

## War as a Paradigm of Life

With Reference to Hemingway's novels "*THE SUN ALSO RISES AND A FAREWELL TO ARMS.*"

**Dr. Seema**

Associate Professor, Department of English  
Government Gils College Sector 14 (Gurugram), Haryana, India  
seema10051981@gmail.com

### Abstract

Ernest Hemingway depicts brilliantly struggle of man to be a human being in a world which increasingly seeks to reduce him to a mechanism, a mere thing. Ernest Hemingway relates in his novels the clash of attitude between old generation and the new generation. The new generation lost faith in the old values of stability and progress, in the sanctity of marriage and in the existence of God. War provides Hemingway with the best conditions under which he can study the stresses and strain to which man is subjected during his journey through life. Hemingway's novels are manifestations of such crucial violent situations in which a man must develop in to something larger and finer. All Hemingway protagonists face such a violent situation. Hemingway's delineation of war in terms of life makes his protagonists come out as representative of universal predicament and dilemma.

**Keywords:** War, Man, Violence.

When one attempts to estimate the achievements of the serious writers of our times, one looks for an image of man attempting in a world increasingly dehumanized, to realize himself as man, to act like a responsible moral being. Ernest Hemingway depicts brilliantly this struggle of man to be a human being in a world which increasingly seeks to reduce him to a mechanism, a mere thing.

As a novelist, Ernest Hemingway appeared on the literary scene during the most "flamboyant and pleasure –seeking 1920" referred to a times as the "Jazz Age, "a term popularized by F.

Scott Fitzgerald through is Tales of Jazz Age (1932). But the period was, at bottom, a period of disillusionment, of utter disappointment, frustration and disenchantment.

It was an era of tension between the past and present, between the old generation and the new generation. It was also an era of lost generation and of self conscious fashions. We also confront a remarkable spectacle of a large part of emerging literary generation learning home and expatriating itself in Paris. Ernest Hemingway, sometimes, is the spokesman of the post war generation. While he associated in Paris with a group of men and women who were creating the art movement of the age and while he adopted whatever he found useful in their theories to his own art, he ruthlessly held himself free of the influence of any individual movement or theory. Ernest Hemingway relates in his novels the clash of attitude between old generation and the new generation. The new generation lost faith in the old values of stability and progress, in the sanctity of marriage and in the existence of God.

The life and works of Hemingway are interrelated. The time that Hemingway was born in to was driven by wars and civic and domestic violence. The world of stability was not for him his time were somehow more difficult than all previous times. During his lifetime, he was influenced by First World War, Turkish war, Spanish Civil war and the Second World War. Hemingway had taken part in, or witnessed most of the major or minor wars of his time and he valued these experiences most. His personal experience of war formed the raw material for most of his fictional creation.

Thematically, Hemingway's fiction remained the same from In Our Times to The Old Man and the Sea. He took for his themes some of the central experiences of his own and the succeeding generation, bred in an age of devastating war and violence, where even to survive was like a miracle and in which for many people the traditional values were disrupted and the meaning of existence observed. To this kind of world Hemingway brought his own vision.

The major and the most comprehensive fictional document about his experience of First World War, however, remains, A Farewell to Arms. As Ray B. West rightly points out, "Hemingway's first three important works were In Our Times, a collection of curiously related short stories, The

Sun Also Rises and A Farewell to Arms. All three deals with the same subject; the condition of man in a society upset by violence of war.”

The Sun Also Rises (1926), is a story of the dissolute expatriates living in Paris after the war. They are amusing but aimless people who were plucked out of their normal sphere of activities by the exigencies of war. No character in this novel is completely normal because of what happened to him during the war. The atrocities of war have shattered their inner self. Moreover, war has affected their emotions, their sentiments, their way of living, their everything's. Hemingway in The Sun Also Rises brings out the chaos of values, gloom, emptiness, frustration and defeatism of post war world.

A Farewell to Arms (1929), is based on the author's own experience of war, and for this reason alone holds a unique place among the war novels. It is perhaps one of the best war novels of the century which brings out the truth about war and life and upholds the values of courage, stoicism, order and tenderness against anarchic violence and death. In this novel, Hemingway has beautifully blended the theme of war and love. It won't be an exaggeration to say that one can learn a lot about the human heart and human mind from this novel.

Hemingway in his works has pictured the modern man's dilemma and in doing that he has unearthed some of the basic facts of modern life. Hemingway sees man as a solitary figure who must forge his own values in a valueless world and thus give significance to his life and actions. War provides Hemingway with the best conditions under which he can study the stresses and strain to which man is subjected during his journey through life.

Hemingway's novels are manifestations of such crucial violent situations in which a man must develop in to something larger and finer. All Hemingway protagonists face such a violent situation. The foremost crises in a violent world are death. The threat of impending death forces the hero to concentrate on giving meaning to life through action. Hemingway's delineation of war in terms of life makes his protagonists come out as representative of universal predicament and dilemma. As Surendra Singh Chandel remarks: "Hemingway could be described as the heroic artist whose talent is best expressed in delineation of violence."

Hemingway presents before us not only relationship between man and woman but also tries to highlight the value of compassion and sympathy with one's fellow human being.

Frederic Henry represents in A Farewell to Arms the principles of liberal human understanding. As a person having liberal understanding, virtue for him lies in acting in accordance with the best impulses which exists in every individual and which embrace all humanity in fellowship. His humanistic commitment enables him to enter in to meaningful relationship with others. He is a very good friend of Rinaldi and helps him in every possible manner when they are together. The very fact that he has come to the battle front from his home thousands of miles away is an indication of his desire to serve those who are fighting for a right cause. His keenness to help others can be seen when he wounded and he wants others to give medical aid first. Some of the other characters in the novel also exhibit humanistic qualities in their thoughts and actions. The concept of love which the writer seems to endorse can broadly be described as humanistic which demand dynamism in the personalities of the lovers. This type of love is not confined only to bodies but it unites heart and souls. The love depicted is not for selfish motives but is extended further. It develops in to a liberating experience and longer remains a subjugating and restricting forces. love, as it is presented in the novels, strengthens the characters and help in their transformation. It is, in a way, a virtue in terms of self realization.

Hemingway's world seems to be very limited one .it is ultimately a world of war. but it assumes broad symbolic significance and become a metaphor for a general hostility at work in the universe. The people of the world operates under such conditions are as imposed by war apprehension, emergency, stiff-lipped fear and pleasure seized in haste. Restricted grimly by the urgencies of war, their pleasures are limited pretty much to those which the senses can communicate, and their morality is a harshly pragmatic affair, what is the moral is what one feels good after.

This is the world where the process of decomposition is always at work but still there is also process of growth always moving side by side. Hemingway is misunderstood as glorifying the scenes of war. But a balance study of the novels shows that there is no morbid fascination for violence, death and destruction of war in his novels. It is transaction from philandering and sensuous affairs to a meaningful relationship. There is greater self realization at the end of affair.

The writer exposes in the novels brutalities of war and its aftermath and shows how man may be wrenched off his hinges and loss all fine human values. War, infect, present a situation in which the qualities of human heart and mind are brought in to play. The novel clearly brings out the Hemingway has no secret and wholesome love for violence. His view towards life, there, cannot be characterized as crudely nihilistic and pessimistic. His treatment of love and war reveals the affirmation of his faith that though man is trapped in a state of nada, he is not without resource in it. Some of characteristics of his novels, by strength of their adherence to fine and positive human values, do not get lost in nothingness which war threatens. If there are character like Rinaldi, Mike etc.who suffer from frustration, there are people like Henry, Jake etc.who seek and achieve self realization in human relations. Those who represent ignorance in the beginning, reaches the culmination of knowledge towards the end of novel.

For Hemingway war was a paradigm of life in which man's predicament could be best studied. Whatever happened, according to him man must cope, must accommodate. He asserts all the plans in life are nullified by death hence man must the proper utilization of his precious life. No doubt, Hemingway novels constitute his answer to the problem how to live in the world full of pain and cruelty. The highest value which Hemingway uphold in life conveys the greatest and the most valuable message for mankind that when fate traps you all you must do is to be brave and face its consequences with calm.

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