

An American writer Ernest Hemingway's life style and its influence to his creative activity

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Abstract: *This dissertation work gives a deeper view of the literary style and philosophy of Ernest Hemingway - the American short story writer, novelist, non-fiction writer, journalist, poet, and dramatist. Mainly, it focuses on the connection between the life of Ernest Hemingway and his literary works. He enjoyed life to the fullest and wanted to show that he could do whatever he wanted and it is truly obvious that these facts deeply influenced to his future career, his creativity and private life.*

This paper examines reflections of the author's childhood on his works and the effects of women's special role on his life and creativity and on the moral and ethical relativism of Hemingway's characters. It also studies the importance and the influence of World War I on his short stories and novels. What's more, it studies his thirst for cultural knowledge which has left indelible signs in all of his works.

The aim of this research is to find out essential features of the writer's literary activity and to explain why the above coupled with the essential messages on the concept of wealth and goodness, portrayed in Hemingway's novels, are some of the reasons why his works have been rendered classics of the American literature.

Key words: Ernest Hemingway

INTRODUCTION

Every man's life ends the same way. It is only the details of how he lived and how he died that distinguishes one man from another.¹

The Nobel Prize winning author had a significant influence on twentieth-century fiction, and most of his works are considered classics today. His work is best known for his stark, minimalist style and accessibility to readers. Authors James Joyce and J.D. Salinger acknowledged Hemingway's influence on their own writing. His works also paved the way for potboilers and pulp fiction. In the nearly sixty two years of his life that followed he forged a literary reputation unsurpassed in the twentieth century. In doing so, he also created a mythological hero in himself that captivated (and at times confounded) not only serious literary critics but the average man as well. His life and legacy are still celebrated today. In a word, he was a star.

1. Early life and entertainment :

Ernest Miller Hemingway was born in 1899, in Oak Park, Illinois. Raised in an upper middle class environment, his father was a physician and his mother had trained as a singer. The family spent summers in Michigan, where Ernest became a great lover of anything that was outdoors related. As a boy he was taught by his father to hunt and fish along the shores and in the forests surrounding Lake Michigan. This love of nature stayed with him throughout his life. Nature would be the touchstone of Hemingway's life and work.

When Ernest graduated from High School, his uncle helped him land a job as a reporter on the Kansas City Star. He never attended college. Ernest only stayed at the Star for about six months. Unable to enlist in the armed forces, due to an eyesight problem, Ernest volunteered to drive ambulances for the American Red Cross in Italy.

During his time in Italy, Hemingway was seriously wounded in the legs and feet by shrapnel. He was eventually taken to the Red Cross Hospital in Milan, where he spent part of the summer and fall of 1918. While cooped up in the hospital Ernest fell in love with a nurse, Agnes von Kurowsky of Washington, D.C., but their love affair came to an abrupt end, when she jilted him, for an Italian officer. Later, he used some of these experiences in his novel "A Farewell to Arms".

¹ See Papa Hemingway: the ecstasy and sorrow by A. E. Hotchner - Literary Criticism - 1983 - 322 pages

Despite his broken love affair with the beautiful nurse, Ernest married his first of four wives, Hadley Richardson in 1921. Soon the couple moved to Paris, where Ernest was part of the literary group later called The Lost Generation.

Ernest and Hadley had one son, Jack, nicknamed Bumby. The family survived on money Ernest made writing short stories and working as a foreign correspondent for the Toronto Star. But, they were relatively poor. The couple found the money to travel to Austria and Spain, where Ernest discovered bullfighting and the running of the bulls in Pamplona.

Ernest was not lucky in love. He divorced Hadley in 1927 and married his second wife, American heiress Pauline Pfeiffer. They travelled to Key West, Florida, and although they had no real plans to stay, eventually bought a home there. Key West was a laid-back place and Ernest spends a great deal of time deep-sea fishing with friends.

Ernest spent part of each day writing, but also found time for drinking with his buddies and more fishing, sometimes off the coast of Cuba. He did some travelling to Spain, and Wyoming. Thanks to a generous gift from Pauline's Uncle, they took a much-anticipated African safari, which lasted several months.

1.1 World War I years:

Following America's entry into World War I, Hemingway tried to enlist in the US Army. Enthusiastic as he was, Hemingway failed the physical examination due to poor eyesight. Still wanting to participate in the war effort, Hemingway signed up with the Red Cross as an ambulance driver.

Upon leaving the US, Hemingway first travelled to Paris, and then received orders to report to Milan. A short time later, he moved to the town of Schio where he worked driving ambulances. While delivering chocolates and cigarettes to soldiers on the front, Hemingway was seriously injured on July 8, 1918 by fragments from an Austrian mortar shell. Though badly wounded by the mortar, and hit by machine gun fire as well, Hemingway worked to secure the safety of his fellow soldiers, getting them out of danger. The Italian government later awarded him the Silver Medal of Military Valor for his heroic actions.

Hemingway spent time recovering at a hospital in Milan, where he met Agnes von Kurowsky, a nurse originally from Washington D.C. She was six years older than Hemingway, but nevertheless he fell in love with her, and planned to take her home to Oak Park. Hemingway fell in love with her, but their relationship did not survive his return to the United States. Hemingway's personal experiences would be used in his fiction.

At this point of view, we may see here how Hemingway's wrote his early novels, like he share his own secret with his novels.

1.2. Ernest Hemingway's private life:

"The better you treat a man and the more you show you love him, the quicker he gets tired of you".²

"From my earliest days with Ernest Hemingway," wrote Major General Charles T. Lanham (USA, Ret.) about his friend Ernest Hemingway, "he always referred to his mother as "that bitch". He must have told me a thousand times how much he hated her and in how much he hated her and in how many ways." At other moments in his mature years Ernest spat out same invective. Grace Hemingway was a domineering shrew who drove her husband to suicide; she had a "rule everything". John Passos said that Ernest was the only man he ever knew who really hated his mother.³

Ernest Hemingway was one of the greatest American writers, but he was also one of the worst in depicting life and women. Carlos Baker believes that the stories of Ernest

² See "The Hemingway Women" by Bernice Kert - Biography & Autobiography - Page 28

³ See Hemingway Women" by Bernice Kert - Biography & Autobiography Page 23

Hemingway, particularly *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber* and *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, are centred on women, alcohol, money, and ambition. In both of these stories, Hemingway portrays the wife either as a "bitch" in character or was considered to be a bitch by the husband. The woman is also seen as smart and challenged the male's ego. The women in these stories are seen either by a male character or by the husband as controlling and manipulative. In Hemingway's stories, *Hills like White Elephants*, *Up in Michigan*, and *A Canary for One*, Hemingway depicts the female characters as weak. He makes them seem stupid and ignorant.

I have mentioned above about his relation with Agnes von Kurowsky, but she rejected his marriage proposals, saying he was too young and immature for her, and besides of this, she even announce her engagement to an Italian officer at her letter that she wrote to him, a few months after Hemingway returned home to Oak Park. A heartbroken Hemingway channelled his disappointment into his writing. He decided then that writing would be the most important and reliable element of his life. Friends and lovers would come and go, but he would always have his writing. It's obvious that, an indelible mark on his psyche and provided inspiration for, and was fictionalized in, one of his early novels, *A Farewell to Arms*. Hemingway's first story based on this relationship, "A Very Short Story," appeared in 1925.

If we pay attention in his childhood relation towards to her mother and then his heartbroken short love story with Agnes von Kurowky, these both are very important and serious factors that until the end of his life deeply influence to Ernest Hemingway.

Thus, as we learn more and more about Hemingway, the self-created macho man's man, we start to understand why he worked so hard to show his sexual prowess. Part of being macho was being sexually adept, being able to satisfy women (who were, in turn, only sex partners rather than people). We come to see that Hemingway was a product of his times-and those times were marked with a nearly obsessive interest in sexuality and erotica.^[4] Notwithstanding his relation failed with Agnes von Kurowsky, Ernest Hemingway made four marriages until the end of his life.

Elizabeth Hadley Richardson was the first wife of famous writer Ernest Hemingway. She was raised in St. Louis, Missouri and married Ernest Hemingway on September 3, 1921. Together they moved to Paris, France, and in the fall of 1923, as Hadley approached the term of her pregnancy, they returned westward so that their child could be born in the United States. On October 10, 1923, Hadley gave birth to John Hadley Nicanor Hemingway. John was nicknamed "Bumby" and "Jack", and later fathered three daughters, including actresses Margaux Hemingway and Mariel Hemingway.

In January 1924 the Hemingway family returned to Paris. Hadley and Hemingway had many adventures together as members of "The Lost Generation," as Gertrude Stein called the expatriates living in Paris. Hemingway recounted these days in his non-fiction book "A Moveable Feast". It covered the years 1921-1926 and it recounts the days of the "struggling artist", Hemingway and wife Hadley, and their adventures in the sidewalk cafe society of Paris; and their trips to Switzerland, Austria, and Spain.

In the spring of 1925, the Hemingway's met Pauline Pfeiffer, an American expatriate in Paris. After Hadley discovered that her husband and Pfeiffer were having an affair, Hadley filed for divorce from her husband, which was finalized in January 1927.

Pauline Marie Pfeiffer was the second wife of the writer Ernest Hemingway. She was born in Parkersburg, Iowa on July 22, 1895, moving to St. Louis in 1901 where she

⁴ Hemingway and women: female critics and the female voice By Lawrence R. Broer, Gloria Holland

attended school at Academy of the Visitation from first grade until graduation. Although her family moved to Piggott, Arkansas, Pfeiffer stayed in Missouri to study at University of Missouri School of Journalism, graduating in 1918. A move to Paris for Vogue led to her meeting Hemingway and his first wife, Hadley Richardson. Although the threesome were friends initially, Pfeiffer began to replace Richardson as Hemingway's romantic partner, eventually leading to a deal where Richardson agreed to a divorce if the two were still in love after a separation of 100 days.

Pfeiffer married Hemingway on May 10, 1927 but it was not a match made in heaven. She was wealthy and he was a best-selling author (*The Sun Also Rises*) with three books in print. Although they had two sons (Patrick and Gregory), Pfeiffer was often forced to choose between following Hemingway on his travels and minding her sons. As a result she failed at both sets of relationships. Hemingway went to Spain in 1937 and there began an affair with Martha Gellhorn. He and Pfeiffer were divorced on November 4, 1940 and he married Gellhorn three weeks later.

Martha Gellhorn was an American novelist, travel writer and journalist, considered to be one of the greatest war correspondents of the 20th century. She reported on virtually every major world conflict that took place during her 60-year career. Gellhorn was also the third wife of American novelist Ernest Hemingway, from 1940 to 1945. At the age of 89, ill and nearly completely blind, she ended her life by taking a poison pill. The Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism is named after her.

Gellhorn first met Hemingway during a 1936 Christmas family trip to Key West. They agreed to travel in Spain together to cover the Spanish Civil War, where Gellhorn was hired to report for *Collier's Weekly*.

Before living with Hemingway for four years, they married in 1940. After four contentious years of marriage, they divorced in 1945.

Mary Welsh Hemingway was an American journalist and the fourth wife (and widow) of Ernest Hemingway.

Born in Minnesota, Welsh was a daughter of a lumberman. In 1944 she met Ernest Hemingway in London and they became intimate. In 1945, Mary Welsh divorced Noel Monks, and in March 1946, she married Ernest Hemingway, the ceremony taking place in Cuba. In August 1946, she had a miscarriage due to an ectopic pregnancy. Mary lived with Ernest in Cuba, Key West, Florida and finally, Ketchum, Idaho.

In 1976, she wrote her autobiography, *How It Was*. Further biographical details of Mary Welsh Hemingway can be found in the numerous Hemingway biographies and also in *The Hemingway Women*.

2. Literary style and works:

Many people hold the opinion that there has been no American writer like Ernest Hemingway. A member of the World War I "lost generation," Hemingway was in many ways his own best character. Whether as his childhood nickname of "Champ" or as the older "Papa," Ernest Hemingway became a legend of his own lifetime. Although the drama and romance of his life sometimes seem to overshadow the quality of his work, Hemingway was first and foremost a literary scholar, a writer and reader of books. Hemingway enjoyed being famous, and delighted in playing for the public spotlight. However, Hemingway considered himself an artist, and he did not want to become celebrated for all the wrong reasons.

From almost the beginning of his writing career, Hemingway employed a distinctive style which drew comment from many critics. Hemingway does not give way to lengthy geographical and psychological description. His style has been said to lack substance because he avoids direct statements and descriptions of emotion. Basically his style is simple, direct and somewhat plain. He developed a forceful prose style characterized by simple sentences and few adverbs or adjectives. He wrote concise, vivid dialogue and exact description of places and things.

The majority of his early novels were narrated in the first person and enclosed within a single point of view, however, when Hemingway wrote *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, he used several different narrative techniques. He employed the use of internal monologues (where the reader is in the "mind" of a particular character), objective descriptions, rapid shifts of point of view, and in general a looser structure than in his earlier works. Hemingway believed that "a writer's style should be direct and personal, his imagery rich and earthy, and his words simple and vigorous. The greatest writers have the gift of brevity, are hard workers, diligent scholars and competent stylists.

For Whom the Bell Tolls is the most serious and politically motivated novel that Hemingway wrote. There are few comic or light episodes in the entire book. *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is an attempt to present in depth a country and people that Hemingway loved very much. It was an effort to deal honestly with a very complex war made even more complex by the beliefs it inspired.

Ernest Hemingway's style, with its consistent use of short, concrete, direct prose and of scenes consisting exclusively of dialogue, gives his novels and short stories a distinctive accessibility that is immediately identifiable with the author. Owing to the direct character of both his style and his life-style, there is a tendency to cast Hemingway as a "representative" American writer whose work reflects the bold, forthright and rugged individualism of the American spirit in action.

3. Suicide and posthumous works:

3.1. Suicide: Hemingway passed a very interesting and complicated life. As we know his father was a hunter and fisherman and he made Ernest love this hobby, but his mother was against this cause she was a teacher of art, musician and she taught Hemingway chorus, and it is clear to us that Hemingway did not like music lessons. When he had got free time we used to go fishing or hunting. Besides this, he was also an amateur boxer and in one of his fights he injured his eye and exactly for this reason he was not able to serve like a normal soldier during World War II. If we pay attention to the fact that Ernest volunteered to drive an ambulance for the American Red Cross in Italy, it may seem for some people an easy job but it was harder than being in a battle because he carried wounded soldier from battle fields and like a human this fact also deeply reflected on his life. As we know, his father had committed suicide, as well, but he had seen not only wounded men but also so many dead men during his life and we may connect both of these facts to Ernest Hemingway's later life that left incurable signs. To live is the only way to face the ordeal, and the ultimate ordeal in our lives is the opposite of life. Deep sea fishing, bull-fighting, boxing, big-game hunting, war, - all are means of ritualizing the death struggle in his mind - it is very explicit in books such as *A Farewell to Arms* and *Death in the Afternoon*, which were based on his own experience.

Hemingway attempted suicide in the spring of 1961, and received ECT treatment again. On the morning of July 2, 1961, some three weeks short of his 62nd birthday, he died at his home in Ketchum, Idaho, the result of a self-inflicted shotgun wound to the head. Judged not mentally responsible for his final act, he was buried in a Roman Catholic service.

3.2. Posthumous works:

Hemingway was a prolific correspondent and, in 1981, many of his letters were published by Scribner in *Ernest Hemingway Selected Letters*. It was met with some controversy as Hemingway himself stated he never wished to publish his letters. Further letters were published in a book of his correspondence with his editor Max Perkins, *The Only Thing that Counts* 1996.

A long-term project is now underway to publish the thousands of letters Hemingway wrote during his lifetime. The project is being undertaken as a joint venture by Penn State University and the Ernest Hemingway Foundation. Sandra Spanier, Professor of English and wife of Penn State president Graham Spanier, is serving as general editor of the collection. Hemingway was still writing up to his death.

CONCLUSION

As we can see from the above material, Hemingway's life forced its way deeply through his literary activity. Hemingway's life style was very complicated not only because of the wounds that he suffered but also because of his numerous love affairs, his four marriages, his being an alcoholic and his depression. However, he wrote in his own style which was loved and what's more he had millions of readers who read his novels and short stories with admiration.

His life by itself was a novel because if we pay attention we could analyze that from early childhood until his last years he lived his life as how he wanted to live! He was a man of adventures!

It's like he wrote all about his life in his secret diary.

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