one of several requirements, although it is one of the most important. One must also consider the structure; and of the possible structures of tragedy, the best one involves a good, but not perfect, man undergoing a change of fortune from good to bad. "The best tragedies are founded on the story of . . . those . . . who have done or suffered something terrible" (1, pp. 46-47), actions which should elicit the required emotional responses.

The writer may use varying methods in his attempt to arouse pity and fear. The actions of the play occur between people, "either friends or enemies or indifferent to one another"; the tragic deed may occur or not occur. In addition, the relationship between the people may be known or unknown to one side or both. These circumstances may be combined in any of four ways, one of which--having knowledge of the person and reaching the point of acting without committing the deed--is not tragic. The other ways, from least to most tragic, are that the deed is committed with knowledge, that the deed is committed without knowledge but then discovered, and that the deed is about to be committed when recognition takes place (1, pp. 48-53). To the modern audience, the third,
rather than the first, circumstance probably seems more tragic. However, if the tragic deed does occur, the audience is less likely to experience the relief of catharsis and more likely to retain pity and fear.

Unfortunately, as has been noted by numerous critics, Aristotle's comments about catharsis are not clear. Butcher explains that remarks of Aristotle in the Politics indicate an intention to clarify the meaning of katharsis in the Poetics; however, this clarification is missing from the extant text of the latter work (3, pp. 251-252). Danziger and Johnson, as well as Butcher, discuss the various interpretations which have been applied to the term; for example, sixteenth century critics believed that the viewing of misery and violence causes the audience to become hardened to such circumstances, whereas eighteenth century critics believed that such scenes soften the spectators' emotions (5, p. 94).

Pity and fear are painful emotions; the cessation of pain brings relief or even, perhaps, pleasure. Danziger and Johnson state that "the interpretation that seems to come closest to Aristotle's meaning is that a purging almost in the medical sense takes place: pity and fear are brought to such an intense pitch by the tragedy that they are driven out" (5, p. 94). However, Butcher states that the katharsis of the Poetics probably also involves an aesthetic satisfaction. This satisfaction he explains as a combined purging of the elements of fear and pity and of the morbid and
disturbing aspects of those emotions so that the emotions are purified: pity and fear lose their self-centered qualities and become true compassion and sympathy. For such a catharsis to occur, for the full realization of the effects of tragedy, the literary work must be as nearly perfect as the writer can make it (3, pp. 253-273).

The modern critic who attempts to judge a literary work as tragic or not-tragic according to the Aristotelian criteria is faced with numerous problems. Gassner points out that Aristotle probably wrote his text about 330 B.C., but that the earliest Greek text available is dated about 1000 A.D. Furthermore, this text is fragmentary; epic poetry and tragedy are the only literary genres discussed in any detail. In addition, "this part is incomplete and apparently unrevised," evidently meant solely as lecture notes. There are also the translation difficulties, some of which have been discussed earlier in this chapter, due to the lack of exact modern language synonyms for ancient Greek terms and to Aristotle's habit of using a single term to mean several different things.

The textual limitations make it necessary for the translator to consider the meanings given to certain terms in Aristotle's other works, and Gassner states that "Butcher substantiated disputable points with a painstaking scholarship" (6, pp. xliiv-xlvii). In his long critical notes (3), Butcher includes copious documented references to other works by Aristotle, long examinations of various interpretations,
and reasoned support for his acceptance or rejection of those interpretations of questionable terms and passages. Butcher, a reputable scholar, has obviously made a sincere and erudite attempt to explain the Aristotle of the Poetics. It remains to be seen if Hemingway can be explained in terms of that Aristotle or whether Hemingway's creations must be considered some other type of tragedy or are not tragedies at all.

Four of Hemingway's novels—those generally considered his best—are discussed in the following chapters. The arrangement is not chronological because the attempt is not to show that Hemingway's works become increasingly tragic, but to indicate in which ways these books fulfill the Aristotelian requirements. Although in some respects, a few of Hemingway's short stories may be considered to fulfill the requirements of classic tragedy better than do these novels, it is necessary to limit this discussion; therefore, it was decided to include only the major novels—The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms, The Old Man and the Sea, and For Whom the Bell Tolls.

This first chapter is necessarily long because it contains reasonably complete explanations of the Aristotelian criteria; if the explanations were shorter, the discussions of Hemingway's works would be longer and would require an excessive amount of repetition.

Because of the difficulties facing the contemporary person attempting to apply the Aristotelian criteria, the
question of whether Hemingway produced any work which Aristotle would acknowledge as tragic can be answered only in part, and then only by making certain assumptions. Nevertheless, since 1498, when Valla translated the Poetics into Latin, the Aristotelian criteria have been discussed by critics and applied to literary productions up to and including those of modern dramatists such as Maxwell Anderson and Arthur Miller. Gassner states that "whether or not we think we apply or should apply Aristotelian criteria, the fact is that we do apply them" (6, pp. xlvii-xlvi).
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER II

JAKE AND SPAIN

The 1926 publication of *The Sun Also Rises* established Ernest Hemingway as an important twentieth-century American writer. Two months after publication, nearly 7,000 copies had been sold (3, p. 230); and several reprints have kept the book available during the years since. More important to this discussion than the popularity of the book, however, is the answer to the question of whether the book is an Aristotelian tragedy.

Very simply, the answer to that question is negative. Nevertheless, the question cannot be dismissed so peremptorily. In the first place, a popularity which spans nearly fifty years indicates that *The Sun Also Rises* has some degree of literary merit and is, therefore, deserving of critical attention. Furthermore, although critics do not unanimously agree about the meaning and theme of the novel, they do generally rank it among the best works of one of the most influential literary figures of the twentieth century; Shaw points out that it is now considered "one of the classic American novels" (20, p. 41). In the second place, Hemingway, in a November, 1926, letter to Maxwell Perkins, says specifically that he meant the book to be a tragedy (4, p. 81). And in the third,
and most important, place, the novel possesses some elements of Aristotelian tragedy.

The elements of the classical tragedy are song, spectacle, diction, thought, character, and plot. Because the modern novel does not generally have song and spectacle, diction must assume their part of the responsibilities for advancing the plot and creating atmosphere. The diction of a novel includes both dialogue and narration; therefore, in addition to whether the dialogue is appropriate to the characters' personalities within a given situation, also to be considered are whether the narration adequately portrays people and describes settings and situations; serves to advance the action; and helps to create the necessary atmosphere—in this case, a tragic atmosphere. The achievement of these goals and the authorial desire to create a tragedy do not ensure success; however, the contribution of properly-used diction cannot be discounted.

The now famous Hemingway style constitutes the diction of *The Sun Also Rises*. Hemingway explains his conception of the function of a serious writer, an explanation which implies the proper use of diction:

A writer's job is to tell the truth. His standard of fidelity to the truth should be so high that his invention, out of his experience, should produce a truer account than anything factual can be. For facts can be observed badly; but when a good writer is creating something, he has time and scope to make it of an absolute truth (12, pp. 7-8).
Hemingway says that he learned from Tolstoy "to try to write as truly, as straightly, as objectively and as humbly as possible" (12, p. 10). These are not, as the author points out in *Death in the Afternoon*, easy goals to attain. The writer must know what his true feelings are and what produces those feelings (11, p. 2). These goals, worthwhile ones for any writer, are especially important objectives for the writer attempting to produce a tragedy. A brief analysis of the diction of *The Sun Also Rises* shows the method Hemingway uses in this novel to reach for these goals.

In addition to the problems created by the necessity of examining both dialogue and narration in order to discuss the diction in a novel, *The Sun Also Rises* presents some difficulties arising from Hemingway's use of a first-person narrator. Jake Barnes reports all of the dialogue as well as telling the story, and there must be some question about how reliably he conveys the meanings of other characters. Despite the failure to cite evidence showing why readers should not accept Jake as either a completely reliable and sympathetic or a completely unreliable and unsympathetic narrator, Rovit's statement that "obviously [Jake] must be mostly reliable and mostly sympathetic" (18, p. 48) makes sense. In any reporting of facts, even the most objective writer influences his account simply by choosing certain words; but as far as conversation is concerned, Jake has no reason to record other than actual words. A narrator may shade meanings in any of several ways--
and for obvious reasons, Jake is not completely neutral (14, p. 63)—but he will quickly alienate his audience if he misrepresents his characters' conversations.

The question of how reliably the dialogue is reported does not seem to have been or to be of much critical concern. Instead, critics have commented repeatedly about the realism of the dialogue. "Realism" in this context should be read as "the natural way for these characters to speak in these situations."

To a great extent, the naturalness of the dialogue in The Sun Also Rises is attributable to its informality. Levin points out that Hemingway's syntax simplifies "as far as possible the already simple system of English inflections." To illustrate this informality, Levin cites the substitution of who and that for whom and which and the frequent failure to provide antecedents for personal pronouns. In addition, Hemingway uses very few adjectives—and uses the same evaluative ones (fine, nice, good, lovely, e.g.) numerous times—and very few verbs—and those generally "not particularly energetic" ones, but predominantly forms of to be (16, pp. 596-599). Farrell states that Hemingway "used [the literary possibilities of the American vernacular] with amazing skill and originality" (8, p. 55). He was not, of course, the first to use the American vernacular, the most notable forerunner being Twain. Yet Levin says that Twain is an impersonator, who keeps his personality separate from that of his characters.
Hemingway, on the other hand, identifies completely with his characters, "not so much entering into them as allowing them to take possession of him..." (16, pp. 595-596).

In actuality, Hemingway's technique produces conversations which are not "natural" in the sense of being a copy of real speech. Probably no adult speaker of English uses so few complex sentences or so few different adjectives and verbs. In fact, it is likely that the only literary characters who speak in such a way are Hemingway's characters and those of Hemingway's imitators. Nevertheless, that Hemingway almost invariably gives his characters in this book the right word in the right structure at the right time, can be confirmed by attempting to alter the speech: anything other than a few very simple changes results in a less natural-sounding dialogue and in personality changes as well. Hemingway uses "the rhythms and idioms, the pauses and suspensions and innuendoes and shorthand of living speech" (1, p. 4) to produce a speech natural to his characters and believable to his readers. Perhaps. Hemingway's "apparently colloquial American style" (6, p. 94) constitutes one method of presenting "probable impossibilities."

The success of the narration in *The Sun Also Rises* depends somewhat upon the same kind of simplicity and informality that the dialogue does. To a great extent, however, ordinary conversation consists of simple constructions and common words used informally, and the main problem for the
writer of ordinary conversation is to adopt familiar patterns and words to fit the speech to the individual character. Well-written narration, on the other hand, requires the writer to indicate the details of scenes accurately and to create a suitable atmosphere while maintaining a greater or lesser neutrality. Any narrator colors his account, but maintaining the neutrality of a first-person narrator is especially difficult; when the narrator is a major participant, as in *The Sun Also Rises*, the difficulty may increase.

The point of view set forth by Jake Barnes almost defies classification; it is first-person, but it is also almost objective. The objective point of view "allows only observable actions to be chronicled, only spoken words to be recorded. Interior monologue . . . is not permitted, nor is authorial examination of characters' motives" (19, p. 203). Although Jake's narration fulfills the first two characteristics of this definition and usually fulfills the last one, it also includes some passages which are very close to being soliloquies.

The first passage of conversation after the running of the bulls (13, pp. 200-204) demonstrates the characteristics that Jake omits. Nearly all of this passage is dialogue; there are only eight extremely short paragraphs of description, most of which concern the actions, not the attitudes, of the characters. In effect, the narrative passages work like stage directions. Even the verbs used to indicate a
speaker are not emotive; said is used twenty-nine times; asked three times, and interrupted and laughed once each.

Up to this point in the story, the tensions among the characters have been building, but it is here, although tension continues to grow, that the no-return point is reached.

Having gone back to their hotel after the scene in the cafe, Jake tells Bill that they should get ready to go to supper, and Bill says, "Yes, that will be a pleasant meal." The narration continues:

As a matter of fact, supper was a pleasant meal. Brett wore a black, sleeveless evening dress. She looked quite beautiful. Mike acted as though nothing had happened. I had to go up and bring Robert Cohn down. He was reserved and formal, and his face was still taut and sallow, but he cheered up finally. He could not stop looking at Brett. It seemed to make him happy. It must have been pleasant for him to see her looking so lovely, and know he had been away with her and that everyone knew it. They could not take that away from him. Bill was very funny. So was Michael. They were good together.

It was like certain dinners I remember from the war. There was much wine, an ignored tension, and a feeling of things coming that you could not prevent happening. Under the wine I lost the disgusted feeling and was happy. It seemed they were all such nice people (13, pp. 204-205).

In this passage, Jake describes, but does not examine; he indicates his own feelings, but not those of the other characters except as they are shown by outward signs. Jake's final statement fully implies that the people are not "such nice people" at all.

Hemingway has been accused—by Aiken (1), among others—of overusing dialogue in The Sun Also Rises. While it is
true that there are remarkably few passages of pure narration, this lack actually adds to the dramatic quality of the book. The passages of description effectively establish and maintain the scenes and the atmosphere without overpowering the action. Hemingway describes scenery almost as though he were directing the painting of a backdrop, as when Bill and Jake are traveling to Burguete:

The bus climbed steadily up the road. The country was barren and rocks stuck up through the clay. There was no grass beside the road. Looking back we could see the country spread out below. Far back the fields were squares of green and brown on the hillsides. Making the horizon were the brown mountains. They were strangely shaped. As we climbed higher the horizon kept changing. As the bus ground slowly up the road we could see other mountains flattened out, and went into a forest. It was a forest and there were cattle grazing back in the trees. We went through the forest and the road came out and turned along a rise of land, and out ahead of us was a rolling green plain, with dark mountains beyond it. These were not like the brown, heat-baked mountains we had left behind. These were wooded, and there were clouds coming down from them. The green plain stretched off. It was cut by fences and the white of the road showed through the trunks of a double line of trees that crossed the plain toward the north. As we came to the edge of the rise we saw the red roofs and white houses of Burguete ahead strung out on the plain, and away off on the shoulder of the first dark mountain was the gray metal-sheeted roof of the monastery of Roncesvalles (13, pp. 172-173).

Frohock says of this passage that it is "almost a classic example of getting a maximum of effect from the least expenditure of material" (9, pp. 167-168). It is typically Hemingway—simple sentences, common words, few details. Hemingway looks at a place with an artist's eye, retaining and recording whatever aspects identify it as a specific
place but, at the same time, rendering it as a generic location (4, p. 50). No one needs to have been there to see this place. One may, in fact, see it more clearly in his mind than he would on stage.

With the exception of the running-of-the-bulls scene, the long bullfight scene is the only one in *The Sun Also Rises* which can be considered spectacle. Yet the description is technical, not picturesque. As Boyd says, however, Hemingway does not leave the impression that he is trying to tell all that he knows. The technique of selective omission allows the picturesque to "emerge more truly and impressively than [it would] from any bravura passage" (5). Morris states that he believed Hemingway's account of the bullfight to be the only one in English which stresses the beauty and expertise (17, p. 142). It may still be the best short account.

The diction—both dialogue and narration—serves very well to establish setting, help create believable people, and produce an atmosphere appropriate to the plot, an element to be discussed later. The spoken words are appropriate to the characters and believable within the situations in which they are spoken. Furthermore, the characters' actions are also believable and appropriate.

The reader may wish that Hemingway had further developed his characters, whom Kazin, for example, considers romantic abstractions (15, pp. 334-335). The major characters were immediately recognizable as projections of people Hemingway
actually knew, many of whom were not particularly happy about the pictures the author had drawn (3, pp. 196-231), probably because Hemingway frequently emphasizes unflattering traits and habits. Baker states that Hemingway believed that watching any group of people under a microscope "for typical or idiosyncratic conduct [would] provide the groundwork of a novel" (4, p. 79). The characters of The Sun Also Rises are drawn as outlines of the microscope specimens, generally with only their outstanding characteristics indicated. The audience, however, learns all that is necessary for the author's purpose, and the actions of the characters are believable. The reader knows, for example, that Cohn would attack Romero; Cohn is, after all, the former "middleweight boxing champion of Princeton" and proud of that fact (13, p. 89), and he "couldn't stand it about Brett" (13, p. 244). Jake Barnes would go to Madrid to rescue Brett; he has, after all, already accepted the blame for her ever having gone there with Pedro Romero.

All in all, Hemingway can be said to have achieved another requirement of Aristotelian tragedy--thought. It remains to be seen why Hemingway's successful use of diction and thought do not help to produce an Aristotelian tragedy. It also remains to be seen why Hemingway speaks of the book as a tragedy.

A logical assumption is that any author who believes he has written a tragedy regards the major character as a
tragic figure. A second logical assumption is that the author would not disagree with the fairly general characterization which Aristotle indicates should be the goal of the writer in creating the tragic hero—a consistent, realistic picture of a "good" man, one who acts with propriety (2, pp. 44-47, 52-55). As noted in Chapter I, the Aristotelian tragic hero is "good" in a moral sense, but he is also a man with a flaw, which may or may not cause his downfall. The tragic flaw, whether a character defect or a terrible mistake committed by the hero, is necessary because the downfall of a perfect man is not tragic, but shocking. Danziger and Johnson point out that in the Greek drama of Aristotle's age, the downfall is more likely to be caused by fate or some higher power than by the hero himself (7, p. 92).

That the characterizations in The Sun Also Rises are consistent and realistic has already been indicated in the discussion of diction and thought; characterization cannot very well be believable if it is not consistent and real. Whether the hero is morally good is a question that can be answered only after the hero has been identified, a process which usually requires nothing more than a simple statement. Some critics, however, have raised the question of whether Pedro Romero or Jake Barnes is the hero of The Sun Also Rises. The answer depends upon an understanding of the basic Hemingway code, which establishes the proper way for the hero to act. Probably, more has been written about the Hemingway
code than about any other element in his works—whether the code has a moral basis and what that basis is, whether various heroes exist in different works or the hero is a single individual pictured in different situations, whether the protagonist of the various stories is a hero or a man attempting to become the hero. The only one of these points which needs consideration here is whether the Hemingway code has a moral base.

The ideal Hemingway hero—whether he is called the code hero, the tutor, or some other name—has courage, honesty, and integrity; he believes in honor and a set of values; he is a stoic and he behaves well; he performs his activities with skill; and he endures. His "message . . . is life: you lose, of course; what counts is how you conduct yourself while you are being destroyed" (22, p. 11).

Many facts support the acceptance of Pedro Romero as the hero of The Sun Also Rises, the chief of which are his stoicism, his skill, and his courage. Having been badly beaten up by Cohn, Romero—-with his physical wounds obvious—enters the bullring the following day to perform:

The fight with Cohn had not touched his spirit but his face had been smashed and his body hurt. He was wiping all that out now. Each thing that he did with this bull wiped that out a little cleaner. It was a good bull, a big bull, and with horns, and it turned and re-charged easily and surely. He was what Romero wanted in bulls.

When he had finished his work with the muleta and was ready to kill, the crowd made him go on. They did not want the bull killed yet, they did not want it to be over. Romero went on. It was like a course in
bullfighting. All the passes he linked up, all completed, all slow, templed and smooth. There were no tricks and no mystifications. There was no brusqueness. And each pass as it reached the summit gave you a sudden ache inside. The crowd did not want it ever to be finished.

The bull was squared on all four feet to be killed, and Romero killed directly below us. He killed not as he had been forced to by the last bull, but as he wanted to (13, p. 266).

Frohock says that the straightness, purity, and naturalness of Romero—the fact that he does not fake in order to make things seem dangerous—illustrate Hemingway's love of "the great beauty of integrity" (9, p. 173). In addition to integrity, Spilka points out that Romero has grace, control, manliness, and values; he has learned to establish his own moral code and live up to it (21, pp. 252-256).

In Death in the Afternoon, Hemingway's famous treatise on bullfighting, the author indicates in several places the characteristics he found admirable in a bullfighter. The most complete single statement, one pointed out by Hovey (14, p. 97), is the description of a corrida performed by Maero (Manuel Garcia), one of "the really brave men . . . who looked [before his death from tuberculosis] as though he were going to be the greatest of all [matadors]." Hemingway speaks of Maero's valor, bravery, and sense of honor in a fight in which the bullfighter—with his right, sword-handling wrist so badly injured that it was swollen to double its normal size—went back five times after the first attempt to kill so that he could kill the bull "as a man should, over
the horn, following the sword with his body" (11, pp. 77-81). This passage should be compared not to the quoted passage above, in which Romero has drawn a good bull, but to the description of Romero's first fight the same day, in which he has drawn a bad bull. Hemingway emphasizes the fact that Romero fights not brilliantly but perfectly (13, pp. 264-266). Obviously, Pedro Romero seems to have most of the characteristics required of the Hemingway hero. It is probable that he also fulfills the Aristotelian requirements for character. Despite all this, Romero is not the hero of *The Sun Also Rises*; he is too young. He has not received the first serious wound which he must receive before he can be adequately judged (11, pp. 166-167); he has not yet passed the final, the telling, test. Although Jake Barnes does not have the same kind of control and grace, the same kind of skill which Romero has, Jake is the hero: he endures.

Any one of or any combination of the characteristics of the Hemingway hero can be misconstrued by the reader who insists that to be a hero, the character must live according to the reader's conception of what is moral and what is not. But to judge, not prejudge, character, one must consider whether the individual fulfills the requirements of his own code. The requirements, the morality, of the Hemingway code concern the character's conduct. As Shaw (20, p. 21) and Gurko (10, pp. 56-57) both note, superficially, Jake does not seem heroic; he does not, for example, perform any
spectacularly brave deed requiring courage and skill, as does Romero in the bullring. However, neither the Hemingway code nor the Aristotelian requirements demand such a performance.

The Hemingway code demands those previously given characteristics, which Jake does not always display. For example, he lacks, and knows that he lacks, integrity when he leaves Brett and Romero together in the cafe (13, pp. 238-239). He maintains his stoicism only in public, letting self-pity cause him to cry when he is alone (13, p. 112). Although he makes it obvious that drunkenness is not permitted (because one loses control of himself), he becomes inebriated (13, pp. 103, 117, 269-270). Although he indicates his disgust at Cohn's not breaking off with Frances and tells Cohn to tell Frances "to go to hell" (13, pp. 117, 128), Jake and Brett's relationship is just as meaningless, and he has done nothing to end it. Nevertheless, despite his many flaws, Jake is the hero.

As Young indicates, the Hemingway code is not highly developed in The Sun Also Rises; among many others, he points out that Cohn's behavior best exemplifies the code by indicating what one should not do (23, pp. 83-84). Cohn makes no effort, for example, to avoid emotionally and publicly revealing his many problems. More important, he does not realize, as Jake does, that man needs a personal code of conduct which allows him to retain his dignity. This need is shown in the description of the bullfight, in the comparison
of Pedro Romero's and Belmonte's behavior (13, pp. 260-268). Jake's heroic quality is not demonstrated in the public spectacle of the bullring but in the privacy of his mind on the morning after the last bullfight when Romero and Brett have gone away together: "In the morning it was all over. The fiesta was finished" (13, p. 271). Jake is very calm.

Man, Hemingway implies strongly in *Death in the Afternoon*, should try to emulate not only the brave bullfighter but, even more, the noble bull, whose "bravery is judged by the manner in which he behaves under punishment"; he ignores the punishment (11, pp. 107-114). Unlike the bull, however, man does not always die at the time of the battle. Life, not death, is the punishment that man faces. When the young son of Sara and Gerald Murphy died, Hemingway wrote to them that "any one who died young after a happy childhood had won a great victory"; he would not, as the living do, have to "look forward to 'death by defeat'--their bodies gone, their world destroyed" (3, pp. 346-347). Jake Barnes is, in his own situation, as Gurko says, perhaps the ultimate hero: he accepts a situation he cannot change and learns to live (10, pp. 56-57).

It is perhaps somewhat difficult to accept Jake as an Aristotelian hero, because Hemingway does not follow the direction to "make a likeness which is true to life and yet more beautiful" (2, pp. 56-57). With the exception of Bill Gorton, who is not a bonafide member of the group, Jake is
of better character than his companions, who are not, of course, particularly admirable specimens to be measured against. Mike Campbell is almost never sober and is "a bad drunk" (13, p. 206). Brett is not only a drunk; she is also promiscuous. Cohn is a self-pitying romantic fool who cannot control his emotional outbursts. Jake, although he is not outstandingly better than the others, does not share the degree of weakness which they have. And it is important to remember Aristotle's indication that tragedy depends upon plot, not upon a strong, noble hero (2, pp. 26-27).

In somewhat simplified form, the Aristotelian plot is a unified construction which concerns itself with an admirable man who suffers a change of fortune from good to bad (2, pp. 44-47). The first requirement of the plot structure is unity, and that requirement is nearly perfectly satisfied by The Sun Also Rises. Most critics have not discussed unity at all, probably because the story holds together so well that it seems almost cavilling to point out any minor defects. Rovit says that there are very few extraneous scenes in the novel; and the only one he discusses (18, pp. 32-33), Bel-monte's appearance in the bullring, is not extraneous. As will be shown, it is an important part of the whole. The book presents the story of a small period in one man's life; it has a beginning (the Paris scenes), a middle (the fishing trip), and an ending (the week in Pamplona).
The second requirement for the plot of the Aristotelian tragedy is that the hero undergo a change of fortune from good to bad. All of the previous statements argue for the acceptance of *The Sun Also Rises* as an Aristotelian tragedy. Right here, the entire argument collapses. The change of fortune is the *raison d'etre* of the Aristotelian tragedy. A tragic atmosphere surrounding appropriate characters in a unified plot may produce a good story, an interesting story, even a great story, but unless the hero suffers a change of fortune from good to bad, that story is not an Aristotelian tragedy. *The Sun Also Rises* does not fulfill the change-of-fortune requirement, perhaps the most important single requirement of all those set forth by Aristotle.

Jake does, in one sense, undergo a change of fortune; he gives up Brett. Jake has believed himself to be in love with her (13, pp. 110-114), and a form of recognition occurs when he realizes that "it was all over" (13, p. 271). If the loss of Brett were the tragic event, the immediately preceding scene, in which Jake reaches his lowest emotional point, would be the scene of suffering. However, the loss of Brett, representing the loss of the normal male life which Jake had had every reason to expect to be his, is a result of the tragic change of fortune which has struck Jake. His war injury, resulting in permanent impotence, has occurred before the opening scenes of the book. Unlike the Aristotelian tragedy, in which the hero moves toward the
scene of suffering in such a way that the pity and fear of the audience are aroused, in this novel, Jake is moving away from the scene of suffering. His great psychological torment and continuing struggle to maintain his composure constitute the essence of *The Sun Also Rises*.

In some ways, the final bullfight scene symbolizes the elements of Jake's suffering and struggle. The reader tends to remember the part of the scene in which Pedro Romero fights; or at least the Belmonte fight is rarely mentioned except as it serves as a contrast to and an emphasis of Pedro Romero's bravery. However, the Belmonte and Romero fights serve a more important purpose than simply contrasting cowardice and bravery.

Pedro Romero represents the bravery of which man is capable; Belmonte, the cowardice. Belmonte has not replaced bravery with cowardice; he has never had any extraordinary amount of courage. Hemingway points out in *Death in the Afternoon* that with very few exceptions, all bullfighters have courage, but that very few have both the extraordinary courage and classic skills required to be really great bullfighters (11, p. 58 and passim). Belmonte had merely been able earlier in his career to give "the sensation of coming tragedy" to the extent that, ironically, no one, including Belmonte at his best, could do the things the crowds had come to expect. Thus, Belmonte represents not just the cowardice of which man is capable, but also the degredation
of the man who fails to admit his own limitations and who, therefore, changes the rules to suit himself, only to find that his new rules are worthless (13, pp. 261-262; cf. 11, p. 68ff., for discussion of decadence in the modern bullfight, a decadence caused by changes Belmonte made).

Pedro Romero represents the bravery of which man is capable, but Pedro Romero has not yet faced the telling test; he has not yet had to go back to the ring after being severely injured. Whether intended by Hemingway or not, there is, as Hovey notes (14, p. 66), no small irony in the dramatic presentation of Romero, whose prototype, Cayetano Ordonez, had made the real Belmonte "look cheap." Hemingway originally planned to present Ordonez as the hero of a novel entitled Fiesta, the working title for The Sun Also Rises (3, pp. 196-197, 201) and the title under which the novel was published in England. The bullfight scene described in the novel actually occurred; Hemingway discusses it in Death in the Afternoon. Ordonez had been considered to have the potential to become an outstandingly great bullfighter, but after he was severely gored at the end of his first season, he completely lost his valor and courage and made his second season "the most shameful season any matador had ever had" (11, pp. 87-90).

Jake Barnes is in no danger of becoming a legend, nor is he ever going to present a beautiful display of skill in the bullring. But he must, within his own life, keep in
mind the goals worth reaching for and must not continue to prostitute himself, as he has been doing, as Belmonte does in the bullring. When Jake makes his decision, he is not falling, but rising.

When Hemingway wrote Perkins that *The Sun Also Rises* is a tragedy, he also said that the "earth abiding forever [is] the hero" (4, p. 81). In the sense that the earth always wins because man does not live forever, Hemingway identifies the hero correctly. However, he does not seem ever to have objected to having Jake Barnes called the hero in the sense that Jake has the ability to endure. Dying, Hemingway wrote to his father in 1918, is easy, and it is easiest of all to die young, happy and "undisillusioned" (3, p. 72). Tragedy occurs, he implies, when man reaches the point of disillusionment. But if man may choose and decides to live, he must accept the circumstances that life presents--not only accept, but control as far as possible, as the bullfighter should control the bull so that the animal cannot make a querencia from which he cannot be moved (11, pp. 152-153).

*The Sun Also Rises* has been interpreted in several ways, but, fortunately, not as an Aristotelian tragedy. The book might have been an Aristotelian tragedy if the story had started at an earlier point in Jake's life. Instead of tragedy, the novel might better be called an extended tragic epilogue.
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CHAPTER III

WAR AND ROMANCE

In June, 1925, Ernest Hemingway began writing a novel which he called Along with Youth. According to Baker, Hemingway evidently meant for this unfinished novel to carry Nick Adams through various war-time adventures in different places until he reached Milan and had a love affair with a nurse named Agnes (2, pp. 190-191). By the time Hemingway finished A Farewell to Arms in 1928, both the structure and the title had been changed; but the basic idea—a story of love and war—remained.

The autobiographical element in this novel is too well known to require much comment. Young (27, p. 89), Baker (2, pp. 191, 731), and Benson (4, pp. 55-56) are among those critics who point out that "A Very Short Story," originally appearing in the Toronto Star Weekly in 1920, is the first published version of the Hemingway-Agnes Von Kurowsky World War I romance. Young states that with the exception of the venereal disease incident, the short story seems to be the truth, while the novel is the might-have-been story. Benson surmises that the sketch was Hemingway's attempt to cauterize a painful emotion. Many of the war experiences are, of course, also autobiographical. Baker states that the urge
to write a fictional version of his war experiences had been building in Hemingway for several years (2, pp. 244-245); he had, in fact, used the separate peace element in the chapter IV sketch of In Our Time (27, pp. 89-90).

World War I provided "the kind of experience of which art could be made," the kind of experience to which Hemingway relentlessly and repeatedly exposed himself (10, p. 3); he often used events in his own life as a starting point for his fiction. War and the love affair were quite evidently more traumatic experiences than were the post-war events of the author's life. Hemingway recorded the personal experiences of The Sun Also Rises almost immediately after their occurrence, but several years were necessary for him to assimilate the war-time experiences and to acquire the additional necessary "knowledge of life," which he says is needed to make a story which is "round and whole and solid and [full of] life" (17, p. 21). Like The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms is not merely a reportorial account, but a created story composed of both those elements the author knew and those he could imagine.

Hemingway is reported by Edmund Wilson as having called A Farewell to Arms his Romeo and Juliet (25, p. 39). Whether he actually made the remark or under what circumstances is not known, but the comment was immediately accepted by some critics, who compare the two works or point out the dramatic elements in the novel. Gurko, for example, finds several
similarities in the two plots: both are five-act love stories which take place in Italy against a background of war, Frederic Henry and Romeo both move "from surface attachment to abiding passion," a priest appears in both stories, and Shakespeare's Mercutio and Hemingway's Rinaldi are similar in their skepticism and cynicism and in their friendship for the hero. The two stories are, of course, not exactly alike, continues the critic. Unlike Romeo and Juliet, who are surrounded by other people, Frederic and Catherine are almost completely isolated as well as being away from their homes. Catherine's death is a biological accident, not a result of the war; and whereas the deaths of the Shakespearean lovers cause the feud to end, Catherine's death "leads nowhere" (12, pp. 81-83). Concerning one of the dramatic elements in the plot, Frohock says that A Farewell to Arms—with its foreshortening of time through a series of rapid impressions, stream-of-consciousness flashbacks, and camera-focused scenes—is more a movie script than a novel (9, pp. 176-178).

Nevertheless, no matter how well-constructed, dramatic elements do not necessarily constitute Aristotelian tragedy. The work must be examined against the criteria for tragedy, not just against those for drama.

The stylistic techniques in A Farewell to Arms are very similar to those in The Sun Also Rises. In both books, dialogue provides much of the information about setting, plot,
and characters, a fact noted by both Grebstein (11, pp. 100, 115) and Edgar (8, p. 345). In addition, Shaw points out another technique used in both novels: "conversation . . . is almost pure dramatic form without the assistance of . . . signposts." Shaw states that the narrator, whom the reader must trust to be objective, rarely intrudes (23, pp. 58-60). The lack of critical comment to the contrary indicates that readers find the dialogue suitable to the characters.

The lengthiest discussion of the dialogue in *A Farewell to Arms* is that by Grebstein, one of the few critics to comment on Hemingway's use of different English for different characters and for the same character in different situations. For example, Catherine and Frederic, both speaking English, use different national dialects; and Frederic's conversations with Catherine are not so colloquial as the passages of thought or narration. Grebstein also points out that--again, like the speech in *The Sun Also Rises*--the dialogue is based upon, but is not, actual speech. The dialogue only seems random, spontaneous, and simple; actually, the author skillfully and deliberately causes the reader to supply the tones and pauses of ordinary speech (11, pp. 119-120, 98-99).

Hemingway also uses techniques similar to those in *The Sun Also Rises* in the descriptive passages of *A Farewell to Arms*. As Shaw says, he eliminates everything but the significant physical details (23, p. 58). Gurko comments that
the elimination of abstractions (such as the question of how one group of Catholics, the Austrians, can fight another group of Catholics, the Italians) and the use of simple structures produce a natural sense of immediacy (12, pp. 107-109). That immediacy is most obvious in the chapter describing the retreat from Caporetto, now one of the most famous passages in American literature. Cowley calls this scene "one of the few great war stories in American literature," saying it describes not just the army but an entire people in motion" (6, p. 45). Hoffman considers it a "brilliant description" of "the landscape of unreason" (13, p. 325).

All of the writing in A Farewell to Arms is not brilliant, of course, and not all critics unreservedly praise Hemingway's stylistic accomplishments. Edgar, for example, says that many of the descriptive passages in this novel constitute a "slovenly continuousness" (8, p. 346). However, in general, critics evidently agree that the diction--both dialogue and description--fulfills the Aristotelian requirement.

Implicit in the preceding discussion is that in achieving appropriate diction, Hemingway is also fulfilling part of the Aristotelian requirement of thought. Also to be considered as one of the elements of thought is the question of whether the characterizations are believable and well-developed.

Of the numerous minor characters, Young says that all of them are "completely real"; he especially mentions the
priest and Rinaldi (27, p. 91). The manner in which these two characters function within the story—they are generally agreed to represent two somewhat extreme attitudes, each of which has some appeal for Frederic Henry—would be important here only if the attitudes warped the characterizations or caused the characters to act in some unbelievable manner. Such is obviously not the case; no critic has commented that the actions of either Rinaldi or the priest are unreal.

The critical comments about the characterization of Catherine Barkley are another matter. On one hand, she is called a "neurotic," almost impossible to believe in, completely dependent upon Frederic for identity and thus capable only of a love that ruins her lover (20, pp. 44-54). At the other extreme, she is considered the hero of the story, who dies because she is gentle, brave, and good; because she loves Frederic, submits to him, and later goes to Switzerland with him; and because "she is heroic in the face of death" (26, pp. 85-91). A majority of critics see Catherine as an idealization, a woman embodying the characteristics Hemingway believed women should possess. As Baker comments, Hemingway's "women are truly emancipated only through an idea or ideal of service. His heroines . . . are meant to show a symbolic or ritualistic function in the service of the artist and the service of man." Catherine, Baker continues, is such a woman, representing life, love, and home; her death, the loss of these (3, pp. 113-116). Young, who says that Catherine is
an extremely idealized character, nevertheless claims that she is the "most convincing" of the Hemingway heroines (27, p. 91).

Relatively few critics present arguments for accepting Catherine as a convincing characterization; most of them see only her idealistic traits. At the same time, many critics—both those who find Catherine an unconvincing character and those who do not—find fault with her actions, thus indicating her believability. Grebstein, however, disagrees with those critics who censure Catherine's "too cooperative" and too ready submission to Lt. Henry, pointing out that even before Frederic's appearance, Catherine has reached an emotional breaking point because of her fiancé's death and that Frederic is merely a substitute for the deceased fiancé (11, pp. 123-124). Those who disagree with Grebstein's viewpoint obviously do not recognize a very realistic situation.

Gellens succinctly summarizes the various arguments about the characterization of Catherine Barkley:

She seems glorified by all those characteristics that the insecure, boyish lover... would idealize in a woman—she is easy, but, somehow, irrevocably pure; has the strength of Beowulf, yet falls apart in a hotel room at the reflection that she is behaving like a whore; is gentle as a deer and still, in the boat on the way to Switzerland, muses rather crudely about the advantages of being poked 'in the tummy' by Henry's oar.

The critic also points out the logical criticism of Catherine's failure to get an abortion; she has tried other methods and obviously has no religious scruples about the operation.
Catherine is feminine, but tough: "on her first night with Henry in the hotel room she feels ashamed, somehow derelict, a tramp. Still the reader suspects the efficient, business-like detachment with which she rigs her schedule at the hospital." Gellens correctly asserts that throughout the story but especially in the deathbed scene in which she asks for a reassurance which anyone might desire but which "only the frank, open, tough little partner" would demand, Catherine is actually a much more complex and concrete character than many critics have realized (10, p. 13).

Catherine is not, of course, the hero of A Farewell to Arms: Frederic is. However, in some respects, the characterization of Catherine is more important than that of Frederic because her death is the culminating point of the novel. She represents everything the hero loses, and the hero's loss must necessarily be a significant one to be tragic.

The hero, on the other hand, may be a man with no outstanding traits. According to Aristotle, the most nearly perfect tragedy has a hero whose nobility of character places him slightly above common men; however a tragic change of fortune may also be the lot of an ordinary man (1, pp. 12-13, 26-27). Such a man is Frederic Henry, who, as Shaw points out, is "not particularly heroic" (23, p. 21). Very little, if anything, would be gained at this point by giving a detailed listing of the various traits which have been attributed to Lt. Henry. Most critics agree with Gurko that
Frederic changes during the course of the novel from an immature, self-centered young man to one who commits himself to Catherine (12, pp. 97-99), and no one seems to find him either an outstandingly brave or a morally superior person.

An accusation made against Frederic Henry--that of cowardice (22, p. 73; 26, p. 78)--does need to be considered here. Although the Aristotelian tragedy does not absolutely require the hero to be a superior person, it does require that the man not be an ignoble character, as Henry would have to be considered if his desertion from the Italian army were an act of cowardice. However, Frederic's dive into the Tagliamento is "an act of common sense" (19, p. 81); it is not a betrayal, but an "eminently sane letter of resignation" (10, p. 12). Meaningless self-sacrifice does not constitute bravery, but stupidity.

In his introduction to Men at War, Hemingway explains the difference between cowardice and courage; the coward allows fear to control him. Hemingway also says that World War I was "the most colossal, murderous, mismanaged butchery that has ever taken place on earth" (15); nowhere does he so much as suggest that man has any obligation to throw away his life. Elsewhere, Hemingway explains that people who refuse to play by the rules--such as the Italian carabinieri--make the game impossible. He also says that in the bullring, when the bull refuses to leave a querencia, the bullfighter, while exposing himself to as little danger as possible, may
justifiably use whatever method is necessary to kill the bull (13, pp. 147-154). In the same way, Frederic's dive into the river is justified.

The tragic flaw of the Aristotelian hero is frequently considered to be the necessary cause of the hero's downfall, but Aristotle does not say that such must be the case. He says, in fact, that tragedy can exist "without character" (1, pp. 26-27); and as has been noted in Chapter I, the hero's downfall may be caused by fate or the gods. Furthermore, as Butcher points out, Aristotle frequently indicates that Sophocles' Oedipus Tyrannus is the ideal play, and Oedipus "cannot, broadly speaking, be said to [owe] his ruin to any striking moral defect"; he is, "in a genuine sense, the victim of circumstances" (5, p. 320). Thus, Frederic's being simply an ordinary man--a man who has no outstanding moral qualities or any terrible defect, a man who, like Oedipus, is the victim of circumstances--is not a sufficient reason to consider him a non-hero. Despite the indication that the hero should be slightly above his fellow man in moral character (1, pp. 12-13), the fact remains that plot is more important than character; although a plot which concerns a merely ordinary man rather than a morally noble one is not perfect, it is unlikely that Aristotle would judge as non-tragic a work which meets the requirements of plot.

The basic plot structure of A Farewell to Arms is not that of classic Greek drama, but of modern drama; and it is
possible, of course, that on the grounds that too many incidents are included, Aristotle would consider this work not a tragedy, or at least not a perfect tragedy. The first scene of ancient Greek tragedy, for example, might be Frederic's escape from the carabinieri or, perhaps even better, Catherine and Frederic's escape to Switzerland. However, the lack of a chorus in the novel makes it necessary to provide background information by some other means, and the modern reader finds nothing strange or incorrect in including within the body of the work incidents which the classic dramatist would have inserted in some other way; it must be assumed that Aristotle would accept the long, more detailed structure of the novel as appropriate to the genre. Such detail does not violate unity in *A Farewell to Arms*.

Actually, although the period of time in the novel proper—from Frederic's return from leave through Catherine's death—is a span of several months, the action is concentrated. This concentration, the more rapid occurrence of events in the novel than in real life, intensifies the experiences, says Grebstein, who also states that the opening chapter of the novel "could be analyzed musically as a tone poem" (11, pp. 124, 168). Gurko says that the first chapter "supplies the novel with a magnificent overture" (12, p. 92). These five paragraphs, serving as a prologue similar to that in classic Greek tragedy, establish the atmosphere for the unified events to follow. Evidently, very
few critics find either a lack of unity or unnecessary incidents in the novel. Benson does say that some passages, such as the baseball analogy (14, p. 327), constitute an "illustrated lecture" (4, pp. 71-72). However, most readers evidently accept these passages as being a type of soliloquy, and the lack of dissenting comments indicates that most critics agree with West's remark that the events are exceptionally ordered and logical (24, p. 622).

In addition to unity, the Aristotelian tragic plot possesses certain other characteristics. The incidents are sequential, leading inevitably to the change of fortune from good to bad. The perfect tragedy has a complex plot, in which a reversal of the situation or recognition or both occur and in which there is a scene of suffering. The plot has a beginning, a middle, and an ending with the complication being the action from the beginning to the change of fortune and the denouement, the action from that time until the ending. Perfect tragedy is the story of an individual whose universal experiences both arouse pity and fear and effect a catharsis of these same emotions. For the most part, A Farewell to Arms fulfills these requirements.

The previously cited comment by West indicates not only that the novel is unified but also that an inevitable sequence of action is maintained. Certainly, there is a change of fortune from good to bad, Catherine's death, which is a reversal of the situation in that her death is not logically
expected until she encounters difficulty in childbirth. At
the same time, the atmosphere, which is discussed more fully
in following paragraphs, is one of doom from the very begin-
ning of the novel. *A Farewell to Arms* has a beginning--the
experiences of Catherine and Frederic until, after being
wounded, he is sent to the hospital where Catherine joins
him; a middle--the weeks in the hospital, the return to the
front, and the two escapes; and an ending--life and death in
Switzerland. At the center of all these activities is the
individual Frederic Henry; his experiences are such that the
reader can identify with Frederic, have sympathy for him,
and fear a similar experience.

The novel maintains its tragic atmosphere throughout.
Hemingway's use of rain as "a conscious symbol of disaster"
(7, p. 46) is frequently commented upon by critics. Benson,
for example, calls the rain a "natural" symbol, producing an
unavoidable "atmospheric gloom"; regardless of where Frederic
and Catherine attempt to create a home, rain inevitably falls
(4, p. 103). Rain is an obvious symbol of doom, but other
portentous signs, some of whose meanings do not become clear
until Catherine's death, also occur; for example, the preg-
nant-looking soldiers who march toward "not successful" bat-
tles (14, p. 4).

Grebstein states that Hemingway uses small details to
emphasize his theme and his situations: the detailed des-
cription of the rifle in Frederic's room (14, pp. 10-11)
illustrates the fact that while Lt. Henry likes guns, he
knows nothing of their terrible effect; the later scene of
the dog nosing through "coffee grounds, dust, and some dead
flowers" in a garbage can (14, p. 315) presents a dramatic
metaphor with an ominous odor of decay (11, pp. 154-157).
This rather subtle technique of presenting facts without ex-
planation is also used to arouse fear: Frederic Henry, for
example, has recurring "'night thoughts'"—never told to the
reader but "creating a pattern of suggested terror [which]
accompanies every man" (4, pp. 137-138). In addition, the
scenes concerning the love affair—"all of them vaguely por-
tentious and disturbing"—are juxtaposed against scenes of
cheerful day-time activities (11, p. 41), a technique which
emphasizes the nighttime gloom and intensifies the feeling
that everything will not go well for Frederic and Catherine.

Everything does not, of course, go well. Catherine goes
into labor, but must have a Caesarean operation; the doctors
are unable to make the baby breathe or to stop Catherine's
hemorrhage and prevent her death. The final events of A
Farewell to Arms are tragic, but the novel is not an Aristo-
telian tragedy.

In addition to arousing pity and fear, tragedy, according
to Aristotle, must effect a catharsis of these painful emo-
tions (1, pp. 44-53). Butcher explains that in the Rhetoric,
Aristotle defines both fear and pity as involving pain, fear
"arising from an impression of impending evil," pity from
an undeserved evil which may threaten any individual. "Pity, however, turns into fear where the object is so nearly related to us that the suffering seems to be our own"; that is, the audience would fear for themselves if they were faced with the difficulties of the tragic hero, with whom they identify. However, the evil which threatens the tragic hero is not merely a personal one, but a significant one involving society:

The private life of an individual, tragic as it may be in its inner quality, has never been made the subject of the highest tragedy. Its consequences are not of far-reaching importance: it does not move the imagination with sufficient power.

Love stories are rarely tragedies because the passion involved is "egoistic and self-centered" (5, pp. 255-273).

Butcher explains that Romeo and Juliet is the exception to the preceding statement because the actions of the title characters cause consequences affecting society (5, p. 272), a statement which cannot be applied to Frederic and Catherine. Catherine's death may be a catastrophe, but it is not tragic in the Aristotelian sense partly because the situation involves only the main characters, but also because the audience experiences no catharsis, a lack perhaps attributable to the subject matter.

Although a few critics remark that A Farewell to Arms makes an affirmative statement, most do not agree with Shaw's conclusion that Hemingway is affirming "faith in human potentiality [and a] feeling that life can give many joys" (23, pp. 61-62). Rovit, however, pointing out, as have several
others, the "game" structure of the novel (that is, the need to engage in a worthwhile game of life), says that Frederic "achieve[s] dignity and some somber meaning out of Catherine's death" (22, p. 115). Evidently, that "somber meaning" is a little too gloomy to arouse positive emotions in most readers. Hovey summarizes the majority opinion: *A Farewell to Arms* is a black, despairing novel with an "almost unbearable darkness" (19, pp. 87-88). This is not exactly a statement of cathartic relief, of purified emotions.

In a 1961 article, Light claims that Hemingway examines "four ideals of service"—to God, to country, to love, and to mankind—and rejects all of them, concluding that only through being brave and stoic can man gain any immortality. As Hemingway indicates in *Death in the Afternoon*, continues the critic, the victory of an ordinary man, like that of the bullfighter, lies in his ability to be contemptuous of death (21). Although Light is undoubtedly correct in his interpretation of the author's ideas as set forth in *Death in the Afternoon*, his conclusion that Catherine is contemptuous of death and thus gains a victory, an immortality, is somewhat difficult to accept. Despite the fact that a few other critics attempt to support such a position, one very simple fact remains: the emotions of Frederic Henry and those of most critics are negative. Readers may pity Frederic, but almost no one seems greatly to regret Catherine's death. Unlike a bullfighter whose heroism in the face of eminent death is long remembered, Catherine becomes only a statue.
There is more to the non-Aristotelian tragedy of *A Farewell to Arms* than Catherine's death, however. Most critics are content merely to announce their feeling of pity for Frederic Henry when Catherine dies; very few record the much more important point that Hemingway makes in this novel: Catherine and Frederic's life together is finished when they reach Switzerland. Having noted the inability of the lovers to escape the world outside themselves and having decided that Hemingway's theme is man's vulnerability, his inability to overcome the natural forces against which he must continually battle, most critics rest their case. Some critics make note of the boredom and sterility of Catherine and Frederic's life in the mountains, but very few record the full meaning of the emptiness of that life.

Lewis and Hovey are among the very few who examine more than the superficial meanings in *A Farewell to Arms*. "No activity has meaning unless the participant is emotionally involved," says West; but then he goes on to say that *A Farewell to Arms* is an ironic story in that just as Catherine and Frederic seem to have escaped, they are unable to save her life (24, pp. 629-632). Hovey (19, pp. 86-89) and Lewis (20, pp. 46-54) both indicate that Frederic does escape. What he escapes is not, of course, the world, but Catherine. Lewis censures Frederic's failure to find a commitment to something other than romantic love, indicting the desertion from the war, a judgment more concerned with one's socio-political
beliefs about what literature is supposed to accomplish than with what any particular piece of literature does accomplish. Hovey's conclusion that Frederic has "a hopeless view of love because he has never learned how to love" is more logical.

Therein lies the tragedy of *A Farewell to Arms*, an anti-romantic tragedy of irony. Numerous small ironies are obvious throughout the novel—for example, the various disguises Frederic assumes at different times (20, pp. 41-42)—as well as larger ones, such as the inability to escape the war even in a neutral country, as Frederic discovers in reading the newspaper while Catherine is dying (14, p. 329), or the fact that Catherine dies in the spring (14, p. 308), a season of rebirth and new life. However, the greatest irony of all is that Frederic is, as Lewis states, glad that Catherine dies (20, p. 49). That Catherine is a rather insipid, almost stupid woman is commented upon by many critics, who seem to believe that this characterization is due to Hemingway's inability to create a believable female. Catherine is, however, very believable; she is quite simply not particularly likeable. Why, after ten years, should Frederic find it necessary to disclose the emptiness of his life with Catherine in Switzerland, the fact that he lies awake after she has gone to sleep (14, p. 301), that he has nothing to do but grow a beard (14, p. 298), or that Catherine makes absurd comments, such as wishing to have gonorrhea so that she could be like Frederic (14, p. 299)? *A Farewell to Arms* is tragic not in the failure
of Catherine and Frederic to "live happily ever after," but in Frederic's realization that the whole affair was a waste of time, a matter of complete disillusionment.

Perhaps Hemingway was convinced that this novel is a tragedy in the usual meaning of the word; he certainly indicates such a belief (15, pp. vii-viii). On the other hand, perhaps such a statement is another irony.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER IV

MAN AND MARLIN

When *The Old Man and the Sea* was published in 1952, several critics proclaimed it a masterpiece, most were highly enthusiastic, and the rest generally found at least some degree of literary merit in the book. Undoubtedly, some critics overpraised the book because Hemingway's immediately preceding novel, *Across the River and Into the Trees*, published in 1950, is so overwhelmingly disappointing that few critics can find anything in that book to praise. In the interim since its publication, *The Old Man and the Sea* has received a tremendous amount of critical attention. Interestingly, as Jobes notes, although the book continues to receive praise, the amount of dissent has increased, and enthusiasm is generally not so great at it once was (19, pp. 1-2). Not many critics are as harsh in their comments as Edel, who objects strenuously to the Nobel Prize award on the grounds that Hemingway is not a first-rate American author, but one who produced stories, including *The Old Man and the Sea*, of no substance and without "Style" (9). At the same time, however, Young's reply that not only does Hemingway state "rather stirring" eternal truths in the book, but that he has also written clean, fresh, subtle, brilliant, moving prose (28, p. 173) is obviously now
considered an overstatement in relation to this particular novel. Insufficient time has elapsed to determine whether, as Rahv assumes, this particular work will eventually be judged a minor writing (21, p. 110); such a demotion has been by no means as yet unanimously approved.

According to Jobes, critics who praise the book tend to believe that literature should express "human values. . . . They admire forthright moral heroism. . . ." Those who censure it view art forms as methods of temporarily imposing order on an essentially disorderly world. And both groups use the same details from the story to support their claims. Thus, the controversy, based "on general philosophical and aesthetic principles," may never be settled (19, pp. 12-14). However, that the book is frequently considered at least one of Hemingway's best and that it is often said to contain elements of tragedy justify its inclusion in this discussion of Hemingway-as-tragedian.

Although The Old Man and the Sea is the last of Hemingway's book-length fictional writings to be published during his lifetime, the basic story of an old man's catching a huge marlin and then losing it to the sharks was told by Hemingway a decade and a half earlier in one of his Esquire pieces (17). Baker reports that as early as 1939, the author mentioned to Maxwell Perkins his plans to expand the episode into a very long short story, which "properly told, . . . could be 'great!'" (4, pp. 430-431).
The diction of *The Old Man and the Sea*, the first constituent of concern when considering whether the story is "properly told," is typically Hemingway--short, familiar words in simple constructions. The style has been both praised and damned since the beginning of Hemingway's career as a professional writer of fiction; and here, as usual, very little middle ground seems to exist. Cowley, for example, states that Hemingway has given these constructions a "new value" by almost inventing a strange new language and then attempting to retain "its original purity" (8, p. 17). Grebstein comments that the Spanish transliteration of Santiago's speech has a convincing authenticity and a simple eloquence and is excellently done. He also says that the technique--about which most critics have said nothing--of changing from third to first to third person is not obtrusive (11, pp. 89-90, 130-131, 136-137). Aldridge, on the other hand, calls the language "oddly colorless and flat," more an imitation Hemingway than a real Hemingway (1, p. 150). The question of whether Hemingway is merely slavishly imitating an obsolete style or using that style creatively to produce an atmosphere appropriate to the story does not require a repetition of the earlier discussion of his techniques. It suffices to note that, basically, the Hemingway style is easily recognizable in *The Old Man and the Sea* and that the diction, rather than distracting most readers, constitutes for many an addition to the story. Whether the diction contributes to the construction of a tragedy is another matter.
The second element of concern is thought, or appropriate and believable actions and dramatic incidents. Weeks indicates that Hemingway fails to fulfill this requirement of Aristotelian tragedy: Santiago has supernatural characteristics, such as the ability to identify the marlin before he has seen it and then, later, to identify it as male; not only the old man but the marlin and the Mako shark as well have "extraordinary powers they could not in fact possess."

He also criticizes Hemingway for allowing the star Rigel to appear "at sunset" (27). Although this last point is a minor one, it serves to point up a weakness in the criticism: having accepted the categorization of Hemingway as "realist," Weeks is now determined that the author is to be allowed absolutely no poetic license. Weeks cites several experts who, the reader must assume, are correct in their statements about the time at which stars appear, the usefulness of sharks' teeth, and various other matters. But Weeks completely ignores the author's purposes, which do not include, for example, proving that the star Rigel appears at sunset.

As Sylvester points out, Weeks is forbidding to Hemingway the use of natural events as symbols of deeper meanings which extend the artistic vision (25, pp. 137-138). Aristotle—in his statement that the poet is to be allowed "to imitate . . . things . . . as they ought to be" and that he is to be judged, in part, according to his reasons for including certain statements (2, pp. 96-101)—implies the acceptability of truths greater than facts.
The preceding remarks of Aristotle are directed to the use of language; and Aristotle, in speaking of plot structure, specifically condemns the inclusion of ludicrous elements (2, pp. 94-97), a statement whose meaning can be stretched to include such "improbable possibilities" as an old man's being able to look at a fish whose sex organs are internal and immediately identify it as male. Nevertheless, Aristotle also specifically points out that the poet is not a historian or a biographer, but a creator (2, pp. 32-37). The novelist as well is a creator; once he is limited to presenting only facts, his creative ability becomes relatively unimportant.

That ability is necessary not only for the creation of incidents but also for the creation of characters and of the moral goodness which Aristotle says the tragic hero should have. As noted, Weeks condemns the "supernatural" abilities which Hemingway bestows upon Santiago; again, these particular abilities do not distress other critics. The qualities of Santiago include his compassion—he not only loves and respects the marlin (16, p. 54), but also feels pity for other creatures of nature, including the birds, "especially the small delicate dark terns that were always flying and looking and almost never finding. . . ." (16, p. 29); his skill—he is precise in keeping his lines straighter than those of any one else and at the proper depths (16, pp. 31-32); his resoluteness—when he begins the trip, he is sure
that his "big fish must be somewhere" (16, p. 35), and once he hooks the marlin, he is determined to stay with the fish as long as necessary (16, p. 52); his self-reliance--he, not anyone else, decides to go after the marlin (16, p. 50), and in his apology to the marlin, he shows his acceptance of the responsibility for having gone too far out (16, p. 110). He is also humble and self-critical--he chastises himself when the marlin jerks the line and almost pulls him overboard (16, pp. 55-56) and when he realizes he could have had salt for the dolphin meat by earlier splashing water on the boat and letting it dry (16, p. 82). He refuses to deceive himself; he knows it is "the boy [who] keeps him alive" (16, p. 116). He is conscientious, eating all the bonito to give himself strength (16, pp. 58-59) and admonishing himself to rest on the second night when he knows that he can go without sleep, but that to do so is dangerous (16, p. 77). Although he claims not to be religious, he is both religious and superstitious (16, p. 64); just before he hooks the marlin, he prays, "'God help him to take it,!'" and just after, he thinks, "Then he will turn and swallow it . . . . He did not say that because he knew if you said a good thing it might not happen" (16, pp. 42-43).

Numerous critics--among them, Burhans (7, p. 447) and Gurko (12, p. 377)--indicate one or more of these qualities. The general consensus is that Hemingway's creation is a good man. Santiago has been compared both to Christ and to
St. Francis (26, p. 188; 18, pp. 192, 197). According to Baker, Santiago is one of the unsung heroes in whom Hemingway had a long-lived interest and who he believed must have the qualities of Christ (5, pp. 160-163). Although both Benson (6, p. 185) and Rovit state that Santiago is presented as flawless and Rovit claims that it is this heroic perfection which keeps The Old Man and the Sea from being a tragedy (23, pp. 83-90), numerous other critics indicate that they do not agree. As Jobes states, many critics maintain that Santiago successfully symbolizes "common human experience" (19, p. 10).

Such critics obviously do not believe that Santiago's fall is shocking, as is the fall of a flawless man according to Aristotle (2, pp. 44-45, 56-57). Harada, for example, says that the old man's sense of destiny and the need to fulfill that destiny without another person represent common feelings and desires (13, pp. 269-270). Backman compares Santiago's battle to that of the bullfighter and finds the latter battle to be "artificial," with "strained and self-induced" emotions. However, everything about Santiago's battle--his being a fisherman, his struggle with the marlin, his being part of a friendly universe with a just Creator--is "natural" (3, pp. 256-257). Baker, in his affirmation that Santiago is a Christ figure, does not say that the old man is Christ. Santiago is human; his "real motivation" for killing the marlin is nothing more than pride, the greatest
sin (5, p. 170). Shaw agrees that the character is a Christ figure, but cautions that such a conception may not be "entirely appropriate" because Santiago represents, as a "son of man," only the human side of Christ (24, pp. 117-118).

Regardless of whether one believes that Santiago is too nearly perfect to be an effective tragic hero, one whose experiences the reader can share, discounting The Old Man and the Sea as Aristotelian tragedy solely on the grounds of Santiago's characterization is not valid. Very simply, one must take into account the obvious fact that many critics do not view Santiago as the perfect man, but as an imperfect, human individual; certain of these critics, such as Sylvester (25, pp. 136-137) and Gurko (12, pp. 378-379), indicate that Santiago has a tragic flaw. Therefore, the analysis of the book as Aristotelian tragedy must also consider Aristotle's most important criteria, the plot.

The first requirement of the tragic plot is, of course, that it be unified. In none of his other book-length works has Hemingway maintained unity any better than he does in The Old Man and the Sea. Critics generally say almost nothing about the unity of the plot, evidently assuming that such obvious unity does not require discussion. Grebstein does point out "one serious error" which he finds very damaging--the authorial explanation that Santiago's "Ay" of pain has no translation and is "'just a noise such as a man might make, involuntarily, feeling the nail go through his hands and into
the wood'"--but his comment concerns the allegorical quality, not the structure *per se* (11, p. 91). The scenes with the boy, Manolin, at the beginning and the end of the book are the only sentimental ones, according to Rahv; but the critic is not censuring the inclusion of the scenes: "they are but indirectly related to the action, [forming] a lyrical prelude and postlude to the action. . ." (21, pp. 111-112). Thus, these scenes can be considered to fulfill at least part of the function of the chorus in classic Greek tragedy, the rendering of the prologue and exode. Benson is perhaps the only critic who says specifically that *The Old Man and the Sea* has the unity and the "formal magnitude--beginning, middle, and end--which usually characterize only the finest tragic dramas" (6, p. 182); but his opinion, apparently, is shared silently by many readers.

The second requirement of the tragic plot is that the hero undergo a change of fortune from good to bad. Although Santiago's fortune changes from bad to good to bad, the good-to-bad change is emphasized. The good fortune of catching the marlin is intensified by the old man's having caught nothing during the preceding eighty-four days, a factor which almost inevitably increases the reader's emotional reaction to the loss. The question at this point must be whether the reader feels the pity and fear necessary to the best Aristotelian tragedy.
Before that question is considered, however, it is necessary to review briefly the remaining characteristics required of the Aristotelian tragedy. The hero's actions should arouse pity and fear. He either commits the tragic deed or does not, and he acts (or fails to act) with knowledge or in ignorance. The most tragic circumstances—those most likely to produce pity and fear and thus to create a scene of suffering through which the audience experiences a catharsis—occur when the hero is ready to commit his tragic deed but does not because he gains knowledge which prevents his action. He may also commit the act and then gain the knowledge—the next most tragic situation—or he may commit the deed knowingly. Either the hero's tragic flaw or some external circumstances (the gods or fate) over which he has no control may cause the hero to act as he does.

Thus far, all the evidence indicates that this short novel is an Aristotelian tragedy. The diction and thought effectively contribute to the unified plot, concerned with the downfall of a good man. Nevertheless, for the writer of Aristotelian tragedy, diction, thought, character, and plot are not an end, but the means to an end—the arousal of pity and fear and a resultant catharsis. The writer must create and maintain the appropriate tragic atmosphere if his creation is to have "the distinctive mark" of Aristotelian tragedy. A significantly serious subject helps to produce the necessary emotional response within the audience.
Almost without exception, critics point out that Hemingway's principal theme is man's ability to endure. Some critics find other themes as well—Hovey, for example, states that an implicit theme is the author's long-sought resolution of ambiguous feelings toward his father (18, pp. 201-202)—but no one denies that Hemingway intended that the reader should admire Santiago's courage. Frohock, who reads the story as being completely pessimistic—"life is a trap in which a man is bound to be beaten and at last destroyed"—says that courage is the only permanent element in Hemingway's "tragic formula" (10, pp. 194-195). Gurko states that it is Santiago's ability to endure courageously which makes him heroic (12, pp. 378-379).

Much earlier in his career, the author had explained that the display of fear completely alienated him. In an Esquire article, Hemingway describes the Max Baer-Joe Louis fight as "the most disgusting public spectacle, outside of a public hanging" that he had ever seen, his disgust produced by Baer's fear (14, p. 35). Hemingway shows his admiration for the courage of the bullfighter in Death in the Afternoon (discussed in Chapter II), and Phillips states that "the pattern of suffering and endurance . . . in The Old Man and the Sea represents the fullest articulation of the tragic pattern [found] in his reaction to the tragedy of the bull" (20, p. 55).

It is obvious, however, that the "tragic pattern" of The Old Man and the Sea does not arouse both pity and fear.
Although Aristotle indicates that tragedy may arouse either pity or fear (2, pp. 38-39), he also indicates that the best tragedy arouses both emotions by presenting "tragic incidents . . . between those who are near or dear to one another" (2, pp. 48-51). Santiago loves and respects the marlin and regrets having killed him (16, pp. 54, 110). Many readers pity Santiago; even those who read the story as merely a fishing anecdote can sympathize with the old man's predicament. Nevertheless, regardless of the level at which he reads the story—as parable, allegory, fishing tale—almost no critic reports a reaction of fear. To lose a fish, whatever the nature of the struggle not to lose it, just does not seem to arouse fear among human beings.

Rovit, who sees Santiago both as an Everyman and as too nearly perfect to be an effective tragic hero, also says that The Old Man and the Sea is a "serene" work (23, pp. 75, 88-89). Jobes, comparing Santiago to such literary heroes as Natty Bumpo and Huckleberry Finn, finds similarities in their struggles to survive and in their desires to "escape to nature to preserve their sense of selfhood." However, although the adversaries which Santiago confronts are strong, they neither represent "the unknown, the dark, the violent, the threatening, the evil" nor pose a purely physical threat. Unlike the struggles of these other heroes or of the bullfighter, Santiago's battle is not immediately dangerous (19, pp. 15-16). In another comparison, Rosenfeld finds many
similarities between Santiago's situation and that of Ike McCaslin in "The Bear," but says that Santiago's situation is superficial and trivial and without spiritual value: unlike Ike, Santiago does not reject a corrupt world but simply resigns himself to "the transformation from life to death" (22, pp. 48-55). Cowley says that Santiago and the marlin are not the equivalents of Captain Ahab and Moby Dick; Santiago and his deep-water inhabitant never become more than an old man and a huge fish (8, p. 1).

Despite a failure to arouse fear, a story may, nevertheless, still be tragic if the emotional effect is otherwise strong enough; and many readers feel great pity for Santiago. Although several critics present arguments for accepting or rejecting *The Old Man and the Sea* as tragedy, the most convincing analysis of the story as tragedy is that by Benson.

Although he sees Santiago as too perfect a hero—a judgment not shared by many others, Benson does not stop his analysis at this point. Hemingway, says this critic, attempts to build layers of meaning by using "image, allusion, metaphor, and symbol," a technique requiring an extremely careful handling, which Hemingway fails to provide consistently (6, pp. 183-184). The tragic effect is thus greatly weakened. Benson mentions several elements which detract from the tragic atmosphere of *The Old Man and the Sea*, but two of these are of more significance than the others.
The first relates to Cowley's comparison of Hemingway's novel and *Moby Dick* and to Hemingway's belief that the bullfight provides the most nearly perfect tragedy: Santiago's "tragedy . . . lacks the spontaneity of [the] moving passion," the intensity, the unpredictability, the real danger of the bullfight. The battle of man and fish does not achieve the combination of spontaneity and formality found in perfect harmony in the confrontation between man and bull. "Despite the many efforts by Hemingway to make the confrontation between man and fish parallel, the emotional effect is not the same, and formal dominates." The fault is partly attributable to the simple fact that fishing is "a passive activity, a test of strength and fortitude rather than courage." In addition, the characterization of the marlin as a positive entity—unlike the characterization of *Moby Dick* as a "totally negative entity"—is not at all convincing (6, pp. 171-172).

The second element is also related to Hemingway's feelings for and beliefs about the bullfight as tragedy—the unjustified "ironic unawareness" of the tourists. Like the bullfighter, as Benson explains, Hemingway's heroes almost always require an audience "to make the final act of courage worth while" (6, pp. 174-175). In *The Old Man and the Sea*, Hemingway demands the reader's sympathy not on the grounds that Santiago's tragic condition deserves that sympathy, but on the grounds that his tragic condition deserves the recognition it does not receive from the tourists. That demand
is a false, emotional trick, "a violation of true emotion" (6, pp. 125-126).

Thus, *The Old Man and the Sea* fails as Aristotelian tragedy on two counts. First, whether one reads literally or symbolically, the story does not arouse fear. Second, the author does not arouse pity specifically, or any emotion in general, by following his own dictum of presenting the actions which produce the emotion (15, p. 174B). Rather, he manipulates the circumstances. Even if this manipulation does not bother the audience, the fact remains that there is no catharsis, no purification, no purging of emotion. *The Old Man and the Sea*, classic in form, is not an Aristotelian tragedy, but a sentimental tragedy.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


A writer can make himself a nice career . . . by espousing a political cause, working for it, making a profession of believing in it. . . . But none of this will help the writer as a writer unless he finds something new to add to human knowledge while he is writing. The hardest thing in the world to do is to write straight honest prose on human beings. First you have to know the subject; then you have to know how to write. Both take a lifetime to learn and anybody is cheating who takes politics as a way out (17, p. 26).

Ernest Hemingway wrote these words almost six years before the publication of his third major novel, For Whom the Bell Tolls, but they defend very well what he tried to do, and in large measure succeeded in doing, in this 1940 novel of the Spanish Civil War. Published three years after To Have and Have Not, which critics generally consider an artistically inferior work, For Whom the Bell Tolls was awaited eagerly both by those critics who wanted Hemingway to redeem himself and by the leftist readers who hoped that the "social consciousness" they had found in the 1937 book would now be more fully developed. Although the new book was an immediate best seller and generally a critical success, Hemingway was virulently attacked by some critics, who condemned the book as both an unfair political attack on communism and a degradation of the Russians working against fascism in Spain (4, pp. 449-454). Alvah Bessie—who Baker declares is "both
fairer and better informed" than most (4, p. 452)--says that Hemingway presents a completely false picture of people and conditions in Spain; Bessie fully expected Hemingway to become a dupe of the fascists. Bessie also scathingly informs Hemingway that *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is nothing more than a "Cosmopolitan love story" (8, pp. 28-29). This last remark has at least some connection with literary merit, or lack of it, but the context in which it appears is regrettable.

Critics who attack a literary work on a purely political basis tend to lose sight of any good qualities the work has and, in this case at least, to ignore the purposes of the writer. Hemingway had long been concerned about the fate of the Spanish people; as early as 1934, he discussed the situation in Spain, noting that despite the fact that monetary conditions seemed superficially to have improved, "the peasants are as bad off as ever, the middle class is being taxed more than ever, and the rich certainly will be wiped out" (15, p. 26). Having stated in 1935 that under no circumstances should the United States become involved in another European war (16), Hemingway nevertheless went to Spain in 1937 to report on "the new kind of total war . . . in which there was no such thing as a noncombatant." He wrote to Maxwell Perkins and Arnold Gingrich concerning his unhappiness about the course of the war and his disgust with the "treachery and rottenness" on both sides; he believed, furthermore, that political corruption was increasing. By March, 1939, he
began writing *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, a project he had not expected to undertake nearly so soon after his return from Spain, but one in which he immediately became totally involved. In December of that same year, he wrote to Perkins that his purpose in the novel is to tell the truth, not to advance an ideology (4, pp. 383, 425-427, 431, 439, 846, 851). Hemingway did not claim to be unprejudiced, but as Baker points out, his concern is with humanity, not with politics or propaganda; he felt that the Spanish people had been betrayed (5, pp. 239-240).

Working from this thesis, Hemingway took one small segment of the war as the focus for his novel. The politics of the Spanish Civil War is a socio-historical concern. The literary question to be answered here is whether *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is an Aristotelian tragedy, a matter of style, characterization, and plot. It is a question whose answer does not depend upon the sociological or political intentions of the author, a question whose answer does not depend even upon the literary intentions, although these must not simply be disregarded. The answer depends upon the literary accomplishments.

The subject matter of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is significant: a small group of Spanish partisans, working with an American, attempt to destroy a bridge, an action upon which they believe the outcome of the war to depend; in the course of the plot, several of the partisans and fascists die.
However, for the purposes of this discussion, the various other elements of Aristotelian tragedy must also be considered.

The diction in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is quite different from, but not completely unlike, that in the novels discussed in earlier chapters. The major difference is apparent in both the dialogue and the narration, but especially in the dialogue. The conversations are in Spanish, most of which are translated into English; in some cases, the Spanish words are given with an English translation following. On the rare occasions when Jordan speaks English, his having done so is indicated. The result of the Spanish-translated-into-English constructions is often a structure which belongs to neither language, but which is, nevertheless, usually successful. Hemingway, relying on his ear for the cadences of language, generally manages to sustain a middle ground between Spanish and English. Although Barea objects to some of the dialogue on the grounds that it is "totally un-Spanish" (6, p. 203), the English-speaking reader finds the language foreign but natural sounding; the author's few failures are of no great importance. Adams, in fact, declares the dialogue in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* to be Hemingway's first really natural dialogue (1, p. 105). Baker describes the language as "a successful collocation of the old and dignified [Elizabethan-Jacobean English, i.e.] with the new and crass" (5, p. 249). Grebstein notes a similarity between the dialogue
techniques of *A Farewell to Arms* and those of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, the use of different constructions by different people in various situations, and states that "each character's linguistic range is appropriate to that character." Perhaps in answer to Barea, Grebstein also says that while the question of whether Hemingway faithfully and accurately translates Spanish idiom into English may be interesting, it is not really relevant (11, pp. 126-129). That very few readers criticize the dialogue of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* indicates the validity of Grebstein's judgment.

In comparing the style with that of *The Sun Also Rises*, Schorer says that the language of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* lacks the grace and precision of the earlier style, but allows for a leisurely pace, more details, and various cadences (23, pp. 101, 104). Schorer's remark applies to both the dialogue and the narration. Both the kinds of words and the structures are changed; sentences are frequently longer with a more complex structure than those of *The Sun Also Rises*. *For Whom the Bell Tolls* has more description: people speak "angrily," "quietly," "heavily," "happily," "bitterly," "seriously," "deliberately," "sullenly," and "almost pitifully" within one five-page span (14, pp. 51-55). Hemingway, although generally still employing common words, does not limit adjectives to a few relatively non-descriptive ones: a road, for example, is "broad and oiled and well constructed" (14, p. 31) rather than just a "very good road"; Karkov's
wife is a "thin, drawn, dark, loving, nervous, deprived and unbitter woman with a lean, neglected body and dark, gray-streaked hair cut short" (14, p. 232). The following passage exemplifies the more complicated sentence structure used with some frequency in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*:

He looked forward with excitement, delight, and sweating fear to the moment when, in the square, he would hear the clatter of the bull's horns knocking against the wood of his travelling box, and then the sight of him as he came, sliding, braking out into the square, his head up, his nostrils wide, his ears twitching, dust in the sheen of his black hide, dried crut splashed on his flanks, watching his eyes set apart, unblinking eyes under the widespread horns as smooth and solid as driftwood polished by the sand, the sharptips uplifted so that to see them did something to your heart (14, p. 364).

Without citing specific examples, only generalizing that Hemingway frequently writes rambling sentences and too often uses overstatement, Schorer states that in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* the author does not maintain control over the diction. However, he also says that the older, much more rigidly controlled style of *The Sun Also Rises* would not accommodate the 1940 novel; the new style does (23, p. 104).

Aristotle explains that in both prose and verse, the function of diction is to express character; the diction of tragedy should be "stately," and the perfect style is that which is "clear without being mean. The clearest style . . . uses only current or proper words; [but] it is mean." To raise the style above "the commonplace and mean," the poet should use, not overuse, "strange (or rare) words" and metaphors; thus, his diction is both clear and distinctive--
appropriate to tragedy (3, pp. 28-29, 18-19, 80-87). Both the drama and the novel, of course, provide the characters' words. However, more is required of language in a novel than of that in drama, where the audience has the physical advantage of viewing and hearing. The author of a novel, unlike the dramatist, must provide for the audience all of the words that describe the setting, the actions, the appearance of the characters, their manner of speaking, and the atmosphere.

The success of Hemingway's diction in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is attributable both to his having provided appropriate dialogue for his characters and to his describing scenes and actions which almost engrave themselves permanently in the reader's mind. The dialogue in particular helps to create the various characters and to distinguish among them; and the narrative language and the dialogue both help to create appropriate atmosphere.

The atmosphere of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is not always a completely serious one; but the inclusion of almost-comic scenes, rather than disrupting, contributes to the tragic effect. One such scene occurs early in the novel (14, pp. 80-84), when Robert Jordan meets Fernando for the first time.

"The ludicrous quality of the too-serious and conventional Fernando gets through to us in his penchant for jargon ..." (11, p. 129); all the time he is giving the news from La Granja, he is protesting that everything he has heard is rumor "as usual," a statement the audience knows is ironical.
Hemingway's comical scenes are frequently ironical and often serve to relieve the pressure of great tension, sometimes in order to emphasize the serious, even somber, tone of following scenes. Such comic relief occurs during the attack on El Sordo's band of guerrillas (14, pp. 314-319). The insurgent captain, trying to assure his men--and himself--that El Sordo and all of his men are dead, shouts increasingly insulting obscenities at the hilltop in an attempt to arouse some reaction. The guerrilla band refuses to respond, and Captain Mora climbs up on a boulder and yells, "'Shoot me! Kill me!'" while waving his arms in the air. El Sordo is still laughing after he kills the captain. Then, the planes come and no one is laughing.

Whether comedy, sobriety, dignity, or some other tone is required, Hemingway almost unfailingly provides the correct atmosphere throughout For Whom the Bell Tolls. Aristotle might judge this novel imperfect tragedy on the grounds that not all of the language is dignified; however, the extant Poetics does not state that some humor is not permitted in tragedy, and Aristotle frequently indicates that speech should be appropriate to personality (3, pp. 26-27 and passim). Valid reasons support the assumption that Aristotle would accept the diction of For Whom the Bell Tolls as appropriate to a tragic novel.

Not only the speech but also the actions of the characters should be appropriate to them. The characters' actions
and the events of the plot constitute the second of Aristo-
tle's requirements—thought, or believable actions.

Although the total cast of characters in *For Whom the
Bell Tolls* is enormous—including, among others, relatives
and friends from the characters' pasts, foreign military per-
sonnel, and journalists—there are relatively few characters
directly involved in the main story. Of these, some, albeit
important to the story, play very minor roles—Rafael and
Primitivio, for example; others, somewhat more important, but
still relatively minor parts. The latter groups includes
such characters as Andrés, Agustín, Fernando—"supremely dig-
nified [and] one of Hemingway's best drawn minor characters"
(5, p. 249), and El Sordo—dignified, courteous, courageous,
dedicated (18, p. 160), and "typical of his kind: primitive,
harsh, straight, and ingenuous" (6, p. 208). Because Heming-
way is not known for developing his characters, it is inter-
esting to note that the amount of physical description and
background information about some of the minor characters in
this novel is greater than that given for some of Hemingway's
major characters in other books.

Maria, Pilar, Pablo, Anselmo, and the hero, Robert Jor-
dan, are the major characters. Critical opinion varies widely
as to whether these characters, including the hero, are indi-
viduals or merely wooden Indians. Aldridge, for example, says
they are all "standard" Hemingway characters, without indivi-
duality (2, pp. 35-37); Kazin says that the major characters
are "totally unreal" (19, pp. 338-339). Barea criticizes the characterization of the Spanish people, as well as their actions, on the grounds that, even for those who are "real and alive," Hemingway fails to provide motivation. Barea indicates that the author should explain "why [these characters] fight for the Republic [because] it had been precisely their hope and belief in a constructive future which had set the Spanish laborers and peasants in motion" (6, pp. 203-208).

Barea's protests are undoubtedly more political and nationalistic than they are literary. Like Weeks in his criticism of The Old Man and the Sea (although Barea's criticism is certainly more logical), Barea demands that Hemingway present only facts. However, Aristotle explains that a poet is not a historian and may therefore include "improbable possibilities" (3, pp. 94-97). Specifically answering Barea, Hovey states that while American readers find it difficult to dispute the claim "that some of the incidents are unlikely and that some of the characters behave implausibly," Barea achieves nothing except "[undermining] our faith in Hemingway's verisimilitude" (18, pp. 152-153). As before, Barea's comments are interesting, and they could probably arouse a great amount of discussion, but they have little relationship to the artistic quality of the book. Other readers object to the inclusion of certain scenes, but these are generally cries of anguish that Hemingway should present one side or the other in such a way.
Many readers find the characterizations in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* Hemingway's most successful and most fully developed. According to Adams, Pilar and Anselmo are the "most fully realized individuals in Hemingway's writings" (1, p. 110), and Nahal states that Pablo and Pilar are "two of the finest [characterizations] drawn by Hemingway" (20, p. 133). Shaw calls the characterizations of Pablo, Pilar, and Anselmo successful pictures of "whole human beings" (24, pp. 99-101). Of Pablo, Hovey says that he is "Hemingway's most complex and ambitious characterization"; Pilar is one of only two female characters (the other being Brett Ashley) in all of Hemingway's fiction "who are autonomous and fully developed" (18, pp. 157-159, 61).

The only consensus about the characterization in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* seems to be that Maria is, as Baker calls her, a "conspicuous example" of one of the types of Hemingway females--the "docile and submissive mistress [type]" (5, p. 110). However, Barea objects to the characterization of Maria, stating unequivocably that a Spanish girl of Maria's rural middle-class background would neither speak nor act as she does and that her instantaneous love affair would have elicited condemnation from the guerrilla band because Jordan does not even ask her (6, pp. 208-209). The failure of the partisans to condemn Maria as a "bitch in heat" evidently depends upon their not knowing that she has gone to Jordan without having been asked; and Barea does not explain how
the men could have known whether Jordan asked Maria or not. Jordan makes his desire very obvious (14, p. 67); furthermore, Barea completely neglects to mention that if Pilar has not urged the girl to go to Jordan, she has at the very least condoned her going (14, p. 73). Again, Barea protests a little too strongly; Maria's actions may not be those which a girl of her background would ordinarily undertake, but then probably neither do most such girls find themselves the victim of rape or the houseguest of a group of partisans living in a cave and preparing to blow up a bridge. Maria's un-believability arises not from what she does, but from the excesses of her characterization: she is too good, too pure, too innocent—traits which have very little to do with her being Spanish, but much to do with the failure to be truly human.

The other three of these four major characters are all very human. To some extent, however, each lacks motivation. The reader is provided with background history and personality traits, but not always with reasons for their actions and beliefs. As far as the forward action of the plot is concerned, the characters act believable, but occasionally the reader cannot help but wonder why a character acts or speaks as he does. The reader can imagine Pilar's taking over the leadership of the group, for example, when Pablo, now a drunken coward, refuses to continue. On the other hand, the reason for Pilar's telling Maria that they are all going
to die is never clarified, and several possible explanations exist: for example, perhaps Pilar is trying to prepare Maria, or maybe she resents Maria's happiness. Hemingway similarly does not provide enough motivation for Anselmo, who never seems to understand fully just why the partisans are fighting. Early in the plot he berates Pablo for caring more about horses than about humanity; but he needs Jordan's orders to make his own job possible and he is never able to accept the necessity for killing a human, hoping that some form of penance will be available after the war (14, pp. 11, 43, 196-198, 410). Barea claims that Pablo's motivation in organizing and conducting the killing of twenty fascists in a small Sierra town (14, pp. 103-129) is done to involve "the whole population in the same blood guilt" (6, p. 205); however, this explanation provides insufficient reasons for the brutality and horror which Pablo—and Pablo alone—creates.

The accusation of lack of motivation is also made against Robert Jordan (2, pp. 37-38), but is not true; as Wagenknecht explains, Jordan is fighting for "human freedom" (25, pp. 377-378). In addition, the statement that Jordan is an undeveloped character is false (22, p. 137). He is one of the most fully realized individuals in all of Hemingway's works; furthermore, he is a character whose development progresses through the book and who fulfills the Aristotelian requirements for the tragic hero. He is the
"good" man Aristotle requires, yet he is by no means perfect or so good that the audience cannot relate to him. He must, for example, continue to reassure himself that the destruction of the bridge is important and that it can be accomplished (14, pp. 43, 335-340, and passim). He is more intelligent than any of the partisans, but not the most intelligent person in the book: Karkov is "the most intelligent man he had ever met" (14, p. 231). He recognizes his own failures and the intelligence of others; he knows very well, for example, that only he, Pablo, and El Sordo understand immediately how dangerous the destruction of the bridge is (14, p. 162). Although Jordan is knowledgeable about many things—such as books, horses, guns, and bullfights—he does not pretend to an expertise that he does not have: he knows that he needs to acquire more knowledge and ability before he will be able to write about the war (14, p. 248). He is honorable concerning Maria; even before their love affair begins, he agrees to take her away after the bridge is destroyed (14, p. 32). He protects her by not allowing her to know how dangerous the situation is; this protection may be partly a matter of realizing how simple the girl is, but it is also a matter of not wanting to upset the equilibrium she has so recently gained. He is a practical man, fully aware of what he can and cannot do, but not allowing difficulties or fear to overwhelm him. He is courageous; throughout the book, he knows how slight his chance of survival is, and after Pablo
deserts, his chances are even slimmer (14, pp. 370-371 and passim); but he does not consider his act one of self-sacrifice or heroism. All of these traits exemplify the quality of character required of both the Aristotelian and the Hemingway hero. Jordan has faults as well, of course; he is, for example, hot tempered (14, pp. 370-371), but Hemingway does not emphasize his negative traits, a non-emphasis which the Aristotelian requirements support (3, pp. 56-57).

In addition to a certain character, the Aristotelian hero requires a certain plot structure within which to act. As pointed out earlier, the subject matter of For Whom the Bell Tolls is significant; it is also serious enough to be appropriate to tragedy. Hemingway is concerned not just with the small action of blowing the bridge, but also with the fate of all men. The plot structure, however, remains to be examined.

The first necessary characteristic of the structure of Aristotelian tragedy is unity. The plot must be so devised that the action has a beginning, a middle, and an ending, and does not include unnecessary extraneous incidents. For Whom the Bell Tolls fulfills only the first part of this requirement:

The first two chapters of the novel may be considered the equivalent of the prologue in Greek tragedy, in which the exposition is given. In these two chapters, the major
characters are introduced and the reader discovers the reason for Jordan's joining the guerrilla group. Not having a chorus to provide all of this information, Hemingway uses dialogue, flashbacks, and factual narration to present it to the reader. These same devices, along with in-set stories, are used throughout the book to maintain unity.

The bridge, the destruction of which is the entire objective of Jordan's mission, also helps to maintain unity. As both Baker (5, p. 245) and Guttman (12, p. 98) explain, the bridge serves as the center of the structural form of the novel. All of the action in the main plot is directed toward the destruction of and escape from the bridge.

The third chapter, in which Robert Jordan and Anselmo go to look at the bridge which is to be destroyed, starts the action proper. The story can be divided into the beginning, middle and ending required by Aristotle. The beginning is a relatively short section (14, pp. 35-73), ending with Jordan's first night at the partisan camp. The middle (14, pp. 74-371), the longest section, opens with the fascist planes waking Robert Jordan as they fly over, and concludes approximately forty-five hours later, just after Jordan has again been awakened—this time by Pilar, who tells him Pablo has left and taken some things—the exploder, the detonators, the fuse, and the caps. The middle section contains most of the flashbacks and set-in stories of the novel, including, for example, one long passage of introspection
(14, pp. 161-169) which immediately follows the famous, or infamous, earth-moving lovemaking. In the final section, Hemingway constantly shifts the action from Andrés, attempting to reach General Golz with a message from Robert Jordan, to Jordan and the others at the bridge. The technique, Grebstein states, both enlarges the scope of the novel and contributes to its suspense (11, p. 50). *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is a long book; however, the story is short enough, if one considers only the main plot, to be easily remembered.

Rovit states that in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, his "most ambitious novel," Hemingway attempts to present an in-depth picture of a people and a country, to describe honestly an extremely complex war, and "to cast a personal metaphor of his unique vision of life" (22, p. 136). Obviously, this combination of goals constitutes too great an undertaking for Aristotelian tragedy, which has fairly strict limitations. Many of the numerous set-in pieces and introspective passages, although they sustain the reader's interest and provide additional information about the characters and their backgrounds and that of the situation, must be considered unnecessary to Aristotelian tragedy. Such tragedy requires not only that episodes be sequential but also that all of them contribute directly to the actions of the drama (3, pp. 32-35). The added incidents of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* often provide much greater detail than the Aristotelian tragedy requires. For example, the long passage about Finito de Palencia (14,
helps to explain the code of the bullfighter and the personalities of those who understand and those who do not understand that code. This passage may help to explain Robert Jordan's motivation as well as the reason that Jordan and Pilar trust each other, but none of this is essential to the main plot. Such passages reinforce information given elsewhere, a technique often helpful to the structure of a novel, but detrimental to the structure of Aristotelian tragedy.

The novel is, of course, a literary genre completely unknown to Aristotle. However, the Poetics not only defines tragedy but also includes several remarks about the epic. One of the major differences between the epic and the Aristotelian tragedy is that the epic includes incidents which the tragedy cannot contain (3, pp. 90-93). In this respect, some novels closely resemble the epic. (Some, probably most, bear almost no similarity to either tragedy or the epic.) With the exception of this difference, the Aristotelian criteria for the epic are almost exactly the same as those for tragedy: "All the elements of an Epic poem are found in Tragedy, but the elements of a Tragedy are not all found in the Epic poem" (3, pp. 22-23). Thus, the analysis of For Whom the Bell Tolls continues. The reader is cautioned to remember that Aristotle presents no criteria for the novel and that no final conclusion about this novel has yet been reached.
With the full realization that *For Whom the Bell Tolls* contains numerous "set pieces" which could have been eliminated—and should have been if the novel were to more nearly resemble Aristotelian tragedy, it is also necessary to consider the development of the main plot beyond those remarks already made.

The best tragedy, according to Aristotle, has a complex plot in which a good man undergoes a change of fortune involving reversal of the situation or recognition or both. The course of events arouses pity or fear, preferably both, within the audience, and having aroused these emotions, then causes a catharsis. Robert Jordan definitely undergoes a change of fortune, an ironical one. The entire point of the action of the novel is that the bridge be destroyed at the proper time. Throughout the story, the reader is never allowed to forget the danger involved; he is, in fact, made aware of that danger very early and is led to believe that Jordan will not survive the explosion. Numerous ominous signs lead to this conclusion: the "bad sign" that Jordan forgets Anselmo's name and the less obvious sign later, when Jordan cannot remember Andrés' name; Jordan's concern about the job to be done, a worry which is aired frequently throughout the book; Pablo's sadness, another "bad" sign to Jordan, to whom it indicates Pablo's probable betrayal or desertion; the announcement of the death of Kashkin, another "dynamiter"; Jordan's thoughts that friendliness on Pablo's part will
indicate a decision to desert or commit an act to ruin the project; the palm-reading; the "really bad" planes, symbolizing death; and the "not good luck" of Maria's inability to have sexual intercourse on the last night before the bridge is to be blown up. But Jordan does survive the bridge itself.

Signs and warnings do not necessarily produce pity or fear, of course, even when the audience is sure that the purported event will occur. Two points must be considered here. First, in order to feel pity, the audience must care about what happens to the hero. Critics such as Bessie (8) who censure the book for its lack of political propaganda do not care about Jordan or his fate. However, numerous other critics do care; these readers find Jordan a well-developed character with reasonable motivations for his actions. The tone of many articles is one of caring about and feeling pity for Jordan. The arousal of fear, on the other hand, depends upon the reader's belief that he could meet the same kind of fate. As Butcher explains, "Pity and fear...are strictly correlated feelings." No one has to believe that he could find himself in the same situation as the hero; instead, the reader must know that he would be fearful for himself if he were in that situation (9, pp. 256-257).

Numerous critics discuss the high degree of tension maintained within the novel--e.g., Rovit (22, p. 142)--or point out that the dominant atmosphere is one of "doom" (10, p. 189; 5, pp. 250-251); these are both indications of the kind of fear required in Aristotelian tragedy.
Obviously, readers who claim that Hemingway has not met his political obligation in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* feel neither pity nor fear and do not experience the relief of catharsis; their pain, rage, remains. Other readers are evidently more fortunate. Shaw, for example, finds in this novel compassion for people and a "tragic affirmation of life" (24, pp. 8, 11). Benson indicates that he, too, experiences a catharsis; he remarks that although Jordan is defeated outwardly, he achieves "an inward victory of some significance" (7, p. 154).

Ultimately, no individual is to blame for Jordan's death but Jordan himself. His tragic flaw is his failure to heed his warning to himself: "he [Pablo] is going bad fast and without hiding it. When he starts to hide it he will have made a decision" (14, p. 16). When Pablo leaves the cave with part of the equipment needed to destroy the bridge, Jordan's useless rage at himself, at his own stupidity, is a form of recognition as well as being a natural, realistic reaction. Jordan blows up the bridge; and because Anselmo dies, Jordan leaves the bridge with the group rather than with Anselmo and Maria.

"It is one thing to know the rules in principle and another to remember them as they are needed when facing an animal that is seeking to kill you" (13, p. 17). Most bullfighters are very brave, says Hemingway, as he describes the tragedy of the bullfight; the bravest are those who do not
simply ignore danger but who have the ability "not to give a damn for possible consequences," even as they despise those consequences (13, pp. 17, 58). Robert Jordan is in another type of bullring. The animal he faces is another man—and, ironically, Lt. Berrenda, also a good man, hates death and war as much as Jordan does.

Jordan wants very much to live. Whether he and Maria "would have been able to sustain a genuine love relationship" (2, pp. 39-40) is immaterial; Jordan has had a good life and hates to die because of the total loss, not just because of Maria (14, pp. 467-471). As Benson says, Jordan's "genuine desire to live" increases the meaning of his death (7, p. 167).

Perhaps readers will always disagree about what Hemingway ultimately achieves in For Whom the Bell Tolls. In the first place, to understand the author's theory of art, one must understand Hemingway's feelings about the bullfight and probably must be in sympathy with those feelings. The structure of this novel, for example, is based upon the three acts of the bullfight (13, pp. 96-100). The beginning and the middle of the novel, like the first two acts of the bullfight, are a preparation for death; the ending, like the third act, brings death. The bullfight, however, as Hemingway explains, is an impermanent art and a minor one when compared to painting or writing; nevertheless, every work of art is created by an individual (13, pp. 73, 99-100).
The greatest form of tragedy in the bullring occurs when "a really brave bull"—one who fights "because he wants to," who continues to fight unhesitatingly even after being wounded, who is noble—is killed by a bullfighter who transcends his human, logical fear and kills properly, without tricks and with honor (13, pp. 112-113, 163, 206-207, and passim). The confrontation between perfect bull and perfect bullfighter is extremely rare, but this in no way excuses the bullfighter from his obligation to retain his honor and to kill without tricks, to do the best he can under whatever circumstances exist.

In some ways, the truly great bullfighter exemplifies the Hemingway "code hero," who in turn "introduces and exemplifies . . . the Hemingway 'code'--a 'grace under pressure.'" The code provides guidelines for courage and honor which permit a man not only to survive but also to live in a tense, painful world and to achieve a stature above the messy, cowardly people who either have no rules or fail to follow them (26, p. 63). These are the kind of rules Jordan tries to follow; he is not naive, but neither is he a "code hero"; he knows the rules and attempts to live by them without being completely sure that he has been successful. "'I hope I have done some good in the world,'" he says. "What do you want? Everything. I want everything and I will take whatever I get" (14, pp. 467, 469). The Hemingway hero has reached his zenith.
Only the structure of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* keeps the book from being an almost perfect Aristotelian tragedy. As numerous critics explain, this novel has the structure of an epic. Aristotle states that the epic is a less perfect artistic form than is the tragedy (3, pp. 108, 111), and Hemingway says that "all bad writers are in love with the epic" (13, p. 54). However, as Baker indicates, although even an excellent writer may produce a rhetorical, grandiose epic, such characteristics can be avoided and Hemingway does so (5, pp. 247-248). The modern reader cannot declare with any absolute certainty just what Aristotle's reaction to the novel would be; however, with the full realization of Hemingway's high accomplishment—the fact that he fulfills the necessary characteristics of tragedy and of epic poetry and that he does so in a completely different genre and makes very few mistakes, one may assume that as an art form, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, a tragic epical novel, ranks very high.
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CHAPTER VI

HEMINGWAY AND TRAGEDY

If they want to keep them there, those who place Hemingway's four major novels on "the second shelf of our literature" (5) may have to continue moving them down from the top shelf. As soon as the members of this group relax their vigilance, someone will return The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms, The Old Man and the Sea, and For Whom the Bell Tolls to the top shelf. Probably no consensus will ever exist about the order of rank of these four novels. Each of them is considered by several critics to be Hemingway's best; however, most critics rate the entire group not only Hemingway's best but also worthy of top-shelf placement.

Many critics insist that Hemingway's protagonists are all the same man, a projection of the author himself. Unfortunately, some of these critics are so busy explaining the connections between the author's and the protagonists' lives they have little time to discuss the qualities of the works. Separating an author's works completely from his personal life is frequently impossible; and in Hemingway's case, these four novels contain so many personal elements that no one should try to ignore the relationship between fact and
fiction. However, such emphasis has been placed on this relationship that some people are probably convinced that Hemingway went to Switzerland during World War I with a British nurse who died in childbirth, that Hemingway received a genital wound in that same war, that he fought in the Spanish Civil War and was gravely injured and almost died (he could not have died, of course, because he still had to go fishing), and that he once caught a huge marlin off the coast of Cuba and then lost it to sharks. None of this is true, but many critics have made it seem true.

In addition, far too many critics ignore Hemingway's theory of tragedy as set forth in *Death in the Afternoon*. The purpose of this thesis is not to examine Hemingway's but Aristotle's theory of tragedy and the ways in which Hemingway fulfills, or fails to fulfill, the Aristotelian criteria. Nevertheless, if it were not for the simple fact that many parallels exist between the theories set forth in *The Poetics* and in *Death in the Afternoon*, much less justification would exist for examining Hemingway's works against Aristotle's criteria.

Several of the most important of these parallels are discussed as necessary in the preceding chapters and need not be repeated in detail again. Some of the similarities in the structure of the bullfight and the structure of Aristotelian tragedy are that both move toward an inevitable ending; both depend upon action; both, if executed properly,
arouse emotions and effect a catharsis. The outstanding parallel requirements are the need for a noble hero and for a prescribed structure. Undoubtedly, Aristotle's and Hemingway's definitions of "noble" are somewhat different, Aristotle's being more concerned with moral beliefs, Hemingway's with physical courage; but both definitions inherently require an inner dignity and a sense of personal worth.

The question of whether Hemingway wrote works which Aristotle would acknowledge as tragedies must, in general, be answered in the negative, or at least with several qualifications. However, Hemingway did write other kinds of tragedies; and his accomplishment is perhaps greater than it would have been if he had merely followed the guidelines provided by someone else. "A new classic," says Hemingway, "does not bear any resemblance to the classics that have preceded it" (6, p. 21); whether the four novels discussed here are classics is a question only future generations can decide. At the present time, however, no one can deny the far-ranging influence of Hemingway.

In the matter of style alone, Hemingway's influence is evident in the writings of many other authors. Shaw describes that style as a "deceptively simple [style] that requires painstaking artistic conscience"; the effort that goes into it is not apparent (10, pp. 28-29). Very few others have attained Hemingway's level of achievement in stylistic technique.
A great many critics recognize Hemingway's achievements in style. Far fewer fully recognize his accomplishments in matters of theme. All of Hemingway's writings, including some really bad ones, have been praised; but, as Hovey states, his accomplishment has been "greatly oversimplified" (7, p. 2). Hovey is speaking specifically of the short stories, but the remark is, if anything, even more applicable to Hemingway's accomplishments in his four major novels.

Hemingway's protagonists are not all the same person, as many critics have said they are; all of them, it is true, share some of the author's experiences or heritage as well as having certain traits in common, but each is a separate personality and each faces problems completely different from those of the others. If the Hemingway heroes were not different from one another, they would not be remembered, as they are, as individuals. The story of each of the four novels is also different. The actions occur in different places under different circumstances. Although Hemingway uses the same themes—awareness, commitment, and courage—from which to project his ideas, as Benson notes, he varies the points of view from which he deals with these themes and achieves "more virtuosity and imagination in shifting from one point of attack to another than he is usually given credit for" (4, p. 149).

Many critics seem to operate from a very narrow point of view. The most obvious examples of such critics are
those who blame the writer for not doing something other than what he has done, who want the writer to begin again and rewrite. To judge an author's work against some arbitrary standard which the critic does not bother to explain or which was not the author's goal in the first place is, as Rovit says, completely illogical (9, p. 166). Yet many critics do this. Others, to whom reality obviously means very little, are critical of what they consider the immorality of some of Hemingway's novels.

The inability to discard prejudices and the failure to explain their own definitions have undoubtedly led many critics away from viewing Hemingway's works objectively. Thus, although many readers aptly praise part of Hemingway's achievements, most fail to realize how close Hemingway's works are to Aristotelian tragedy. What is perhaps worse is that some of these people do not seem even to have read the works; not only do they grossly misinterpret passages, but in at least one major case, the critic does not even state the facts correctly. Although he corrects his error in a later edition (3, p. 105), Carlos Baker states that Catherine and Frederic go to Switzerland separately (2, p. 104).

This thesis does not pretend in any way to explain everything about any of the four novels discussed; the remarks here concern only the fulfillment, or lack of fulfillment, of the Aristotelian requirements for tragedy. These
requirements, both descriptive and prescriptive, are based upon tragedy as it was known to Aristotle. That he must work from an evidently incomplete text, that no way exists to be familiar with dramas which have not survived, that even excellent translations may not provide the full meaning of the original text—these are just the first problems the modern reader faces. Another problem is organizing the material from the *Poetics* into a coherent whole, a task which involves accumulating the remarks made at various places and then checking every statement which seems contradictory against the context in which it appears. When all of this is done, the reader may begin analyzing Hemingway's works, but certain assumptions must still be made in evaluating novels against criteria set up for drama.

The Aristotelian requirements most consistently achieved by Hemingway in the works considered here—*The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, *The Old Man and the Sea*, and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*—are diction and thought, or the provision of appropriate dialogue, description, and characterization. Although Hemingway almost unfailingly achieves these goals, especially that of diction, they are the ones least important to Aristotelian tragedy. Any literary work which has characters, setting, or action is expected to achieve these goals.

The next most important goal is that of character, which might be better phrased as "the need for the tragic hero to live by a moral code." Hemingway's heroes do have a code,
of course, but its terminology—"honor" and "bravery," for example—is abstract and thus difficult to specify. For instance, O'Faolain points out that in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Pablo, presented as a coward, "might strike anybody accustomed to fighting as the only sensible man in the whole crowd" (8, p. 131). Jordan is generally accepted as heroic; but if Pablo is "sensible," then Jordan must be a fanatic or, perhaps even worse, a fool. The modern reader can do no more than assume that Aristotle would have accepted the characteristics of the Hemingway hero as appropriate to the tragic hero.

The last, and most important, of Aristotle's criteria is the plot, which should concern the unified story of the downfall of a good man. Certain other elements are also required by Aristotle, but these need not be elaborated again. *The Sun Also Rises* is not Aristotelian tragedy because Jake's downfall occurs before the opening of the novel; rather than the tragedy itself, the story concerns Jake Barnes' gradual recovery from a tragic event. Now sometimes considered a classic, the novel is closely akin to tragedy and probably stands a better chance for survival than does *The Old Man and the Sea*. If *A Farewell to Arms* becomes a true classic, it will evidently do so because the book is frequently misread as a tragic love story. Although not an Aristotelian tragedy because there is no catharsis, the book is, nevertheless, a type of modern tragedy—a story of
disillusionment due to the failure to find what one is almost desperately seeking. The chances for the survival of *A Farewell to Arms* cannot be accurately estimated. The book has already survived more than four decades, a fact which indicates that regardless of the reason, it has viability. The *Old Man and the Sea*, on the other hand, may have run its course. The fact that critical comments about the book are becoming less laudatory indicates that its major chance for long-term survival is related to Hemingway's having won the Pulitzer and Nobel Prizes shortly after its publication. Of these four books, the closest to Aristotelian tragedy in form, it fails as tragedy because the subject matter, as it is presented, fails to arouse the necessary emotions. The book which should have won the Pulitzer, and almost did win it (1, p. 461), *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, should be the one book to survive if only one does. It fails as Aristotelian tragedy only in not maintaining the rather rigid unity of classic Greek drama. Modern readers do not demand this type of unity in their novels, and several other critics quite obviously agree with Baker's judgment that the book is a "genuinely great novel" (3, p. xvii).

In the foreword to his 1966 book, Young states that Hemingway once accused him of having distorted the author's work because Young "was riding a thesis." Young agrees that "all theses distort the work in some degree" (11, p. 28).
Although the word has a slightly different meaning here, it is hoped that this thesis does not distort.
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