Introduction to the Novels of Ernest Hemingway,

by Professor Bryant Mangum, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia in Critical survey of long fiction, 1981

Principal long fiction

The Sun Also Rises, 1926; The Torrents of Spring, 1926; A Farewell to Arms, 1929; To Have and Have Not, 1937; For Whom the Bell Tolls, 1940; Across the River and into the Trees, 1950; The Old Man and the Sea, 1952; Islands in the Stream, 1970.

Other literary forms： Ernest Hemingway will be best-remembered for his novels and short stories, though critical debate rages over whether his literary reputation rests more firmly on the former than the latter. In his own time, he was known to popular reading audiences for his newspaper dispatches and for his essays in popular magazines.

He wrote, in addition, a treatise on bullfighting (Death in the Afternoon, 1932) which is still considered the most authoritative treatment of the subject in English; an account of big-game hunting (Green Hills of Africa, 1935); two plays (The Fifth Column, 1938 and Today is Friday, 1926); and reminiscences of his experiences in Paris during the 1920s (A Moveable Feast, 1964).

Achievements： There is little question that Hemingway will be remembered as one of the outstanding prose stylists in American literary history, and it was for his contributions in this area that he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1954, two years after the publication of *The Old Man and the Sea*.

The general reader has often been more intrigued by Hemingway's exploits — hunting, fishing, and living dangerously — than in his virtues as an artist. Ironically, he is often thought of now primarily as the chronicler of the 'lost generation' of the 1920s, a phrase which he first heard from Gertrude Stein and incorporated into *The Sun Also Rises* as one of its epigraphs. The Hemingway 'code,' which originated as a prescription for living in the post-World War I decade, has become a catch phrase for academicians and general readers alike.

Biography： Ernest Miller Hemingway was the first son of an Oak Park, Illinois, physician, Clarence Edmonds Hemingway, and Grace Hemingway, a Christian Scientist. As a student in the Oak Park public schools, Hemingway received his first journalistic

experience writing for *The Trapeze*, a student newspaper. After serving as a reporter for the Kansas City *Star* for less than a year, he enlisted as an ambulance driver for the American Red Cross and was sent in 1918 to serve on the Italian front. He received a leg wound which required that he be sent to an American hospital in Milan, and there he met and fell in love with Agnes von Kurowski, who provided the basis for his characterization of Catherine Barkley in *A Farewell to Arms*. Hemingway was married in 1921 to Hadley Richardson. They moved to the Left Bank of Paris, lived on her income from a trust fund, and became friends of Gertrude Stein and other Left Bank literary figures. The Paris years provided Hemingway with material for the autobiographical sketches collected after his death in *A Moveable Feast*. Also in the Paris years, he met the people who would become the major characters in his roman a clef, *The Sun Also Rises*. Hemingway dedicated the novel to Hadley, divorced her (in retrospect, one of the saddest experiences in his life), and married Pauline Pfeiffer in 1927. During the 1930's, Hemingway became attached to the Loyalist cause in Spain, and during the years of the Spanish Civil War, he traveled to that country several times as a war correspondent. His feelings about that war are recorded in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, which was an enormous popular success. In 1940, he divorced Pauline and married the independent, free-spirited Martha Gellhorn, whom he divorced in 1945, marrying in that same year Mary Welsh, his fourth wife. The 1952 publication of *The Old Man and the Sea* is usually regarded as evidence that the writing slump, which Hemingway had suffered for nearly a decade, was ended. The last years of his life were marked by medical problems, resulting to a great extent from injuries which he had sustained in accidents and from years of heavy drinking. In 1961, after being released from the Mayo Clinic, Hemingway returned with his wife Mary to their home in Ketchum, Idaho. He died there on July 2, 1961, of a self-inflicted shotgun wound.

Analysis： 'All stories, if continued far enough, end in death, and he is no true story teller who would keep that from you,' Ernest Hemingway wrote in *Death in the Afternoon*. He might have added that most of his own stories and novels, if traced back far enough, also begin in death. In T*he Sun Also Rises*, death from World War I shadows the actions of most of the main characters; specifically, death has robbed Brett Ashley of the man she loved before she met Jake, and that fact, though only alluded to in the novel, largely accounts for her membership in the lost generation.

A Farewell to Arms begins and ends with death: Catherine Barkley's fiance was killed before the main events of the novel begin; and her own death at the end will profoundly influence the rest of Frederic Henry's life. The Caporetta retreat scenes, often referred to as the 'death chapters' of *A Farewell to Arms*, prompt Frederic Henry to give up the death of war for what he believes to be the life of love. In *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, death is nearby in every scene, a fact suggested first by the image of the bell in the

novel's title and epigraph, the bell whose tolling is a death knell. Perhaps most important in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Robert Jordan's choice to die as he does comes from his reflections on the heroic death of his grandfather compared with what he sees as the cowardly suicide of his father. Finally, Santiago's memories of his dead wife in *The Old Man and the Sea* play in and out of his mind as he confronts the possibility of his own death in his struggle against the great marlin and the sea.

Indeed, in Hemingway's work, as Nelson Algren observes, it seems 'as though a man must earn his death before he could win his life.' Yet it would be a mistake to allow what may appear to be Hemingway's preoccupation — or, to some, obsession — with death to obscure the fact that he is, above all, concerned in his fiction with the quality of individual life, even though it must be granted that the quality and intensity of his characters' lives seem to increase in direct proportion to their awareness of the reality of death.

There is a danger, however, in making so general an observation as this. Hemingway's attitudes about life, about living it well and living it courageously in the face of death, changed in the course of his most productive years as a writer, those years between 1926 and 1952, which were marked by the creation of his three best novels, and the Nobel Prize-winning novella *The Old Man and the Sea*. During this period, Hemingway shifted away from what many consider the hedonistic value system of Jake, Brett, Frederic, and Catherine, a system often equated with the Hemingway code, to a concern with the collective, almost spiritual value of human life reflected in the actions of Robert Jordan and Santiago. If the constant in Hemingway's works, then, is the fact that 'All stories, if continued far enough, end in death,' the variable is his subtly changing attitude toward the implications of this fact, no better gauge of which can be found than in the ways his characters choose to live their lives in his major novels.

The best prologue to Hemingway's novels is a long short story, 'Big Two-Hearted River,' which has been described as a work in which 'nothing happens.' By the standards of the traditional, heavily plotted story, very little does happen in 'Big Two-Hearted River,' but the main reason for this is that so much has happened before the story opens that Nick, Hemingway's autobiographical persona, has been rendered incapable of the kind of action one usually associates with an adventure story.

Death has occurred; not literal human death, but the death of the land, and with it the death of Nick's old values. It has been brought about by the burning of once-lush vegetation that covered the soil and surrounded the water of Nick's boyhood hunting and fishing territory. Presented with this scene, Nick must find a way of living in he presence of it, which he does by granting supremacy to his senses, the only guides he can trust. He earns the right to eat his food by carrying the heavy backpack containing it to his campsite; after working with his own hands to provide shelter, he can savor the cooking and eating of the food.

He can then catch grasshoppers, which have adapted to the burning of the woods by becoming brown, and use them as natural bait for fishing. Then he can catch fish, clean them, eat them, and return their inedible parts to the earth to help restore its fertility.

It is appropriate that 'nothing happens' in this prologue to Hemingway's novels because the dilemma of his main characters is that 'nothing' is going to happen unless a modern Perceval removes the plagues of the people and restores fertility to the land. The task for Hemingway's characters, particularly those in his early works, is to establish a code by which they can live in the meantime. Nick, like T.S. Eliot's Fisher King, who sits with his back to an arid plain at the end of *The Waste Land* (1922), is shoring up fragments against his ruins: he is developing a personal system that will enable him to cope with life in the presence of a burned out, infertile land. Also, like Eliot and many other lost-generation writers, Hemingway suggests that the actual wasteland is a metaphor for the spiritual and psychological impotence of modern man, since the state of the land simply mirrors the condition of postwar man's psyche. Like the grasshoppers in 'Big Two-Hearted River,' who have changed color to adapt outwardly to the changing of the land, Nick must adjust internally to the altered condition of his psyche, whose illusions have been destroyed by the war, just as the land has been destroyed by fire.

An understanding of the principles set forth in 'Big Two-Hearted River' is perhaps essential to an understanding of the life-in-death/death-in-life philosophy that Hemingway presents in his major novels, particularly in *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms*. Bringing these principles in advance to *The Sun Also Rises* enables a reader to see the mythical substructure that lies beneath the apparent simplicity of the story line. On the face of it, *The Sun Also Rises* tells the story of Jake Barnes, whose war wound has left him physically incapable of making love, though it has done so without robbing him of sexual desire. Jake has the misfortune to fall in love with the beautiful and, for practical purposes, nymphomaniac Lady Brett Ashley, who loves Jake but must nevertheless make love to other men.

Among these men is Robert Cohn, a hopeless romantic who, alone in the novel, believes in the concept of chivalric love. Hemingway explores the frustration of the doomed love affair between Jake and Brett as they wander from Paris and its moral invalids to Pamplona, where Jake and his lost-generation friends participate in the fiesta. Jake is the only one of the group to have become an *aficionado*, one who is passionate about bullfighting. In the end, though, he betrays his *aficion* by introducing Brett to Pedro Romero, one of the few remaining bullfighters who is true to the spirit of the sport — one who fights honestly and faces death with grace — and this Jake does with full knowledge that Brett will seduce Romero, perhaps corrupting his innocence by infecting him with the jaded philosophy that makes her 'lost.' Predictably, she does seduce Romero, but less predictably lets him go, refusing to be 'one of these bitches that

ruins children.' Finally, she and Jake are left where they started, she unrealistically musing that 'we could have had such a damned good time together' — presumably if he had not been wounded — and he, perhaps a little wiser, responding, 'Yes. . . . isn't it pretty to think so.'

Few will miss the sense of aimless wandering from country to country and bottle to bottle in *The Sun Also Rises*. The reader who approaches Jake's condition as a logical extension, symbolically rendered, of Nick's situation in 'Big Two-Hearted River,' however, will more fully appreciate Hemingway's design and purpose in the novel. As is the case in 'Big Two-Hearted River,' the death with which *The Sun Also Rises* begins and ends is less a physical death than it is a living or walking death, which, granted, is most acute in Jake's case, but which afflicts all of the characters in the novel. They must establish rules for playing a kind of spiritual solitaire, and Jake is the character in the novel who most articulately expresses these rules, perhaps because he is the one who most needs them. 'Enjoying living,' he says, 'was learning to get your money's worth and knowing when you had it.' In a literal sense, Jake refers here to the practice of getting what one pays for with actual money, but in another sense, he is talking more abstractly about other kinds of economy — the economy of motion in a good bullfight, for example.

To see how thoroughly Hemingway weaves this idea of economy into the fabric of the novel, one needs only to look at his seemingly offhand joke about writing telegrams. On closer examination, the joke yields a valuable clue for understanding the Hemingway code. When Jake and Bill, his best friend, are fishing in Burguete, they receive a telegram from Cohn, addressed simply, 'Barnes, Burguete.' The address was free, and Cohn could have included full name and address, thus increasing the probability that Jake would get the message. As a response to Cohn's telegram, Jake and Bill send one equally wasteful: 'Arriving to-night.' The point is that the price of the telegram includes a laugh at Cohn's expense, and they are willing to pay for it.

After the Burguete scene, there is no direct discussion of the price of telegrams, but through this scene, Hemingway gives a key for understanding how each character measures up to the standards of the code. Ironically, Bill, with whom Jake has laughed over Cohn's extravagance and whom Jake admires, is as uneconomical as Cohn. From Budapest, he wires Jake, 'Back on Monday'; his card from Budapest says, 'Jake, Budapest is wonderful.' Bill's wastefulness, however, is calculated, and he is quite conscious of his value-system. In his attempt to talk Jake into buying a stuffed dog, Bill indicates that, to him, things are equally valueless: whatever one buys, in essence, will be dead and stuffed. He is a conscious spendthrift who has no intention of conserving emotions or money. He ignores the fact that letters, cards, and telegrams are designed to accommodate messages of different lengths and that one should choose the most appropriate (conservative) form of communication available. At first, it seems strange that Jake can accept as a true friend one whose value-system is so different from his, but

just as Frederic Henry in *A Farewell to Arms* will accept the priest, whose code is different, so can Jake accept Bill. Both the priest and Bill are conscious of their value-systems. Thus, if Bill's extravagance appears to link him with the wasteful Cohn, the similarity is a superficial one. Like Jake — and unlike Cohn, who still believes in the chivalric code — he has merely chosen extravagance as a way of coping, knowing that whatever he gets will be the equivalent of a stuffed dog. Morally, Bill is less akin to Cohn than he is to Rinaldi in *A Farewell to Arms*, who continues his indiscriminate lovemaking, even though he knows it may result in syphilis. Just as Frederic Henry remains true to Rinaldi, so Jake remains true to Bill.

Standing midway between Bill and Cohn is Brett's fiance Michael, whose values, in terms of the code, are sloppy. Like Cohn, Mike sends bad telegrams and letters. His one telegram in the novel is four words long: 'Stopped night San Sebastian.' His one telegram in the novel is four words long: 'We got here Friday, Brett passed out on the train, so brought her here for 3 days rest with old friends of ours.' Michael could have gotten more for his money in the telegram by using the ten allotted words, just as he could have sent a letter without abbreviations for the same price. The telegram and the letter suggest that although he is conscious of the *principle* of economy, he simply has no idea how to be economical. Thus, when Brett says of Michael that 'He writes a good letter,' there is an irony in her comment which Jake acknowledges: 'I know. . . . He wrote me from San Sebastian.' In juxtaposing the telegram and the letter, Hemingway shows Michael to be a man without a code, a man who, when asked how he became bankrupt, responds, 'Gradually and then suddenly,' which is precisely how he is becoming emotionally bankrupt. He sees it coming, but he has no code that will help him deal with his 'lostness.'

Unlike Cohn, Bill, and Mike, both Brett and Jake send ten-word telegrams, thus presumably getting their money's worth. When Brett, in the last chapters of the novel, needs Jake, she wires him: 'COULD YOU COME HOTEL MONTANA MADRID AM RATHER IN TROUBLE BRETT' — ten words followed by the signature. This telegram, which had been forwarded from Paris, is immediately followed by another one identical to it, forwarded from Pamplona. In turn, Jake responds with a telegram which consists of ten words and the signature: 'LADY ASHLEY HOTEL MONTANA MADRID ARRIVING SUD EXPRESS TOMORROW LOVE JAKE.' Interestingly, he includes the address in the body of the telegram in order to obtain the ten-word limit. The sending of ten-word telegrams indicates that Jake and Brett are bonded by their adherence to the code; since they alone send such telegrams, the reader must see them as members of an exclusive society.

Yet ironically, to Jake and Brett, the code has become a formalized ritual, something superimposed over their emptiness. They have not learned to apply the code to every aspect of their lives, the most striking example of which is Brett's ten-word

(excluding the signature) postcard at the beginning of Chapter Eight: 'Darling. Very quiet and healthy. Love to all the chaps. Brett.' The postcard has no word limit, except that dictated by the size of one's handwriting. Brett, however, in the absence of clearly labeled values, must fall back on the only form she knows: in this case, that of the ten-word telegram, which is here an empty form, a ritual detached from its meaningful context.

Jake and Brett, then, come back full circle to their initial frustration and mark time with rituals to which they cling for not-so-dear-life, looking in the meantime for physical pleasures that will get them through the night. Yet if this seems a low yield for their efforts, one should remember that Hemingway makes no pretense in *The Sun Also Rises* of finding a cure for 'lostness.' In fact, he heightens the sense of it in his juxtaposition of two epigraphs of the novel: 'You are all a lost generation' from Gertrude Stein, and the long quotation from Ecclesiastes that begins 'One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever. . . .The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down. . . .' As Hemingway maintained, the hero of *The Sun Also Rises* is the abiding earth; the best one can hope for while living on that earth, isolated from one's fellowman and cut off from the procreative cycle, is a survival manual. Finally, that is what *The Sun Also Rises* is, and this is the prescription that it offers: one must learn to exhibit grace under pressure, and one must learn to get his money's worth. In skeleton form, this is the foundation of the Hemingway code — the part of it, at least, that remains constant through all of his novels.

Many of the conditions that necessitated the forming of a code for Jake and Brett in *The Sun Also Rises* are still present in *A Farewell to Arms*, and there are obvious similarities between the two novels. Like Jake, Frederic Henry is wounded in the war and falls in love with a woman, Catherine Barkley, whose first love, like Brett's, has been killed before the main events of the novel begin. Yet there has been a subtle change from *The Sun Also Rises* to *A Farewell to Arms* in Hemingway's perception of the human dilemma. The most revealing hint of this change is in the nature of the wound that Frederic receives while serving as an ambulance driver on the Italian front. Unlike Jake's phallic wound, Frederic's is a less debilitating leg wound, and, ironically, it is the thing which brings him closer to Catherine, an English nurse who treats him in the field hospital in Milan. Though their relationship begins as a casual one, viewed from the beginning by Frederic as a 'chess game' whose object is sexual gratification, it evolves in the course of Catherine's nursing him into a love that is both spiritual and physical. Catherine's pregnancy affirms at least a partial healing of the maimed fisher king and the restoration of fertility to the wasteland that appeared in *The Sun Also Rises*.

With this improved condition, however, come new problems, and with them a need to amend the code practiced by Jake and Brett. Frederic's dilemma at the beginning of the novel, how to find meaning in life when he is surrounded by death, contains clear-cut

alternatives: he can seek physical pleasure in the bawdy houses frequented by his fellow soldiers, including his best friend Rinaldi, or he can search for meaning through the religion practiced by the priest from the Abruzzi; he can do either while fulfilling his obligation to the war effort. His choices, simple ones at first, become limited by forces beyond his control. First, he must discard the possibility of religion, because he cannot believe in it; then, he must reject the life of the bawdy houses, both because it is not fulfilling and because it often brings syphilis. These are choices which even a code novice such as Frederic Henry can make, but his next decision is more difficult. Knowing that Catherine is pregnant and knowing that he loves her, how can he continue to fight, even for a cause to which he feels duty bound? Catherine, who had earlier lost her fiance to the war and who had refused to give herself to him completely because of her sense of duty to the abstract virtue of premarital sexual purity, has prepared Frederic for his decision, one forecast by the title *A Farewell to Arms*. Frederic's choice is made easier by the disordered and chaotic scenes that he witnesses during the Caporetta retreat, among them the shooting of his fellow officers by carabinieri. Partly because Catherine has initiated him into the life of love, then, and partly because he needs to escape his own death, Frederic deserts the Italian army in one of the most celebrated baptismal rites in American literature: he dives into the Tagliamento River and washes away his anger 'with any obligation,' making what he terms a separate peace.

If Hemingway were a different kind of storyteller, the reader could anticipate that Frederic and Catherine would regain paradise, have their child, and live happily ever after. In fact, however, no sooner have they escaped the life-in-death of war in Italy to the neutrality of Switzerland, where the reader could logically expect in a fifth and final chapter of the novel a brief, pleasant postscript, than does the double edge hidden in the title become clear. Catherine has foreseen it all along in her visions of the rain, often a symbol of life, but in *A Farewell to Arms* a symbol of death: 'Sometimes I see me dead in it,' she says. The arms to which Frederic must finally say farewell are those of Catherine, who dies in childbirth. 'And this,' Frederic observes, 'is the price you paid for sleeping together. . . . This was what people get for loving each other.' Some will take this ending and Frederic Henry's observations about love at face value and accuse Hemingway of stacking the odds against Frederic and Catherine, maintaining finally that Hemingway provides a legitimate exit from the wasteland with a code that would work and then barricades it capriciously.

There is, however, ample warning. From the beginning of the novel, Hemingway establishes Catherine as one who knows well the dangers of loving, and from the time of her meeting with Frederic, she balances them against the emptiness of not loving. In most ways, Catherine is a model of the code hero/heroine established in *The Sun Also Rises*: she stoically accepts life's difficulties, as evidenced by her acceptance of her fiance's death; and she exhibits grace under pressure, as shown in her calm acceptance

of her own death. In giving herself to Frederic, she adds a dimension to the code by breaking through the isolation and separateness felt by Jake and Brett; finally, even though she does not complete the re-creative cycle by giving birth to a child conceived in love, she at least brings the possibility within reach. The reader must decide whether Frederic will internalize the lessons he has learned through Catherine's life and allow his own initiation into the code, which now contains the possibility of loving, to be accomplished.

There are some tenets of Hemingway's philosophy through the publication of *A Farewell to Arms* about which one is safe in generalizing. The most obvious and most important of these is his belief that the only things in life that one can know about with certainty are those things that can be verified through the senses, as Jake can confirm that he has had good food or good wine and as Frederic can verify that being next to Catherine feels good. Hemingway refuses to judge this belief in the primacy of the senses as moral or immoral, and Jake articulates this refusal with mock uncertainty during a late-night Pamplona monologue on values: 'That was morality; things that made you disgusted after. No, that must be immorality.'

The point is that in referring observations about life to the senses, one relieves himself of the need to think about abstractions such as love and honor, abstractions that the main characters in the first two novels carefully avoid. Frederic, for example, is 'always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain.' With such a perspective, the value of life can be rather accurately measured and described in empirical terms. Similarly, death in such a system can be described even more easily, since there is nothing in death to perceive or measure, an idea vividly rendered in Frederic's remarks about his farewell to Catherine: 'It was like saying good-by to a statue.'

In looking back on Catherine's death, Frederic or the reader may conclude that it had sacrificial value, but until the late 1930's, Hemingway was reluctant in his novels to identify death with an abstract virtue such as sacrifice or to write about the value of an individual life in a collective sense. By 1937, however, and the publication of what most critics regard as his weakest novel, *To Have and Have Not*, Hemingway's attitudes toward life and death have changed. Harry Morgan, the 'have not' spokesman of the novel, finally with much effort is able to mutter at the end, 'One man alone ain't got . . . no chance.' After saying this he reflects that 'It had taken him a long time to get it out and it had taken him all his life to learn it.' The major works to come after *To Have and Have Not*, namely *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *The Old Man and the Sea*, amplify Morgan's view and show Hemingway's code characters moving toward a belief in the collective values of their own lives.

The epigraph of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, which was taken from a John Donne sermon and which gives the novel its title, points clearly to Hemingway's reevaluation of the role of death in life:

> *'No man is an Iland, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine. . . . And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.'*

Regardless of the route by which Hemingway came to exchange the 'separate peace' idea of *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* for the 'part of the maine' philosophy embraced by Robert Jordan in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, one can be sure that much of the impetus for his changing came from his strong feelings about Spain's internal strife, particularly as this strife became an all-out conflict during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). This war provides the backdrop for the events of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and the novel's main character, like Hemingway, is a passionate supporter of the Loyalist cause. The thing that one immediately notices about Jordan is that he is an idealist, which sets him apart from Jake and Frederic.

Also, unlike Jake, who wanders randomly throughout Europe, and unlike Frederic, whose reasons for being in Italy to participate in the war are never clearly defined, Jordan has come to the Sierra de Guadaramas with the specific purpose of blowing up a bridge that would be used to transport ammunition in attacks against the Loyalists. Thrown in with the Loyalist guerrillas of Pablo's band at the beginning of the novel, Jordan is confronted with the near-impossible task of accomplishing the demolition in three days, a task whose difficulty is compounded by Pablo's resistance to the idea and, finally, by increased Fascist activity near the bridge.

Potentially even more threatening to Jordan's mission is his meeting and falling in love with beautiful and simple Maria, who is in the protection of Pablo's band after having been raped by the Falangists who killed her parents. Again, however, Jordan is not Frederic Henry, which is to say that he has no intention of declaring a separate peace and leaving his duty behind in pursuit of love. He sees no conflict between the two, and to the degree that Hemingway presents him as the rare individual who fulfills his obligations without losing his ability to love, Jordan represents a new version of the code hero: the whole man who respects himself, cares for others, and believes in the cause of individual freedom.

Circumstances, though, conspire against Jordan. Seeing that his mission stands little hope of success and that the offensive planned by General Golz is doomed to failure by the presence of more and more Fascists, he attempts to get word through to Golz, but the message arrives too late. Although he manages successfully to demolish the bridge and almost escapes with Maria, his wounded horse falls, rolls over, and crushes Jordan's leg. He remains at the end of the novel in extreme pain, urging the others not to stay and

be killed with him, and waiting to shoot the first Fascist officer who comes into range, thus giving Maria and Pablo's group more time to escape.

Jordan is perhaps Hemingway's most ambitious creation, just as *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is his most elaborately conceived novel. Its various strands reflect not only what he had become the standard Hemingway subjects of personal death, love, and war, but also his growing concern with the broader social implications of individual action. Jordan's consideration of his mission in Spain clearly demonstrates this: 'I have fought for what I believe in for a year now,' he says. 'If we win here we will win everywhere. . . .' How well Hemingway has woven together these strands remains a matter of critical debate, but individually the parts are brilliant in conception.

One example of the many layers of meaning contained in the novel is the Civil War framework, which leads the reader not only to see the conflict of social forces in Spain but also to understand that its analogue is the 'civil war' in Jordan's spirit: the reader is reminded periodically of the noble death of Jordan's grandfather in the American Civil War, compared to the 'separate peace' suicide of Jordan's father. Jordan debates these alternatives until the last scene when he decides to opt for an honorable death which gives others a chance to live. This, Hemingway seems finally to say, gives Jordan's life transcendent value.

F. Scott Fitzgerald theorized early in his friendship with Hemingway that Hemingway would need a new wife for each 'big book.' As Scott Donaldson observes, the 'theory worked well for his [Hemingway's] first three wives (Hadley: *The Sun Also Rises*; Pauline: *A Farewell to Arms*; Martha: *For Whom the Bell Tolls*), but breaks down in Mary's case because *The Old Man and the Sea* does not qualify as a 'big book.' It does qualify, however, as a major epilogue to the 'big books,' much as 'Big Two-Hearted River' qualifies as their prologue. In the prologue, Hemingway outlines the dilemma of modern man and establishes the task with which he is confronted in a literal and figurative wasteland. For Nick in the story, Hemingway posits a swamp, which Nick may fish 'tomorrow' and which is a symbolic representation of life with all its complexities, including male-female relationships.

In the 'big books,' Hemingway leads the reader through the wasteland, showing first, in *The Sun Also Rises*, the risk of personal isolation and despair in a life cut off from the regenerative cycles of nature. In *A Farewell to Arms*, he dramatizes the vulnerability of the individual even in a life where there is love; and finally, in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, he presents a 'whole man' who recognizes the value of individual sacrifice for the survival of the human race. In the epilogue, *The Old Man and the Sea*, Hemingway carries this principle to its final step and issues, through Santiago, his definitive statement about the role of life in death.

It is no surprise that The Old Man and the Sea takes the form of a parable and that its old man takes the form of the archetypal wise man or savior common to most

cultures, mythologies, and religions. While others who surround Santiago depend on gadgets to catch their fish, Santiago relies only on his own endurance and courage. He goes eighty-four days before hooking the marlin, against whose strength he will pit his own for nearly two full days, until he is finally able to bring him to the boat and secure him there for the journey from the Gulf Stream. Numerous critics have noted the similarities between Santiago and Christ. Santiago goes farther out than most men, symbolically taking on a burden for mankind that most men could not or would not take on for themselves.

When Santiago returns to land from his ordeal, secures his boat, and heads toward his shack, Hemingway describes his journey explicitly in terms of Christ's ascent to Calvary: 'He started to climb again and at the top he fell and lay for some time with the mast across his shoulder.' Moreover, Santiago talks with the boy Manolin about those who do not believe in him or his ways in terms that are unmistakably religious: of the boy's father, who does not want his son to be with the old man, Santiago remarks, 'He hasn't much faith.' In all of this, Hemingway is leading the reader to see that some, in going out 'too far,' risk their lives in order to transmit to others the idea that 'A Man can be destroyed but not defeated.'

Finally, it is of little importance that sharks have reduced Santiago's great fish to a skeleton by the time he has reached land because the human spirit which has been tested in his battle with the fish has in the end prevailed; those who are genuinely interested in that spirit are rarely concerned with ocular proof of its existence. Santiago's legacy, which must stand as Hemingway's last major word on the human condition, will go to Manolin and the reader, since, as the old man tells him, 'I know you did not leave me because you doubted'; and he did not doubt that man's spirit can prevail.

Hemingway, then, traveled a great distance from the nihilistic philosophy and hedonistic code of *The Sun Also Rises* to the affirmative view of mankind expressed in *The Old Man and the Sea*. His four major works, if read chronologically, lead the reader on an odyssey through the seasonal cycle of the human spirit. 'All stories, if continued far enough, end in death, and Hemingway never stops reminding the reader of that fact. He does add to it, though, in his later work, the hope of rebirth that waits at the end of the journey, a hope for which nature has historically provided the model. The reader of Hemingway's work may find the idea of metaphorical rebirth less a solace for the individual facing literal death than Hemingway seems to suggest it can be. Few, however, will leave Hemingway's work — 'his shelf of some of the finest prose by an American in this century' — without feeling that he, at least, speaks in the end with the authority of one who has earned, in Carlos Baker's words 'the proud, quiet knowledge of having fought the fight, of having lasted it out, of having done a great thing to the bitter end of human strength.'