

LIVES AND LOVES OF LOST GENERATION IN THE SUN ALSO RISES

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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces the lives and loves of the lost generation in the novel *The Sun Also Rises*, debut novel by Ernest Hemingway, published in 1926. Lost generation refers to the people who came during the World War First. The disorientated, directionless, wandering age that was the result of the repercussions of the horrors of war. The deserted lives and impotent loves that the novel has woven in the hollow lives of the characters portrays Hemingway's real visit to the aftermath of war in the form of this novel. The protagonist Jake Barnes, who seems to fight against his unavailing manhood because of the injury that rendered him impotent and the heroine Lady Brett Ashley "Damned good-looking" is how Hemingway describes her. She is unable to consummate her love for American newspaperman Jake Barnes, because of his injury, Brett has affairs with many others, including the American expatriate Robert Cohn and the handsome young bullfighter Pedro Romero. The story revolves around the expatriates during 1920s, who have almost lost their morales, lives life devoid of focus or meaning and who therefore wander aimlessly from one place to another.

Keywords: Expatriate, Lost Generation, World War First, Sex, Bull fighting, Drinking, Decadence.

INTRODUCTION

"This's what you are. That's what you all are,' Miss Stein said. All of you young people who served in the war. You are a lost generation'" ("A Moveable Feast" 38).

Ernest Hemingway (July 21st 1899 – July 2nd 1961) was an American journalist, novelist, short-story writer, and sportsman. *The Sun Also Rises* is a 1926 novel and first major work of Hemingway, portrays American and British expatriates who travel from Paris to the Festival of San Fermin in Pamplona to watch the running of the bullfights. Hemingway himself later disapproved the word lost. Hemingway believed the character in *The Sun Also Rises* may have been bettered but was not lost. He was undoubtedly an important part of this movement. His first novel *The Sun Also Rises* tells us a story about people of this generation, their lives relationship's, problems and passions. The country which America was becoming with the obsession of growing urge for being miser, money loving culture for progress, the shift from production to consumption, political mess, interdictions, and the rise of the stock market. They didn't like the country because of such thing discussed above, so in 1920's writers from America started seeking refuge in Europe. Also they believed in art as a self-fulfilling life style, which is again a prove of them being astray or eliminated. According to Ronald Bradbury at the start of the century the American arts had almost no artistic confidence, no certainty of directions or guiding tradition, no strong aesthetics feeling and no pride in the creative past. The people in America were in effect for revolutionising literature and vanish the literary essence of the previous century (19th century). Hence it was the age of innovations, technological advancement, music, film-20th century. It was basically the impact of World War 1st that left the young minds, new writers lost their original view that the time has given them until now, it also took their faith in humanity, and they were disappointed, lost. The reason behind their search for new literature, voice, style, revolution were the horrors of war and blood bath had a major impact of "Aesthetic sensibility" of young writers who served in Europe, There search and adverse impact of war is one of the reason they tried to escape to Paris but with no real purpose, but because of its low cost of living, which became the "Experimental laboratory" for young American writers. "There prolonged apprenticeship in Europe enabled them to view American life from the perspective not only of distance but of opponent cultural values." A sense of purposelessness, decadence, cultural emptiness and political failure interviewees the American fiction of the 1920s.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ernest Miller Hemingway born in Northern Michigan, fulfilled his parents expectations. He wrote for school papers and a literary magazine he was also looking for a way to escape the "decadent and materialistic America." He moved to Kansas and began his journalised career, but left it and moved to France where he drove an ambulance car for the Red Cross. He was then transferred to Italy in

1918, where he was badly wounded in both legs, decorated for heroism and hospitalised in Milan, fallen in love with a nurse who declined to marry him. After the war was over, he tried to write in America, where he met and marry his first wife Hadley and shortly after their wedding they left for Paris where they spend 6 years.

“If you lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man, then where ever you go for the rest of your life it stays with you, for Paris is a moveable feast.” (Hemingway, “A Moveable Feast”).

In order to become a full-time writer, he quit the job of journalism. He and his family lived a very ordinary life with limited amount of money (5 dollars per day). They would spend their days drinking lots of different wines, enjoying food and the views, travelling horse races, romantic evening, fishing in Seine, the winter and the spring, which evoked all types of feelings. Writing in cafes early in the morning, socialising with writers such as Gurtitade, Stein, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Evan Shipman and other expatriates just like Hemingway. Hemingway was becoming excessive drinker. They were trying to survive, to live in that time and had every minute of it, *The Sun Also Rises* was written in 2 months period after he and Hadley made their 2nd trip to Pamplona and this period of Hemingway’s life provided the material for it. All the themes of his latter writings which he expanded and separated are condensed in this novel. Eventually he broke the marriage with Hadley, falling in love with Pauline, Hadley’s “temporary best friend” eventually marrying her, thus smashing the delight associated with “The First Part of Paris.” Donaldson writes: “...life in Paris changes in Oak Park; he plunged into the ego-driven, crass competitiveness of an international literary seen and found himself simultaneously tantalized by the prospect of a love affair.”

HEMINGWAY’S INSPIRATIONS

Hemingway in the first draft of the novel *The Sun Also Rises* has used the names of those real life friends who travelled from Montparnasse to Pamplona in 1925, including Ernest and Hadley. On reworking, he changed the names ‘Duff Twysden (The seductive bar fly from Great Britain)’ with whom Ernest had flooded impertinently in Pamplona ’became Brett Ashley’ her bisexual companion, Pat Guthrie, became Mike Campbell; Hemingway’s fishing Pals Don Stewart and Bill Smith merged to form Bill Gorton “and belligerent Herald Loeb became first Gerald and then Robert Cohn. Hemingway became Jake Barnes and Hadley vanished from the novel. Hemingway has been a part of lost generation and thus he was able to transfer his experience into the novel. The narrator in the novel, the hero, Jake Barnes, is an expatriate, though he claims the opposite (according to him expatriates are the people who do nothing except drinking, socializing and wandering around the city of Paris). The only thing that differs him from the others is his job as a journalist in Paris (just like Hemingway did). Jake and his friend had a same start up; they used to drink very often in the meanwhile. They were scornful towards the thriving consumerism of the 1920s: “You’re an

expatriate. You've lost touch with the soil. You get precious. Fake European standards have ruined you. You drink yourself to death. You become obsessed with sex. You spend all your time talking, not working. You are an expatriate, see? You hang around cafes."

ABOUT THE CHARACTERS

Robert Cohn, a failed writer, came from America with his girlfriend. He was trying to become a part of the new, progressive society, followed social stigmas. The reason for leaving his repressive girlfriend was that because of people who would've talked about him having a mistress. He was concerned for he's not living his life to the fullest but is actually trying to run away from himself. The prejudice against Jews (Anti - Semitism) tells us about America in 1926. "In the twenties, this attitude was so prevalent that it's an almost unconscious response, Jake bends over backward to be nice to Cohn almost reverse discrimination." Jake is hurt when Brett Ashley takes Cohn with her for a week at San Sebastian and he does not tease him, but his friends do. Bill ask, "Brett's gone off with men, but they weren't Jews". They can forgive Brett for having multiple sexual partners, but not her running away with Jew. He gets constantly disrespected. Brett Ashley, a nurse during the World War I and Jake happened to meet him over there when he got wounded. They came into relationship, but soon when Jake come to know 'bout his impotency, the relationship came to an end because they couldn't consummate their love. The man loved by Brett died from dysentery and it left Brett numb and she couldn't build any relation now with any other man. Brett Ashley is shown as socialite, immoral, promiscuous woman during the novel. Her character is based on Duff Twysden, a woman who is with Hemingway in Pamplona and with whom he flirted, but didn't become her lover due to his moral values that he has brought from his family. At the beginning of the novel Brett is shown to have come with a crowd of lad and she also states that she can safely get drunk around these young men, which vividly delineates that they are homosexual as so are not going to harm her anyway. Jake wore malice towards her male friends of Ashley. The whole of women were transforming in patriarchal world, from the private creature to an individualist in chasing new experiences. She's sitting on a high stool, her legs crossed. And she had not put the stockings on, inviting attention. The bare legs unmistakably signified her sexual freedom.

"This is not a question of what kind of mothers will flappers make or where is bobbed hair leading us. This is about something that is already finished for whatever is going o to happen to the generation of which I'm a part has already happened"(Hemingway, an unpublished forward to the novel)

They disliked the refugees who made Europe every summer however, they are of money-loving culture. Jake is one of the two characters who work as a successful newspaper man. Work separates the amateurs from the professionals. Pedro Romero, a professional who gives his best performance no matter what. Ironical, Georgette, the prostitute, is a professional. Robert Cohn, a failed writer but he has the remain of 50.000\$ that he inherited, Lady Brett, getting divorced as already got engaged to

another man, but she needs a financial assistance. Bill has a career, but he's there only on vacation. But Jake is someone who's genuine passion and hobby that allows him to keep himself away from decadent world. It also allows him to keep through breakable, insincere bonds and attitude of the people around him. Finishing expedition of both Jake and Bill states a contrast to whatever disturbance they'd in the War time. The purpose to Jake's life was all given by nature and he is enjoying it to the fullest. During his life in Paris, he learnt how to dive in a man's world he's all living for his work, friendship, sports (tennis, fishing, swimming, as observing boxing, bicycle, bullfighting). He's all happy with the way of life he's living or the things world was offering him. Maybe because he knew how to enjoy simple things in life-the streets and buildings, historic locations near his apartments on the Boulevard St. Michel. He was living his life at a satisfactory pace in the man's world. But his deep feelings for Ashley underscore everything he relates. There excessive indulgence in drinking is the reason for the characters in the novel who seem to drink excessively too. In America, it was different because, alcohol was forbidden. Jake has been abroad for a long time and he could drink without making any political statement, but in Paris, he never had alcohol. Bill Gorton writing from America, was perpetually slightly drunk- an American abroad to catch up the freedom to drink. It was only on the occasion of festivals that Jake and Bill get indulge in heavy drinking. In Pamplona, average American drinker will be startled by the excessive amount of liquor they will have either join the drinkers or not enjoyed the experience. Jake used to drink to escape his condition or catastrophe happening around him. When in Madrid, Jake has no excuse of heavy drinking, he gets extremely drunk while Brett opposes him by telling that there is no need for it but inside he felt there is because he knew he's bankrupt, and because of this adverse thinking over powers him and he has to face the problems as before.

*"There is a good place," he said.
"There is a lot of liquor," I agreed."(6)*

CONCLUSION

The impact of World War First left many physiological and mental scars, especially on Jake's life. The mental scars represent a hard burden on him. He got wounded in the war that left him impotent. Since then, Jake's life was turned upside down, leaving him incapable of sex, but still had sexual desires, his anxiety aroused regarding his masculinity. He was now embodying the decreased masculinity. This was one of the reasons for Brett that it became a possibility of their impossibility to live together forever. Brett was promiscuous in nature, having involved with many different men throughout the novel. Jake was the only one who cannot have her and cannot consummate the love. Bill, a post war veteran, he provides an important contrast to Jake as he didn't lose as much as Jake did. Jake was generally tight lipped and hesitates to express his feelings, while on the other hand, Bill knows how to communicate his feelings; he jokes constantly using humour as a coping mechanism.

Jake's compact world of man without woman due to his impotency. Only Bill and Brett know about his impotency. Brett was with Jake but she gave up on him because she could not give up on sex. Robert Cohn in the novel is shown as overly romantic and he has an affair with Brett, in San Sebastian, but Brett feels sorry for him because his overly romantic feeling was pathetic. Donaldson writes: "Hemingway's negative portrait of Robert Cohn; for example, is skewed by his bitterness at the time of the telling, for it is clear that the two men had been good friends in Paris, before Cohn got involved with Brett Ashley".

There are many major changes seen in men-women relationships compared to Victorian period. The interruption of women in male dominated society, the impotency seen through Jake's eyes. People in the novel are already disoriented, especially regarding their affairs and relationships. Jake in the novel wants to be with Brett, helps her out every time she's in trouble, and comforts her even though she does not want to be with him. Jake also asks her to stay with him but she says that "she'd just tromper (or deceive) you with everybody." And he would not be able to stand it. They love each other but cannot stay together for it will be painful for both of them. Jake tries to break free out of patriarchal control. She often wavers between the extreme of self-renunciation and self-gratification, and her relationships with her two former husbands as well as with Mike Campbell, Robert Cohn, and even Jake, are filled with ambivalence, anxiety and frequent alienation. Jake demonstrates that his loyalty to Brett is stronger than his commitment to the code of aficionado. He suffers a lot because the woman he is in love with stays with so many other men which is more like humiliating Jake. Also, trying to fix the mess that was being created. He also has an incident with Georgette, a prostitute, at the same time Brett is in the company of homosexuals. Jake is offended by the unmanly manner of Brett's companion, and she taunts him about his date. From the starting the world is out of sexual order by leaving the club, Jake sends money to Georgette to preserve his manly appearance even though he is impotent. In 1925 Brett was on leading edge of the sexual revolution that brought about two types of the "new woman": the educated professional woman who was formerly active in male areas and the stylish uninhabited young woman who drank and smoked in public, devalued sexual innocence married but did not want children and considered divorce no social stigma. Robert Cohn and Mike Campbell are perceived as puppets in their relationships. Robert is an overly romantic man, representative of old gentleman manners for which there is no need in Brett's life. Mike does not have the same feelings as Jake does, and he sees her in a sexual way. Jake observes Brett's legs while Mike compliment's Brett by calling her a lovely "piece". When in Pamplona, we see her get attracted to a young matador. Donaldson says: "She is intrigued by the ritual violence in the ring, a counterpoint to the sexual violence all around her, but she is even more attracted to Pedro Romero, the nineteen-year-old bull fighter".

It was more like a lust because she has already decided to seduce him. The novel also shows the woman interfering with the male world of Corrida (Bull fight). Jake and Brett - two different worlds' matador-most pure character of them all, young, unspoiled, with a purpose and meaning in life. Brett

leaves him because she thinks that she is spoiling him and there comes the moment of truth. "I am not going to be one of those bitches who ruins children." Jake's love and his affection towards Brett seems incredible when Romero has gone out of her life, she over turns to Jake and he treats her cold and avoid any further involvement. The wrapping up of novel is famous for its understatement:

"Oh Jake, "Brett said," We could have had such a damned good time together." Ahead was amounted policeman in khaki directing traffic. He raised his baton. The lowed suddenly pressing Brett against me. "Yes", I said. "Isn't it pretty to think so?" (129).

Jake's affection towards Brett tends to cease for the first time in the novel. His believe that he and Brett will keep up with the life together despite their problems and live happily was no more in effect. He was now willing to send away his tormented feeling for Brett which has ruined him until now. He was not only lacking in his decreased masculinity but also at the other facets of his life. He was deprived of all the things that are necessary in one's life; deprived of values, striped off of all the values, seduced and abandoned by his times. If at Botins he gets a bit drunk listening to Brett, perhaps we can forgive him, it was realised by Jake that he is the most unfortunate man in a most unpromising place. He is an epitome of "Lost generation".

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