



## Journal of the Short Story in English

Les Cahiers de la nouvelle

49 | Autumn 2007

Special issue: Ernest Hemingway

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### Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/jsse/723>

ISSN: 1969-6108

### Publisher

Presses universitaires d'Angers

### Printed version

Date of publication: 1 December 2007

Number of pages: 13-56

ISSN: 0294-04442

### Electronic reference

Rédouane Abouddahab, « Introduction: Fiction, Criticism, and the Ideological Mirror », *Journal of the Short Story in English* [Online], 49 | Autumn 2007, Online since 01 December 2009, connection on 01 May 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/jsse/723>

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# Introduction: Fiction, Criticism, and the Ideological Mirror

Rédouane Abouddahab

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- 1 The aim of this Hemingway special issue is not to represent the largest possible range of commentary on Hemingway's short stories, but to look closely at their rich texture, considering them as coherent wholes and autonomous units that activate their own symbolical potentialities, and liberate under the careful gaze of the reader their poetic energies and *ever surprising* force of connotation. Hence, the essays brought together in this volume value the textual dimension of Hemingway's narratives, and eschew in varied degrees and manners the ideological background and the usually underlined alleged links with the reality "out there." Close in spirit and method, they lay bare the poetic, plastic, fantasmatic matter at work in Hemingway's short fiction, and minimize more or less radically the illusions of depth and the false mimetic knowledge of the author, in favor of the rich textual network and surface phenomena, overlooked more often than not by Hemingway's commentators. The essays are indeed off the beaten track as they view suspiciously the overemphasized referential assumptions about Hemingway's "Code" and its positivist and ideological implications, and his alleged moral, political, or even biographical "messages." If they acknowledge and synthesize usefully the abundant critical work already realized on the stories under consideration, the contributors propose new ways for reading Hemingway's (short) fiction.
- 2 It may be urged either that we delve among the imaginary "contents" of Hemingway's work and participate in the conflicting, overburdening and, inevitably, transient ideological debate about his relevance – here the social evolution of ideas is the yardstick against which the pertinence of the work's signifieds is measured –, or that we usefully uncover the formal scaffoldings of the fiction, and reveal consequently its lasting artistic complexity, its robust syntactic carpentry *and* sophisticated sub-textual lacework. Engaging in ideological debates about Hemingway, who is usually interchangeable with his fiction in numerous critical comments, sheds no light on the writer's creative and original work. Used as a pedagogical instrument to teach one's own ideologies, viewed as a pre-text to value and confront the commentator's theories on gender, race, religion, or

sexuality, and not as a text belonging to the in-between space conjured up by the dynamic writer-reader dyad, the Hemingway text is inevitably subjected to the ideological changes that the American society has undergone in the last four decades, instead of being valued with the literary (linguistic, rhetorical, plastic, energetic...) matter it is made of, and the artistic attention and intentions it was written with: not to represent reality, but to create one.

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- 3 Most of Hemingway criticism is ideologically based and heavily influenced by the accumulated knowledge about the life and work of the writer. There are thousands of academic books and articles on Hemingway. Following his suicide in 1961, the 1960s decade saw the publication of almost four hundred serious studies on him, while in the 1970s the number increased to more than seven hundred; and the critical works, far from decreasing, have gained strength throughout the next decades (Beegel, 1996; Wagner, 1998). The most important trend among the critical studies is indubitably biographical. Almost all aspects of Hemingway's life have been scrutinized in scholarly biographies, from Carlos Baker's pioneering *Life Story* (1969) to Michael Reynolds' detailed four volume biography (1989, 1992, 1997, 1999).<sup>1</sup> Some of them specialize in certain aspects of Hemingway's life: John Raeburn (1984) deals with the relation between Hemingway and fame, Michael Reynolds (1981) focuses on Hemingway's private library; some critics have written about Hemingway's wives (Sokoloff, 1973; Kert, 1983; Rollyson, 1990), his stays in different parts of the world (McLendon, 1972; Fuentes, 1984; Samuelson, 1984). Numerous acquaintance and family biographies have been published, too.<sup>2</sup> Some of these are serious and helpful (Hotchner's, for example), but most of them are trifling or self-centered.<sup>3</sup>
- 4 The regular output of biographies testifies to the attractiveness of Hemingway, whose adventurous life fascinated millions of people.<sup>4</sup> What is of interest in the present essay is not the rich and appealing life of Hemingway, but, on the contrary, the damaging encroachments of the writer's life and fame upon his fiction, not in his own works, but in the texts of his commentators. As Kenneth Lynn shows in his original biography of Hemingway, which, not unlike Meyer's, demythologizes the writer, the most prominent critics who influenced Hemingway criticism from the 1950s on, saw in him an idealized reflection of themselves. This imaginary identification with the writer determined their reading of him, as they stuck to the culturally reassuring significance they thought Hemingway incarnated, unnoticing the textual subtleties of his works.
- 5 In much of the criticism that has been devoted to the writer's life and work from the 1950s to the 2000s, there have appeared numerous and contradictory theories backing up an ideologically oriented interpretation of Hemingway's work.<sup>5</sup> One can even underline a persistent confusion between the false fiction Hemingway and his popular and academic admirers created, and the true fiction he wrote out of the intimate and precious parts of his being. Till the first half of the 1980s, the Hemingway protagonist as dealt with by most commentators is a full-fledged "white male," supposedly the vehicle of American individualism, optimism, self-reliance, and manliness. The image conjured up in the studies of Young, DeFalco, Rovit, Baker, or Gurko is entirely determined by ideology. These commentators believed in the "Americanness" of Hemingway, and explicitly or implicitly considered his works as the "natural" reflection and confirmation of mainstream culture. Literary studies were on the whole dominated by this specific

ideological vision, premised upon the Americanness of national literature. As Robert Spiller's authoritative *Literary History* contends, American literature "is profoundly influenced by ideals and by practices developed in democratic living," and "has been intensely conscious of the needs of the common man, and equally conscious of the aspirations of the individual." According to Spiller, American literature is "humanitarian," "optimistic;" it has been "made virile by criticism of the actual in comparison with the ideal" (Spiller ix-xx).

- 6 Prior to the posthumous publication of *The Garden of Eden* in 1986, Hemingway's work has been discussed by most commentators within this consensual frame of reference. It comes as no surprise then that even the philosophical studies devoted to the writer, such as John Killinger's *Hemingway and the Dead Gods*, should display the same concern for the heroism of his protagonists. John Killinger's existentialist interpretation of Hemingway underlines the protagonist's solitude but also his heroic quest for authenticity, the courageous choices he has to make, the godlike position he reaches thanks to his moral courage: "The *ensrealissimum* is possible only in the valley of the shadow of death, for it is there that man comes face to face with the uncanny feeling of nada. It is there, in the moment of truth, that the encrustations and accretions of historical man drop away, and the real, ex-sisting man emerges, timeless, Godlike, and free" (32). Ben Stoltzfus (2005) sees numerous analogies between Hemingway's works and Sartre's and Camus's; all three are haunted by the leitmotif of death and nothingness. This commentator sees in Hemingway's "African stories" the best illustration of his existential philosophy: "Nowhere is this *nada* (the void, emptiness, meaninglessness) more insistent than in Hemingway's two African stories, 'The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber' and 'The Snows of Kilimanjaro,' because the absurd has the potential to reorient the subject toward life, and living life authentically and courageously was and is essential to happiness" (206).<sup>6</sup>
- 7 One might object, though, that what is at stake in Hemingway's fiction is not "nada" as absolute nothingness, but "nothing" as... "something," i.e. as an object (of fear, desire...). This is precisely what "Three Shots" (*The Nick Adams Stories*) stages when, suddenly anguished, Nick shoots into the silence and 'nothingness' of the night, only to feel relieved immediately after. And this is also what occurs in "A Clean Well-Lighted Place" (*Winner Take Nothing*) where the older waiter's parodic monologue ("Our nada who art in nada, nada be thy name thy kingdom nada thy will be nada [...]," 383) operates as the verbal symbolization of the void, the transformation of existential "nothingness" into a verbal something and, as such, into an objective meaning. The perspective then is not moral or psychological but energetic and cathartic. There is no meditation on the void or emptiness in Hemingway's fiction, but a series of actions attempting to symbolize the ontological "holes" that appear in different guises in the work: sexual difference, the ineluctability of death and its attractiveness, the unrelenting passage of time...
- 8 If the negative philosophy of existentialism permits the protagonist to reach "happiness," so does, of course, religious belief, seen by some commentators as an important trait in Hemingway's work (Isabelle, 1964; Pratt, 1974, 2001; Buske, 2002). The religious readings of Hemingway partake of the same logic. Indeed, the variety of remarks leads to the same alleged signified of the work: certainty. Sam Bluefarb (1971) sees in "A Clean Well-Lighted Place" and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" a "Manichean split between an Absolute (or perfect) in which God or His equivalent is to be sought, and a world in which, if God is indeed dead, one must look for an Absolute which might fill the void of His loss" (3).

According to the author, the two stories express “a longing for a way out of this impasse, the need to break through to some transcendent purpose—esthetic or religious—without which life seems to have little or no meaning” (Bluefarb 4).

- 9 Persistently, the dominant ideological reading of Hemingway leads, quite expectedly, to the imaginary plenitude of the signified, even when the emphasis is placed on the themes of concreteness or senses. Joseph Flora contends that “Nick’s approach is to suspect the abstract, to deal with the concrete. Nevertheless, Nick and Descartes are not far apart. [...] Nick will rely on his senses, on what he feels. He will start where Descartes started, with what he could absolutely trust. Then—like Descartes—he can move forward, to find—perhaps—what he cannot lose, maybe even God” (Flora, 1982, 153).
- 10 Philip Young’s psycho-biographical interpretation of Hemingway influenced radically and enduringly many critics, from Earl Rovit (1963) to at least Joseph Flora (1989). For him, the Hemingway protagonist, especially Nick Adams, is but the projection of Hemingway himself, whose writing is considered as the dramatization or even the over-dramatization of the important events that marked his life, starting with his wounding in World War I. Hemingway was, according to Young, “traumatized” by the violence of the injury and so were his protagonists whose scope is delimited by an *incident* that functions like the *primal scene* of the whole work.
- 11 How does Hemingway transform in his fiction a biographical incident into an *event*? How does the fiction deal with the true primal scene that leads back to one’s earliest childhood and the witnessed or fantacized parents’ coitus interpreted as sexual violence? This is precisely what a story like “Now I Lay Me” stages finely. While external action, which takes place not far from the front, is reduced fittingly to an invisible background, internal action, by far the most important, presents an exploration of the attic where Nick was born. This occurs on certain nights when he can not fish mentally any more, i.e. escape his own truth. In those nights, lying “cold awake,” he would think of his “mother and father’s wedding cake” (note the rhyme) “hanging from one of the rafters” (365), and probably going stale, symbolizing the problematic relation between the parents and the cold violence it is marked with, as the dramatic burning by the mother of the father’s objects, in his absence, shows. The invalidation of the paternal signifier by the maternal “flames” is nonetheless not complete. Nick Adams, out of the phonematic ruins of the father’s name, will manage to construct his subjectivity in between feminine aggressivity and sovereignty, and masculine passivity.
- 12 Philip Young approached interestingly the crucial issues of Hemingway’s work (especially the trauma theme), yet he skirted around the uncovered holes to look finally at the mask of “heroism” he named “the Hemingway-Code.” According to Philip Young, what Hemingway once called his “grace under pressure,” corresponds to the “Hemingway-Code,” a sort of heroic system of behavior, “[...] made of the controls of honor and courage which in a life of tension and pain make a man a man and distinguish him from the people who follow random impulses, let down their hair, and are generally messy, perhaps cowardly, and without inviolable rules for how to live holding tight” (Young, 1966, 63). The “Hemingway-Hero” and the “Code-Hero” (Young 6), or the “tyro” and “tutor” (Rovit, 1963, 53-77), testify to a binary approach to the work that reduces its plurality and productive ambiguity to a set of clear-cut moral judgments and values, which are already “there,” and that the protagonist is supposed to be initiated to.
- 13 Initiation is a recurrent notion in numerous studies (DeFalco, 1963; Waldhorn, 2001...); it supposes the integration of a superior, i.e. unquestionable order of knowledge, underlain

by the certitudes of the moral majority. In one of the chapters of his *Hero in Hemingway's Short Stories*, significantly entitled "Initiation," Joseph DeFalco makes a dualistic reading of opposed "archetypes" in "Indian Camp" and "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," that leads him to biased conclusions about the white characters, seen as the vehicle for the powers of the light, and the Indian characters, who are, according to this clear-cut archetypal binary symbolism, the vehicles for the powers of the dark: "Hemingway establishes a controlling symbol, the Indian camp itself. As in other stories, the camp is suggestive of the primitive and dark side of life. It is a manifestation of the intrusive and irrational elements that impose upon the secure and rational faculties where order and light prevail. For Nick, whose own home is across the lake, the night journey to the camp has all the possibilities of a learning experience" (Defalco 28). Is there *anything* in "Indian Camp" (or even in the whole work of Hemingway) that supports this view? One doubts it. Joseph DeFalco could draw these ideological conclusions because the text is structurally elliptic and uncommunicative, not containing any ideological message, but rather exploring the possibilities of creative language, as the narrator's main concern is how to suggest much thanks to "silent" and deliberately reduced verbal forms.

- 14 Hence, since the early scholarly studies realized on Hemingway, critical attention has been fed by ideological considerations that subjected the writer's art to the critic's moral, political, or religious concerns or beliefs. When the literary is thus submitted to the ideological, the fertile polysemy of the Hemingway text is reduced to the fake stability of the arbitrarily superimposed ideological signifieds. Strangely enough, Hemingway, the modernist and expatriate writer who preferred from the age of twenty-two to live abroad,<sup>7</sup> and whose work testifies to certain doubts about the American way of life, becomes in these studies the conveyor of the vitality of white Anglo-Saxon American ethics. The early prominent critics who created and oriented the Hemingway studies, belonged assuredly to a generation whose excessive patriotic Americanism was ignited by the popular nationwide anti-communist campaigns of the 1950s and the global Cold War politics.
- 15 Whatever the context, throughout the last five decades Hemingway's work has been seen, in varied degrees, as the representation of the writer's ethical ideas, openly or obliquely communicated to the reader through the narrator or the protagonist, automatically and indistinctly seen as the author's mouthpiece. This is the specific case of what came to be called *The Nick Adams Stories*, a posthumously arranged and augmented collection, where the protagonist is seen as the mere projection of the writer.
- 16 Hemingway wrote between 1924 and 1933 many stories centered on one of his most original characters, Nick Adams. The order of composition and publication does not follow a chronological pattern.<sup>8</sup> In the first of these stories ("Chapter VII," *in our time*, 1924),<sup>9</sup> Nick Adams is a wounded soldier, while "Indian Camp," written later and published in *In Our Time* (1925), presents him as a child. The order of the stories within the same volume does not follow a chronological line either. In the *Men Without Women* collection, "Ten Indians," where Nick Adams is a young boy, appears after "The Killers" where he is older, and "An Alpine Idyll" is anachronistically situated before "Now I Lay Me," which hence closes the volume for evident non-chronological reasons and implicit structural reasons.
- 17 The reasons for these "disruptions" are clear enough. Not unlike the modernists of his generation who were familiar with Cubism, who read Proust's *In Remembrance of Things Past*, and read or heard of William James's theories on the "flow" or "stream of

consciousness” and Einstein’s theories on time’s relativity... Hemingway, who met in Paris two of the most significant American literary theorists, Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein, and learned much from them, distrusted mimetic writing and strove rather to create in his fiction *forms* of time that would reveal epiphanically the truths (in the plural) he was striving to write. Those truths, which are equated in Hemingway with objects of desire and not concepts, were looked at and presented from different angles. This is why Hemingway wrote *different* stories centered on *one* character, Nick Adams, rather than one novel about him. The apparent disorder of these stories is the manifestation of the “hidden order of art” (Ehrensweig) and Hemingway’s belief in the pertinence of symbolical discourse, rather than in the chronological transparency of realism.

- 18 The multiplication of different situations at different periods under this freer form, allowed him to build up the world of this character through situational dissimilarities, favoring hence discontinuity instead of chronological and psychological continuity, subtle verbal and visual links rather than referential unity or emotional coherence. The opacity of Nick Adams, which Philip Young unfairly decries and “amends,” is not accidental but structural. The difference between Young’s chronological Nick Adams and Hemingway’s poetic one, might be illustrated by an imaginary comparison between two portraits of Nick Adams, one realized by Courbet, the other by Cézanne. In truth, Courbet would have had a hard time drawing the picture. Indeed, if not for one very laconic, almost imperceptible reference in “Cross-Country Snow” (*The Short Stories*, 184), Nick Adams is *never* described by the Narrator. Hemingway avoids thus the limitations of realistic discourse and heightens the poetic and symbolic potentialities of his narratives. The absence of prosopography but also of ethopea frees the character from the ossifications of psychological depth, and liberates his creative energetic possibilities. Nick Adams remains fundamentally the artist’s voice staged in different familiar-looking situations.
- 19 Philip Young does not take into consideration at all the structural part of this “disorder” where meaning is created and recreated thanks to the free association of ideas, images, and even phonemes. Having thus appeared “in jumbled sequence,” says Philip Young, “the coherence of [Nick’s] adventures has been obscured, and their impact fragmented” (“Preface,” v). By not submitting the writing of his stories to the referential logic of chronological time (the time of reality “out there”), Hemingway played deliberately on ambiguity, “obscured” poetically his narratives in order to multiply the possibilities of interpretation, to thicken the symbolical potentialities of these stories based on the simplicity (or even absence) of plot, action, and syntax. “Arranged in chronological sequence, he adds, the events of Nick’s life make up a meaningful narrative in which a memorable character grows from childhood to adolescent to soldier, veteran, writer, and parent—a sequence closely paralleling the events of Hemingway’s own life” (*ibid.*). Meaning draws exclusively on order and fiction on biographical life brilliantly reproduced by the author.<sup>10</sup>
- 20 The image of an adventurer conquering the wild and wide open spaces of Africa, the figure of the writer as prizefighter able to “beat” or not other writers (Ross), or as a twentieth-century warrior fighting all the good wars, but also his “minimalist” method, his refusal to comment on his work, the tight-lipped speech of his own characters or the athletic and verbal masks some of them wear, helped create Hemingway’s *ideological reader*.

- 21 When the posthumous *Garden* was published – a novel where the protagonist, David Bourne, presents a much more different image from the “usual” Hemingway protagonist – Hemingway seemed to respond from beyond the grave to his conventional readers and feminist detractors and all those who neglected the work in favor of the man or, rather, the image he himself helped create. The gender issue and the correlated themes of sexuality, androgyny have now become the pivotal topic of any innovative study on Hemingway (Spilka, 1990; Comley and Scholes, 1994...).
- 22 In her overview of Hemingway’s critical reputation from the 1950s till 1990, Susan Beegel presents chronologically the important currents in Hemingway criticism from the dominant WASP male-centered critical discourse of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, to the more recent feminist and post-feminist critical responses to him. She even believes that the Hemingway study will take a new direction. The author confidently “predict[s] what new ideas might replace discussion of androgyny and gender as these issues grow stale,” i.e. mainly “ecological studies” (Beegel, 1996, 293). The fiction is thus reassessed not in terms of possible new *methods*, but new *ideas*. Whatever the announced renewal, Hemingway’s work continues to be seen as an ideological mirror where “new ideas” are celebrated, debated, and then... forgotten. Clearly enough, Hemingway’s critical reputation is not determined by the intrinsic qualities of his works, but by the aleatory development of cultural studies. As Susan Beegel puts it,
- the dearth of minorities and women in the academy during the 1960s is probably the most significant negative influence on Hemingway’s critical reputation. When potential readers reject Hemingway as indifferent to minorities and hostile to women, they are often responding not to Hemingway’s fiction, but to the indifference and hostility of some of his early critics, and a negative image of the author those influential first admirers unintentionally projected. (277)
- 23 The renewed interest in Hemingway has not put an end to the phenomenon, it has only shifted its ideological implications. The debate indeed continues to focus on the man, his personality, his social, moral, historical, and, of course, political significance. The restrictive domination of ideology among the earlier critics is not questioned but, on the contrary, justified as such. The debate about Hemingway has become an inter-ideological discussion or quarrel between two different visions of society, opposing feminists and post-feminists – who have now the upper hand –, to the “patriarchal males” whose views once dominated the Hemingway studies. And except for some few studies, what Hemingway *created*, i.e., literary *forms*, has continued to be overlooked.
- 24 In spite of its useful critical novelties, Nancy R. Comley and Robert Scholes’ little yet influential book on *Hemingway’s Genders*, does not value the *Hemingway Text* as the subtitle of the book suggests, but substantiates the firm grip ideology and culturally oriented studies have on Hemingway criticism. The general critical attitude toward the writer does not so much reflect an artistic or literary concern as it expresses the will to change the cultural and hence ideological appreciation of Hemingway. In this important book, Nancy R. Comley and Robert Scholes call the Hemingway that his posthumous *Garden* helped surface, “*el nuevo Hemingway*” (146). Here one wonders if Hemingway’s works are a product whose meanings or worth are determined by the evolution of ideology, or, rather, a *productivity* (Barthes), a poetic force that eludes the ideological closures of meaning, and that can be appreciated according to a dynamic and open process determined from within, from the textual world Hemingway created. Plainly enough, it is not Hemingway who is “nuevo,” but the critical literary discourse that has not managed to elaborate an intrinsic reading method of his fiction, drawing instead on the cultural or



realistic referent to reach the implicit meanings of the text. Moreover, while Hemingway (like most authors) wrote for cathartic purposes but with the clear intention of being freely appreciated and interpreted, literary criticism is heavily determined by classroom scholarship, and is hence influenced by the pedagogical, not to say ideological restrictive intentions of the teacher. Hemingway, more than any other twentieth-century American writer, reflected sharply, as a cultural symbol, and as an appropriated critical object, the ideals and prejudices of his society. The question of critical appreciation depends hence on the manner his works have been taught and appreciated in the academy.

25 Nancy R. Comley and Robert Scholes highlight incidentally (and for the best of reasons) this complex threefold relation between artistic creation, teaching, and ideology, when they claim quite confidently that “the Hemingway [we] were taught about in high school is dead” (146). Whatever the pertinence or impertinence of the observation, it symptomatically shows how the academy has it in its power to create and direct the critical reputation of a writer, and to impose, through oral and written criticism, the manner in which she or he should be appreciated. What makes this possible is the focus on the work’s signifieds, imaginary by definition, which are likely to reflect the reader’s or critic’s own assumptions on the writer. The “ancient” Hemingway (a bragging machismo indifferent or even hostile to minorities...), who himself went through and survived different deaths,<sup>11</sup> has now been replaced by a “new” Hemingway (multicultural and sensitive to the complexities of gender and sexual desire). In fact, the explicit themes staged in the posthumous fiction, especially *The Garden of Eden* and, to a lesser extent, “The Last Good Country,” or “The Strange Country” (written in the 1950s), are structurally similar to those connoted textually in the other works. After all, Hemingway does not have two unconsciouss, one determining the later posthumous fiction, the other the rest of the work! As the *textual reader* knows, the same unconscious forces are at work in the whole of his fiction.

26 Recent studies have shown how culturally challenging, especially on the issues of sexuality, race, and gender, the Hemingway text is.<sup>12</sup> One can only welcome this manner of appreciating Hemingway from the margins and not from the center any more. Yet, the persistent focus on the relation between text and culture unavoidably and detrimentally subjects the former to the latter. It is not the Hemingway Text which is actually considered, but what might be called the Hemingway Pre-text, or Hemingway as pretext for cultural debates:

[...] We are concerned with the representation of human character in Hemingway’s writing, especially with how characters are constructed along lines of gender and sexual behavior. Our notion of the Hemingway Text, then, puts Hemingway’s writing and the facts of his life at the center and situates around the center various other cultural elements that must enter into any reading of that writing, starting with cultural objects we know Hemingway studied or encountered and extending to other cultural elements that throw light on Hemingway as a writer. (Comley and Scholes xi-xii)

27 Hemingway could be hailed a hero and an anti-hero by “white males” and feminists alike, because precisely his work is not ideological. Hemingway’s textual forms *look at* the reader almost like visual figures in painting – naked and silent. The image that Hemingway as a public figure strove to create and the life he chose to live were of course ideologically determined, but so was not his fiction.<sup>13</sup> Even *For Whom the Bell Tolls* cannot be considered as a narrative about commitment, whatever the ethical beauty and humanist promises of its Donnean title. *Hemingway* went to Spain and fought fascism, but

not Robert Jordan the protagonist of the novel. And why should Hemingway “go” there twice, really and through fiction? Because through fiction and the symbolical action realized by his protagonist, the writer confronts death, this time not in the military or physical sense of the word. As dealt with in the text, death becomes an attractive power, an overwhelming desire, a mysterious *energy* that unites suffering and sensuality. It is the necessary elucidation of this knot that structures the plot of the narrative and seems to have motivated its writing.

- 28 The ideological reader presupposes consciously or not the realism of Hemingway’s fiction. Hemingway has indeed been hailed a brilliant copyist of nature and society, a realistic writer whose “journalistic,” “neutral,” and “manly” style shows reality “as it is.” The excellent observer and reproducer of human behavior is, in other words, the modern positive version of the devalued Platonist poet, supposedly “imitating an imitation.”<sup>14</sup> Being tightly related to the external world, fiction looks real and becomes hence socially useful. This assumption is reassuring as it permits to skirt around the puritan diatribes against fiction and its useless artificiality and non-spirituality. The biographical link is hence one of the most important elements that justify fiction.
- 29 Hemingway’s life and work are most of the time checked against each other. According to Robert E. Fleming, the readers of *The Garden of Eden* “will note biographical sources for characters and events in the novel. Catherine Bourne looks a great deal like Pauline Pfeiffer Hemingway, and her burning the manuscripts echoes Hadley Richardson Hemingway’s accidental loss of a small piece of luggage containing all of Hemingway’s manuscripts in 1922” (Fleming, 1996, 141). I do not deny the existence of these models, but I contest the validity of the referential relationship with the text. Assuredly, there is an epistemological confusion between two different orders or two different codes. Once the alleged biographical “model” has been integrated into the *world* of fiction that Hemingway considers as being *real*, he or she functions along an utterly different line of appreciation and valuation. The subjection of fiction to biographical reality, and hence one different code to another, is a recurrent trait in Hemingway criticism. Almost all the alleged biographical models of the characters have been identified and used as reading keys. What might be called *concordism* is so appealing that many scholars cannot separate the biographical and literary significance of Hemingway’s works even when the analysis concerns textual aspects (Justice, 2001).
- 30 The general assumption about Hemingway’s realism concerns both his “transparent” style and the earlier determining perception of his work as empowering and not challenging American mainstream culture. This is one reason why his fiction is supposedly representative and his characters considered as types. Carlos Baker sees in Nick Adams a typical American young man: “The story of Nick’s education, so far as we have it, differs in no essential way from that of almost any middleclass American male who started life at the beginning of the present century or even with the generation of 1920” (Baker 131). The subversive matter at work in the fiction is reduced here or rather normalized as if Hemingway’s works were the substantiation of the social ethos. Dealing with “Fathers and Sons,” which can be read as one of the most subversive stories regarding the theme of paternity, the prominent Hemingwayan scholar argues that “Nick was his father’s son, loving his father (...). From the son’s fictional reminiscences a memorable portrait of Dr. Henry Adams is made to emerge” (Baker 129). Jake Barnes, for sure, is the spokesman for the “Lost Generation,” Nick Adams is a war veteran, and whoever the Hemingway “hero,” he is an avatar or a representation of Hemingway.

- 31 The typicality of the Hemingway character is taken for granted. The proper textual identity, i.e. the sole material reality of fiction depends on the supposed referent to produce meaning. For instance, the symbolical force of femininity and sensuality in Hemingway's fiction can only be appreciated if the character "leaves" the text and "inhabits," as in the following example, the flesh of the supposed model. According to James Nagel indeed, Brett Ashley (*The Sun Also Rises*) "is not only a woman but an extraordinary woman for the age, a point not clear unless she is considered in historical context" (Nagel, 1996, 92). The coherence of the character is not textual, cognate with and functioning thanks to the symbolical network created by the fiction, but depends utterly on what occurs in the real world.
- 32 Hemingway's "realism" and "naturalism" are rarely discussed; they are taken for granted by numerous critics who never question but confirm "[...] the powerful naturalistic impulse in the fiction of such literary giants as Hemingway and Faulkner [...]" (Pizer, 1995, 14). When Michael Reynolds says that "Margot [Macomber] looks a lot like Jane Mason" and Francis, her husband, "looks a lot like Grant Mason" (Reynolds, 1996 ["Doctors"], 220-221), the comparison "looks like" presupposes automatically the mimetic intention of the fiction, while, in fact, Margot *cannot* "look like" a real person, but can only be compared to another Hemingwayan character (Brett Ashley, for example) or a character from the work of another writer, playwright, or painter. Margot is above all a textual form, an artifice, or, better still, an active signifier that *sounds* like Marjorie of which Margot is a more developed version, in terms of *marring* and feminine power.<sup>15</sup>
- 33 The fiction's false simplicity, reminiscent of Zola's ideal "transparent style," misled many scholars into viewing Hemingway's method as realistic. Very early essays emphasized the point. Hence, E. M. Halliday, who first sees Hemingway as a "philosophical writer" (Halliday, 1956, 1), considers him as a typical realist (Halliday, 1963, 217). Roger Asselineau, too, views Hemingway as a "true realist" representing "as truly as possible" his and his contemporaries' "horrible reality" (Asselineau, 1966, xvii). This is also David Lodge's premise (1981), or Paul Goodman's who contends that Hemingway's fiction and "passive style" are naturalistic, though in a "deeper" and more original sense (Goodman, 1974, 154). Bickford Sylvester evokes the "naturalistic surfaces of [Hemingway's] narratives" (Sylvester, 1989, 91). Elizabeth Dewberry, who in other respects highlights penetratingly the complex relationship between language, history, fact, and fiction in Hemingway's writing, considers him as a "writer of realist fiction" (Dewberry 16).
- 34 The aim here is not to set up an exhaustive list of the realistic readings of Hemingway, but to underline the ideological logic lying behind. In truth, it is not Hemingway's realism that the commentators praise, but realism per se. So what is meant exactly by realism in Hemingway? Is it a matter of expression or attitude?
- 35 In fact, opinions are premised upon both. Hemingway's style is supposedly "objective," the depicted situations are unsophisticated and the places are commonplace, characters look like real-life persons, and the author's image is so reassuring that expression and attitude appear to be easily recognizable. Hemingway's objectivity, the factuality of his writing are in the following comment attributed to the writer's ethical and aesthetic beliefs: "Hemingway's prose, based on his belief in the ability of concrete language to construct an objective reality, his craftsmanlike insistence that language is a tool of the writer, and not vice versa, would prove extremely resistant to the critical method of deconstruction" (Beegel, 1997, 287). Hemingway *might* have believed personally in this; but if he did, he never said it. He expressed his admiration for the great Russian and

French realists, but he also admired Cézanne, Picasso, Pound, numerous musicians, and acknowledged that he learned as much from writers and poets as from other artists (Plimpton, 1958). But he never said that he wrote realistic fiction.

- 36 His realism is assumed because his prose is supposedly mimetic (it looks like objective reality), and because as an author he hypothetically controls the language he uses and the totality of the produced meaning. In this perspective, Hemingway seems to expose his craftsmanship and to *communicate* a set of beliefs and ideas to his readers, to the detriment of signification and ambiguity. The “tool” as such is devalued as it only serves to designate something else that exists beyond the inherent reality of the words. Linguistically speaking, it is the meaningfulness of literary texts which is valued, not its poetic opacity and ambiguity, its power of suggestion, its music and sensuality. The primary aim of writing, says Geneviève Hily-Mane, is “to be read, i.e. understood and assimilated by its addressee” (Hily-Mane, 1983, 99). This is also what E. M. Halliday assumes when he says that Hemingway is “a writer who aims at realism” (Halliday, 1963, 217). He briefly defines realism as a method of representation of life and of distinction between the objective and the subjective:

[Defining realism] includes two limitations. One of these is familiar and, I should think, easily acceptable: that realism in fiction attempts to re-present life, through an artistic illusion, as it is “normally” experienced—that is, with as much probability and immediacy as possible. The other, which I advance more tentatively, is that literary realism, like epistemological realism in the vocabulary of philosophy, should make a distinction between the objective and subjective worlds, presupposing and emphasizing the existence of things independent of our experience of them. (Halliday 217)

- 37 Contrary to Proust’s or Woolf’s, Hemingway’s best work does not *fuse* the internal world and the “world of reality,” as the objectivity of his work “is one of its most celebrated features.” Hemingway “selects his objective facts carefully” and “manages to convey accurately his hero’s subjective states by implications” (217, 218). So doing he avoids brilliantly “the non-realistic tendency to confuse objective and subjective” (219). It is obvious that here realism is not considered simply as a discourse among other literary or artistic discourses possessing specific rules, but as the expression of an ideal realized through the “artistic illusion”: the affirmation of objectivity and clarity at the expense of “the stigma of retrospective reconstruction,” i.e. subjective, non-pragmatic fusions and confusions (220)!
- 38 Hence, these “technical” observations are in fact buttressed by ideological assumptions about the manliness of realistic discourse, the manliness of Hemingway, and, of course, the manliness of American democracy (Spiller).<sup>16</sup> The objective world or reality that Hemingway constructs represents the ideal social reality, a reality marked with order, coherence, the comfort of hierarchy, and certainty. “Objective reality” correlates here with harmony and intelligibility. Ambiguity, which lies at the root of poetic suggestion, is to be avoided because it is subjective and maybe subversive; the writer, on the contrary, creates a transparent world that looks real, i.e. true.<sup>17</sup>
- 39 In brief, what is implied by these assumptions about Hemingway’s realism, is the fact the ideas (or “messages”) and realities to which the words call the attention of the reader, are what really matters, not the words themselves. These are the tools of the writer who creates meaning willingly, and in so doing reassures society.<sup>18</sup> The inherent “identity” of the words (their materiality as signs) is not taken into consideration. Language is viewed

as a medium devoid of traces of enunciation that might denote a different order of meaning: seemingly disordered and meaningless, yet coherent and richly connotative.

- 40 Underlain by chronological order, psychological and narratological coherence, and objective and documentary knowledge, realism and naturalism present a reassuring mirror to society. Even when they describe social fragmentation, the negative image is “contained within the order of significant form.” Indeed, as Leo Bersani notes,

realistic and naturalistic literature gives constantly to society that seems to be severely judged, the comfort of a systematic vision of itself and the security of a structured meaning. The very desire “to be realistic” represents a crucial, albeit obscure aspect of this connivance that binds the novelist and society together. (Bersani 59)

- 41 In order to realize these aims and to maintain objectivity, realistic discourse places the emphasis on the protagonist and reduces the role of the narrator to a mere reporting agent, transcribing events that remain outside his own emotional realm. Hemingway’s realistic method has been praised because even an I-narrator like Jake Barnes (*The Sun Also Rises*) manages to use an “authentic” technical perspective, i.e. “having the tone of an eye-witness report” (Halliday, 1963, 217).

- 42 Yet, if one considers the Hemingway narrator as a *voice* and not simply as a mere witnessing eye, the unconscious desire at work in the narrative becomes manifest. In other words, the Hemingway narrative, because the writing stance is not realistic but poetic, i.e. not concerned with communication and representation, but with signification and verbal enjoyment, makes the reader hear the voices of the unconscious, liberates the repressed elements that come up to the surface to create *effects of meaning* in the guise of real effects. The volcano figure, connoted through metonymical and metaphorical links, conveys in the following excerpt from “Big Two-Hearted River,” a meaning that goes beyond the limited scope of representation: “[...] On the smoking skillet he poured smoothly the buckwheat batter. It spread like lava, the grease spitting sharply. Around the edges the buckwheat cake began to firm, then brown, then crisp. The surface was bubbling slowly to porousness” (222).

- 43 Primary processes with their energetic thrusts appear in the discourse of the narrator and voice the unconscious, testifying hence to the transgression of the symbolic order. The pressure of the “real” is evidenced by the energetic metaphor but also by the insistence of the plosive phonemes [p] and [b] that correspond to the sudden release of the air after its flow has been stopped. Moreover, the *bubbling surface* can also be considered as a *babble* of unconscious phonematic energy, or as a *babel* of unconscious voices trying to come up to the surface.<sup>19</sup>

- 44 Far from being realistically self-controlled and self-conscious, the language of “Big Two-Hearted River” expands its poetic possibilities toward primary processes, incorporating hence the creative force of disorder. The subject of the unconscious and enunciation seems misleadingly to be expelled from the narrator’s perplexingly “objective” and stripped bare discourse. In the following excerpt from the same story, we are presented with a typical Hemingwayan description, marked with mimetic transparency, impervious objectivity, and “phallic” naturalistic knowledge. The comic theatricality of the scene seems to confirm the realism of action and tone:

He started down the stream, holding his rod, the bottle of grasshoppers hung from his neck by a thong tied in half hitches around the neck of the bottle. His landing net hung by a hook from his belt. Over his shoulder was a long flour sack tied at each corner into an ear. The cord went over his shoulder. The sack flapped against

his legs.

Nick felt awkward and professionally happy with all his equipments hanging from him. The grasshopper bottle swung against his chest. In his shirt the breast pockets bulged against him with the lunch and his fly book. (223)

- 45 There is much to say about the excessive image of masculinity especially suggested by the multiplication of reassuring objects, all connected to the knowledge of the well-equipped angler! Yet, what is of interest here is precisely what belies this phallic image: the subject of enunciation that musically passes through the discourse of the *narrator*. The rhyme is arresting: *chest/breast*. The unity of the two signifiers testifies to the power of desire at work, a desire of totality that challenges the limits of realistic discourse. Yet, the poetic force of Hemingway does not lie only in these epiphanic truths, but in the relation between the double planes of discourse and enunciation. The unconscious meaning suggested by the rhyme *chest/breast* is produced by the narrator's discourse, not the protagonist's speech or action. Yet, it is backed up by the image of the self as conveyed by the protagonist's action: Nick *has* filled his breast pockets with his lunch and fly book, making his chest "bulge".
- 46 The rhythmic, plastic, and dramatic force of the passage is enhanced by the pertinent link between the two 'objects,' one referring to the oral drive and bodily matter (primary sources), the other testifying to the necessary shift to the realm of the artificial. The passage from the former to the latter is a minimal but intense illustration of the Freudian notion of sublimation.
- 47 The polysemic and polyphonic mobility of meaning operates subtly in the narrative and liberates it from the grip of realistic discourse, which is, as Philippe Hamon would have it, a "restrained" discourse. Here, the (sexual) identity theme has no psychological depth. It operates at the surface level and points to the creative possibilities of poetic language, staged by the falsely familiar action of the protagonist, and enjoyed *hic et nunc* by the narrator.
- 48 When the Hemingway protagonist is viewed against the biographical background, which is immediately ideological and fantasmatic in the case of Hemingway, the poetic force of the narrative is suppressed in favor of the moral ossifications of psychologism. This is precisely how proliferating recent studies interpret the sexual theme in Hemingway's fiction. Here, the false depth of realistic perspectivism discussed above, has an imaginary counterpart, i.e. the biographical and ideological "depth" of fantasy. Indeed, when the commentators deal with the subversive matter at work in Hemingway, the emphasis is heavily placed on Hemingway himself, his characters being recognized as the fantacized auto-biographical projections of Hemingway himself, posthumously avowing his sexual secrets, real or imaginary, in a well-hidden Garden of Eden whose doors he kept shut while still alive.
- 49 Carl P. Eby "psychoanalyzes" the man and the work alike, shifting from the former to the latter and vice versa. "Elucidating Hemingway's psychosexuality," contends the author, is "essential for understanding his own or his characters' unconscious motivations" (Eby, 1999, 2). The purport here is "to better understand the psychology of Hemingway's fetishism as well as what is at stake in his texts" (Eby, 2005, 79). This method, which presupposes the possibility of psychoanalyzing a person *in absentia* (i.e. in the absence of the real body, the real voice, and outside any institutional framework),<sup>20</sup> or through his creative work (considered as a psychological representation of the author's psychic life),

is a perplexing shortcut, rather reminiscent of Philip Young's initial work, except that Carl P. Eby substitutes "fetishism" for "trauma."

- 50 Yet, Carl P. Eby's "psychoanalytical" contentions about Hemingway's "fetishism" and "transvestism" are all the more puzzling as they mistake erotic imagination for pornography, fantasy for reality, and, what is more, artistic creation for pathology and desire for perversion (Eby, 1999, 2005). Besides, the question of sublimation, central to appreciating Hemingway's poetics of desire, is completely ignored, while it demonstrates, if need be, that Hemingway's fiction, contrary to Bataille's for instance, cannot be associated to perversion in any form (Abouddahab, 2001).
- 51 Hemingway's bafflingly alleged perversion is also the focal point of the work of Richard Fantina, who contends that "masochism [...] prevails in much of [Hemingway's] work" (Fantina 84). Ultimately, this creates a generalized sense of suspicion, as any female character holding a gun becomes "phallic," and any aggressive act realized by her means an act of penetration of the male character.<sup>21</sup> The idea does not need to be textually demonstrated; it simply needs to be stated: "In 'The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber,' Margot's rifle is a phallic projection of sex and death. When she shoots her husband, Margot perpetrates the ultimate act of penetration of the male body" (Fantina 103).
- 52 The sexual theme, which, since the publication of *The Garden of Eden*, seems to have broken new ground in Hemingway studies, turns out to be a debate about the ideological meaning of sexuality. In this perspective, Hemingway's alleged masochism has political extensions, being considered as subversive to the "dominant fiction" of phallic power (Silverman). Hemingway's fiction, which has been interpreted in early studies as the substantiation of American ethics, continues today to back up the realization of new social projects and new utopias.
- 53 Ideological readings are the most prominent trend in Hemingway criticism, but there have been interesting studies that have revealed the rich singularity of his art. Charles Fenton's *Hemingway's Apprenticeship* usefully examines the writer's early years as journalist and the development of his literary style out of this journalistic experience (Fenton, 1954). Other critics have constructively analyzed Hemingway's narrative pattern (Nahal, 1971; Ficken 1971; Hily-Mane, 1975, 1986...). The style of Ernest Hemingway attracted many scholars, especially when it became possible to read Hemingway's manuscripts. The most important works dealing with the writer's style are doubtless Geneviève Hily-Mane's who devoted many articles and a full-length study to Hemingway's stylistic method (Hily-Mane, 1983), where she revealed the linguistic complexities of the writer's misleadingly simple style. Interesting studies have been devoted to Hemingway's craft in general (Grebstein, 1973), or to specific aspects of his writing, such as the use of omission or understatement (Brenner, 1983; Johnston, 1987; Beegel, 1988), his rhetoric (Rao, 1983; Tetlow, 1992), or to the tragic dimension of his work (Broer, 1973; Williams, 1981).
- 54 An interesting trend in Hemingway criticism concerns comparative studies or "influence" studies. They have evolved throughout the decades to suggest helpfully, whatever the purely "imaginary" dimension of some of them, the literary background of Hemingway's work. While the legend of "Papa Hemingway" held sway, it was indeed interesting to read studies comparing Hemingway and Flaubert (Engstrom, 1950) or Hugo (Orrok, 1951). Other than the most important American writers of his own and of the earlier generations (Thoreau, Twain, Adams, Dreiser, Stein, Pound, Anderson, Fitzgerald,

- Faulkner...), Hemingway has been mainly compared to French writers (Maupassant, Stendhal, Flaubert), and to Russian writers (Turgenev, Tolstoy).<sup>22</sup>
- 55 In other much more important and increasingly pertinent influence studies, the different artistic “sources” of Hemingway have been laid bare. His work has been associated to the arts in general (Watts, 1971; Hermann, 1997), to impressionism or expressionism (Nelson, 1979; Nagel, 1987), or to cubism (Naugrette, 1990; Vaughn, 1994; Brogan, 1998; Narbeshuber, 2006). He has been compared to many painters such as Goya (Haas, 1987), Hopper, and especially Cézanne, whom Hemingway himself designated as a mentor in his posthumous memoir *A Moveable Feast* (Hagemann, 1979; Johnston, 1984; Nakjavani, 1986; Hermann, 1997; Gaillard, 1999; Berman, 2004; Stanley, 2004).
- 56 Important “textual” studies have been devoted to the large collection of manuscripts left by Hemingway at his death, since 1975 when the National Archives in Waltham, Massachusetts, then the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston, were trusted with nearly twenty thousand pages of manuscripts. The critics could hence follow the different steps of composition and verify, if need be, the complexity and exacting rules of Hemingway’s craft (Reynolds, 1976; Hily-Mane, 1977; Oldsey, 1979; Beegel, 1988). In truth, bearing in mind Gérard Genette’s austere taxonomy, the manuscript studies should be affiliated with “para-textual” scholarship (Genette 1982), as they focus on the necessary elements that have been left out from the text and have accompanied the genesis of the work without being part of it.
- 57 Textual studies in the strict sense of the word (Barthes, Derrida, Genette, Kristeva...) are exceptional in Hemingway studies; they remain one of the most important fields of research that might be developed in the coming years out of the few available studies already conducted on this usually overlooked aspect. The textual dimension is based on ambiguity, suggestion, polysemy, indetermination, and the absence of an absolute meaning. Paying attention to the textual combinations in Hemingway’s fiction allows the reader to perceive and celebrate what the text signifies not what it supposedly communicates.
- 58 This is how I personally have read Hemingway’s fiction ever since I started doing research on him (Abouddahab, 1992), as did Thomas Strychacz in his *Hemingway’s Theaters of Masculinity*(2003), where he penetratingly highlighted the writer’s “narrative and rhetorical strategies” (13), and showed how “theatrical” and “contingent” masculinity is in his fiction (8).<sup>23</sup>
- 59 It is necessary to consider, as the essays in this volume do, how Hemingway’s fiction does not overlook the relation between the sign and the referent or consider it as ‘natural.’<sup>24</sup> His fiction is aware of the problematic relation between the two and explores fittingly “the nature of reality and the relationship among reality, representation, and language” (Dewberry 16). To put it differently, Hemingway did not believe in the realistic fallacy and did not consider his fiction as the ideological mirror of his society.
- 60 I do not mean that literature or art are not determined at all by culture, or that they can go unaffected by social pressure or change; the question is *to what extent?* Hemingway is not Faulkner who is not Toni Morrison who is not William Gaddis.<sup>25</sup> My principal premise is that ideological and realistic readings of Hemingway are not totally erroneous; one cannot deny the presence in this writer’s work of some “human” substance, some form of social and historical concern, or biographical background. I see them rather as a fast track, overlooking the actual *work* done, i.e. all the matter that accounts for the fiction’s



*literarity* (Jakobson, Riffaterre), the formal elements that make of it *what it is*: simply and uniquely Hemingwayan. The specific identity of the Hemingway text, its singular reality and *inimitable* vigor, its intrinsic sternly well-built pillars – to use an architectural Hemingwayan metaphor: “Prose is architecture, not interior decoration, and the Baroque is over” (*Death in the Afternoon*, 170) –, all the *artistic* elements that make of Hemingway the significant writer we know, should not be reduced or overlooked in favor of the premise of representation and the hackneyed ideological overemphasized issues, but, on the contrary, celebrated.

- 61 It is true that some of Hemingway’s fiction, especially the work published in the 1930s, is marked with a pretentious “Hegelian” all-knowing tone. *To Have and Have Not*, Hemingway’s unique “political” novel, and some of the stories published in and especially after *Winner Take Nothing* (1933), present certain realistic characteristics (portraits, an obsession with authorial discourse, mimetic descriptions, the rejection of intuitive spontaneity, self-consciousness, references to social discourse...).<sup>26</sup> But these texts are rather exceptional. Most of the narratives in *The First Forty-Nine Stories* are essentially poetic.
- 62 Dealing with Hemingway’s fiction, I have always disregarded the referential dimension in favor of what I consider as the core of Hemingway’s art: its fundamentally poetic *force*. Indeed, my own view sees the originality of Hemingway’s work as centrally present not in story and diegesis, but in text and poetry: the musical play of the letter, the rigorous construction of the visual sequence, the silent and so significant wake left by the *object* of desire, evanescent, intriguing, attracting, and disquieting; the subtle interplay between the two planes of story and discourse in a continuous “solidarity” between narrative voice and character, frame and stage.
- 63 Contrary to his modernist contemporaries (Joyce, Woolf, Fitzgerald...), the poetic force of Hemingway’s writing is not so much palpable in the poetics of the signifier as it is in the poetics of enunciation. I believe that Hemingway’s best appears when the text manifests the consciousness of its own identity, however familiar, athletic, or adventurous the action performed by the protagonist might be, however anti-intellectual or plain speech might sound. In so doing, the reader perceives *on* the mask of diegesis the marks of artistic creation, the forces (unconscious, creative, disordered *and* ordered) at the root of its production. This is the real subject and concern of Hemingway’s fiction.
- 64 To be sure, the reflexive consciousness of textual autonomy is not verbally assumed by a character or the narrator through an obvious metafictional discourse;<sup>27</sup> it is, and this also accounts for Hemingway’s poetic force, staged by characters evolving in a world reminiscent of the familiar world. The straightforward concreteness of action and expression, the striking simplicity of the exposed ideas and of the verbal medium, give to the fiction the transparent guise of realistic fiction. The misleading “real effect” Hemingway’s writing produces, operates only in diegesis and its chronological development. In text or narrative, one can perceive the artistic consciousness at work, moving the apparent simplicity of theme and action into different patterns of aesthetic complexity. Looking, for example, does not simply describe a pre-existent scene or create the illusion of depth to prove how good a “copyist” Hemingway is, but structures the (disquieting) “real” into a delicately organized and rigorously *unified* textual world (“An Alpine Idyll,” “Big Two-Hearted River,” “The Light of the World,” “Old Man at the Bridge”...). In Hemingway’s most significant stories, the narrative dramatizes imperceptibly and finely its own artistic constituents.

- 65 When the narrator of “Indian Camp” depicts Nick, who is holding the basin for his father, as “looking away so as not to see what his father [is] doing” (93), he seems to present an “incident” illustrating “character” or the protagonist’s psychology.<sup>28</sup> In reality, it is not. The varied repetition of the same observation inscribes in the narrative a meaning whose range goes beyond the mimetic function of literature: “Nick didn’t look at it,” “Nick did not watch” (*ibid.*). The comportment of the protagonist has a discursive counterpart as the narrator remains himself silent on certain events. These *silent events* are not narrated; they nonetheless take place verbally in the textual world of the fiction. They are not passive blanks designed to alleviate the superfluous weights of description; they are rather active ‘white’ signs testifying to the presence of an implicit subject who functions both artistically and ethically, inscribing in the narrative the aesthetic awareness of the importance of these privative utterances, and at the same time voicing from within this aesthetic shelter his own fears and fallibilities.
- 66 “Later when he started to operate Uncle George and three Indian men held the woman still. [...]” (*ibid.*). What happened in between the moment the father asks George to “‘pull back’” the quilt that the Indian woman has been wrapped in so far, and the moment he decides to operate? The text does not simply or accidentally skip a difficult and structuring episode that psychoanalysis calls “castration” (in which case one is liable to speak here of the unconscious process of repression). The text is aware of its productive manipulation of silence. It has the power to transform repression into structural omission. The text, in other words, shows what it omits, and in so doing reveals its artistic structure.
- 67 Omission operates also at the level of enunciation: it appears in the text as an act of veiling and unveiling the unbearable truth, which is not pretentiously or philosophically presented as *the* truth, but the protagonist’s truth as it appears at one specific moment. This is how the Hemingway text “pulls back” its own curtain, a curtain of “mist” that the reader goes through from the outset, and that leads analogically to the mother’s quilt, and finally to the husband’s tragic blanket, i.e. a *blank it*.
- 68 The child cannot face certain difficult or tragic aspects of human reality (sexual difference or violent death...). But what lacks at the level of diegesis becomes structural at the level of narrative or text. The incapacities of Nick are used by the narrator as sculpturing devices, allowing him to negatively highlight his text, creating thus, like a sculptor, negative, dark, empty zones in order to endow the “visible” parts with intensity and a striking sense of truth. Hence, the Hemingway narrator makes of his protagonists’ fallibilities, foibles, or capacities, productive elements. Taken into consideration, the fine association between the two planes of diegesis and text (or discourse), utterance and enunciation, shows how action, while appearing to illustrate “character,” stages in fact the artist’s vision. Only paying attention to the diegetic world corresponds to forgetting precisely the seven-eighths of the textual iceberg, i.e. the actual work realized. Self-reflexive textual awareness is not static, nor is it expressed, but impressed in the verbal matter.
- 69 Not unlike Nick in “Now I Lay Me” who is daydreaming, the writer is within and without, conscious of what happens to him unconsciously, simultaneously (and mysteriously) in control and out of control. The subjective position from which writing is produced remains ambiguous and inexplicable, and, as Jacques Derrida once admitted, no one can honestly say what writing is (Derrida, 1980), because in order to answer this question one has to determine *where* the writing occurs or, rather, where it leads to. The sylleptic

structure of the following excerpt from *The Garden of Eden* dramatizes well this voyage through the words:

When he sat down the sun was not yet up and he felt that he had made up some of the time that was lost in the story. But as he reread his careful legible hand and the words took him away and into the other country, he lost that advantage and was faced with the same problem and when the sun rose out of the sea it had, for him, risen long before and he was well into the crossing of the gray, dried, bitter lakes his boots now white with crusted alkalis. He felt the weight of the sun on his head and his neck and his back. [...] (138)

- 70 What is at stake here might be called a *syllaptic consciousness*. David, who dissolves as an ego to become a writing force, reaches a level of consciousness that makes him not only see but feel what he invents, and, what is more, believe in it. This is the objective reality Hemingway's fiction presents; not the reality "out there," but the reality within, a world that *becomes* objective to the writer and that writing, literally a vehicle, leads to or at least makes true: "He went on with the story, living in it and nowhere else, and when he heard the voices of the two girls outside he did not listen" (107). In this perspective, creating has nothing to do with representing reality, but reaching a level of creativity that transforms psychic reality into an objective one, and it is this shivering *sense of the real* that Hemingway's fiction gives to the reader. The writer invents his own world – "[...] he was inventing all of it. It was all true now because it happened to him as he wrote [...]" – (94), and so doing he *at once* becomes and manipulates the forms he creates – human, vegetal, animal; male and female.
- 71 What Hemingway writes fundamentally is not reality but the real, i.e. what lies at the core of reality and is negated by it: death, sexual inadequacy, otherness, silence... Modern culture, modern reality denies death, devalues silence, rejects slowness, non-productivity, failure. Hemingway's fiction, on the contrary, highlights those dark matters that modern reality strives to expel. What is more, these dark matters become the structural pillars of Hemingway's fiction.
- 72 By focusing on the poetic dimensions of the Hemingway text, by placing the emphasis much more on discourse than on story, or by completely leaving aside the diegetic plane, the essays in this volume reveal new textual dimensions of Hemingway's fiction. Taken together, they complement the important scholarship already available, and suggest modestly new manners of reading Hemingway.

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- 73 The leading article sets the tone of this volume whose main aim is to unveil the (purely) literary and formal dimensions – poetic, plastic, parodic...– of Hemingway's stories, regardless of indefatigable conjectures about the ideological referentiality of the work. Claude Maisonnat's reading of "Hills Like White Elephants" pertinently rejects binary considerations and the moral, social, if not biographical assumptions they are often premised on. The focus of the study is precisely not the ideological conclusions one can draw from the implicit theme of "Hills Like White Elephants", nor the way Hemingway deals in this much-debated story with the clichéd theme of gender. The freshness of Claude Maisonnat's essay results from the emphasis he places throughout his study on the way the *narrative* incorporates artistic themes, while the *story* seems to *implicitly* deal with abortion. His textualist approach in the proper sense of the word, helps him disclose the inferred threefold relation that structures the narrative; the dual relation established

by the two characters is dealt with in relation to a third element: the narrative voice. The meaning of the story lies in the dynamic *relations* finely established between these three agents.

- 74 Bearing this in mind, one can interpret the story metaphorically: “Hills Like White Elephants” is not about having an abortion or not, but about literary creation. The mimetic or realistic function of discourse is assumed by the man, while the creative and metaphorical use of discourse is conveyed by the girl. The dialogue about abortion, the “omitted” theme of the story, turns out to be in Claude Maisonnat’s convincing and rigorously built interpretation, a discussion about abortion as a metaphor for problematic literary creation, in a complex textual organization involving the three aforementioned agents. Taking into consideration the contained discourse of the narrative agent, the apparently contradictory and conflicting relation between the man and his partner becomes on the contrary productive.
- 75 As the title of her study suggests, Alice Clark-Wehinger deals with the notions of deviation and in-betweenness or *entre-deux* in “The Sea Change.” Her essay acknowledges the numerous studies devoted to the story and helpfully assimilates some of their conclusions. Yet, she distances herself from the conventional readings that view the story’s “sea change” as an identity crisis or a conflict between heterosexual and homosexual wills, leading eventually to the triumph of the latter. The explicit theme of loss is minimised in favor of the theme of sexual “completeness,” considered by the author as the true outcome of the story. The notion of rupture does not operate at the level of sexual choices or identities; it is above all a question of form as Hemingway’s story breaks with conventions at the thematic, compositional, and structural levels. “The Sea Change” is considered here as a subversive love story that departs from the literary tradition, not only because homosexual feminine desire challenges a marital or at least heterosexual relation, but also because the narrative is structured around an obscure unnamed other.
- 76 The author demonstrates her conclusions by a sensitive analysis of Hemingway’s narrative method: the dynamism of silence, the use of dialogue as a substitute for action, the absence of plot, the assimilation of two important inter-texts... It is especially the latter that retains Alice Clark-Wehinger’s critical attention. The Pope and Shakespeare “hypotexts” (Genette, 1982) help highlight the story’s implicit meanings and re-orient its exposed themes. While Pope, unsuccessfully quoted by the male character, Phil, suggests his initial division, the reference to Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* in the very title of the story substantiates the implicit *entre-deux* motif, viewed not as a conflicting, albeit dialectical, relation between opposites, but as the common space where these opposites merge together. Not unlike the young woman’s role in “Hills Like White Elephants,” the girl’s role in “The Sea Change” is most fundamental: she is the agent through which this rich *sea change* occurs, prompting her partner to liberate himself from the ossifying bipolarity he has been the prisoner of so far.
- 77 The first two studies value the active presence of what could be called a “feminine voice,” and demonstrate how creative and intricately related to the artist’s vision the voice is. The following study highlights the feminine voice from the angle of silence and its narrative and ethical use by Hemingway.
- 78 Cassandre Meunier’s study explores the feminine theme and shows, if need be, how Hemingway made of female characters “positive” figures. This once innovative area of

scholarship might seem to have lost its fine edge, which is true unless one eschews psychological and ideological considerations, and looks at the text and the way it creates meaning. This is precisely the case of Cassandre Meunier's essay: it does not present a set of predictable remarks on the important place Hemingway's fiction gives to female characters; it rather relates the theme of femininity to textual phenomena, mainly silence, assuredly a multifaceted notion considered here as an identified linguistic fact. Deploying a methodology that draws mainly on the theoretical works of Ihab Hassan, Adam Jaworski, Deborah Tannen..., she analyzes the different oral and literate strategies in the text (verbal and non-verbal communication, reader response, description...), and explores the interplay between silence and social processes, and especially between silence and/or discourse and the exercise of power.

- 79 Hence, silence is not only considered as a linguistic phenomenon or a literary device inventively used by Hemingway to heighten the suggestive possibilities of his fiction – the “iceberg principle” is, as we know, the hub of Hemingway's style –; it is also construed as the illustration of an ethical quality, namely dignity and moral courage. Thanks to the ethical use of silence, the female characters are not only equal to their male counterparts, they are especially cognate to the artistic and ethical vision of the writer himself.
- 80 One of the salient, albeit inchoate, traits of this essay, lies in the interesting connection established between the levels of story and narrative (or text). It would be interesting to pursue the argument further and include the dimension of enunciation in the analysis of silence, and see how Hemingway's work problematizes the question of communication and fictionalizes both the possibilities and limits of language. Furthermore, if the study rightfully argues that the seeming interest Hemingway exposes with respect to “men's worlds” is not absolute, as his fiction shows that female identities are in accordance with the moral values that structure his fiction, then, here again, one can skirt the hackneyed issue of gender and expand the question of femininity toward the themes of literary or artistic creation.
- 81 In truth, what is at stake in Hemingway's fiction, as in Proust's or Woolf's, is not gender as such, but identity; the behavior or emotional response is determined by the subject of enunciation, i.e. the subject of the unconscious which is both female and male. The analysis of the poetics of silence in Hemingway can usefully help surface this “subject” not as a deep psychological entity, but as an energetic, creative, and imaginative force.
- 82 The conclusions drawn in the three preceding studies about the feminine voice and its relation to artistic creation and the writer's ethics, presuppose a rupture with moral and literary conventions. They also presuppose Hemingway's awareness of the imaginary and symbolical construction of the human identity. This is why his fiction, as the three following essays show, uses reality in order to reveal the “real,” ethically defined in Horst Breuer's study, psychoanalytically in Elisabeth Bouzonviller's and Eléonore Forrest's.
- 83 Horst Breuer's essay, straightforwardly if not simply entitled “Past and Present in ‘Cat in the Rain’ and ‘Old Man at the Bridge,’ ” is not, as the title might well suggest, a dualistic reading of two opposed categories; it rather aims to analyze the ambivalent appeal of tradition and modernity. The past denotes a sense of security and assurance while the present is, on the contrary, associated with the notions of decenteredness and unpredictability. In reality, the relation between past and present creates a permanent tension and testifies to continuous encroachments. One can even speak of a form of in-betweenness that marks the relation between tradition and modernity, as the freedom provided by the latter means the loss of security and certainty ensured by the former.

- 84 Hemingway's artistic method is reminiscent of the figure-ground process in Gestalt psychology, and Horst Breuer discerningly spotlights the surface effects in these stories without yielding to the illusions of depth. The author's fine textual observations highlight some of the important aspects of Hemingway's art, such as the strategic use of omission and silence, polysemy, the composition of space and motion, and other literary devices that account for the timelessness of Hemingway's art.
- 85 This essay shows that Hemingway's perspective is neither idealistic nor nostalgic. The young woman in the cat story and the old Spanish peasant in the war story, romanticize their past, but the narrator suggests the deadlocked irrelevance of their wistful longings. What Hemingway fundamentally writes are not the easy promises of life, but the "real," what lies at the core of reality and is unalterable and impassable. This is the focus of Elisabeth Bouzonviller's essay.
- 86 In his famous *Education*, Henry Adams makes an insightful remark about 19<sup>th</sup> century American art which, Adams thinks, is unable to cope with sex:
- Adams began to ponder, asking himself whether he knew of any American artist who had ever insisted on the power of sex, as every classic had always done; but he could think only of Walt Whitman; Bret Harte, as far as the magazines would let him venture; and one or two painters, for the flesh-tones. All the rest had used sex for sentiment, never for force; to them, Eve was a tender flower, and Herodias an unfeminine horror. American art, like the American language and American education, was as far as possible sexless. (385)
- 87 One had to wait for the "wild" autobiographies of Henry Miller to see an American writer deal frankly with eroticism. In between Whitman and Miller, the modernist writers did not belie Adams's appreciation. American modernist literature shies away from a healthy presentation of sexual desire. In his famous *Love and Death in the American Novel*, Leslie Fiedler deals with "the failure of the American fictionist to deal with adult heterosexual love" (xi). He nonetheless acknowledges that Hemingway's fiction "is much addicted to describing the sex act. It is the symbolic center of his work [...]. There are, however, no women in his books! In his earlier fictions, Hemingway's descriptions of the sexual encounter are intentionally brutal, in his later ones unintentionally comic; for in no case, can he quite succeed in making his females human [...]" (304). If the first part of the quotation is insightful, the second one is rather hasty and inconsiderate, and straitjackets Hemingway in order to prove a general theory about American literature.
- 88 Considering "The End of Something" as a paradoxical love story, Elisabeth Bouzonviller's close textual analysis of the story demonstrates the force of the sexual theme in Hemingway's fiction. Indeed, the sexual issue plays an important thematic role and operates efficiently, like the rest, beneath the surface. The story under consideration is viewed as a subverted fairy tale, not only departing from but sometimes inverting traditional sexual roles. In fact, what is dramatized in the story is the inevitable sexual otherness and the tragic solitude of the sexualized human being. This is the "truth" staged in the story: the impassable gulf that separates the sexes. The writer's non-nostalgic, non-idealistic approach permits him to lay bare the truth of sexual difference. Hemingway writes what lies at the root of reality: man's original division, the impossibility of love to make up for what has been lost forever at one's birth. The feeling of wholeness that love gives is but a mirage.
- 89 Elisabeth Bouzonviller's premises are backed up by a very precise and rigorous textual analysis that uncovers the fine workings of the narrative, at the syntactic, semantic,

symbolical, and visual levels of this often overlooked story. What “The End of Something” stages beyond the misleading familiarity of the exposed theme (the end of a love affair in a natural scenery) and its topicality (female ascendancy), is what lies beyond words: the unspeakable, both as a mark and as an act.

- 90 It is the same unspeakable “real” that Éléonore Lainé Forrest perceives at the heart of Hemingway’s early masterpiece, “Indian Camp.” Her micro-textual Lacanian reading highlights the zones of silence and failure in what she considers rightfully as a “story in disguise,” the essential meanings being enunciated in discourse or narrative, i.e. the poetic verbal structure of the story. The essay suspects appositely the apparent and misleading dualism of the story. Contrary to Manichean readings opposing Whites to Indians, men to women..., the author looks at the zones of tension where contraries merge together. The crossing of the lake leads to the “Other Scene” (Mannoni) or unconscious. The quest then is not seen in terms of initiation; it is viewed as a self-discovery, an elucidation of one’s ignorance. “Indian Camp” stages the early phases of the subject’s education when s/he needs to acknowledge her or his human, *limited* condition, and accept the symbolic order. The narrative reveals this necessary sacrifice at the root of one’s development into subjectivity.
- 91 Hemingway writes *life* as it is, exposing, without over-dramatizing them, the discordances of life, its sharp reefs and the disquieting presentness of death and heterogeneity. He does not so much *tell* these truths as signify them poetically, valuing hence the synchronic dimension of language in a fake diachronic guise.
- 92 Hemingway once said about “The Light of the World,” one of his favorite stories, that there is much more to it than meets the eye: “It is about many things and you would be ill-advised to think it is a simple tale” (Hemingway, “The Art,” 92). Assuredly, Émilie Walezak is a well-advised reader who brilliantly uncovers the complexity of this story whose apparent simplicity of theme and structure is perplexing. The picaresque dimension and the conflicting themes of innocence and initiation are only red herrings allowing the “ill-advised” to identify psychologically and culturally with the story. In truth, the artistic force of “The Light of the World” lies in its surface quality or form: its visual geometry, rigorous structure, its theatricality that reduces psychology and enhances performance, its implicit and yet enriching inter-textuality, and in the... anonymity of its narrator. Synthesizing the most prominent and typical studies of the story, drawing on Todorov, Bakhtine, and the linguistics of enunciation, Émilie Walezak tackles what she convincingly considers as the key to the story’s interpretation, i.e. the very anonymity of its narrator or “enunciator,” usually and hastily identified as Nick Adams by the commentators. The author’s admirably accurate and careful reading of the narrative challenges critical opinion as she not only problematizes the question of anonymity, but shows that the unidentifiability of the enunciator becomes the key hermeneutic element of the story.
- 93 Who speaks in “The Light of the World”? Such is the elementary question that leads to the complex structure of the narrative. In fact, the interest does not lie in the practical side of the question – identifying *who* speaks –, but in the theoretical aspects it involves – *how* does *it* speak in literary texts? The question of enunciation is then of the first and foremost importance in this exacting analysis that considers Hemingway’s story as a verbal construction primarily concerned with the inherent reality of language. This helps her highlight the workings of the narrative, eschewing the alleged psychological or moral depth, valuing on the contrary performance, the circulation of the gaze, the theatricality

of movement... Consequently, the misleadingly “objective” eye that registers the world it merely seems to observe, turns out to be a subjective ‘I,’ a *subject* trying to cope with his desire and the unnamable “thing” at the core of an uncertain reality. So while presenting the readers with a familiar place (train station) and familiar American figures (Indians, lumberjacks, prostitutes...), the text creates a subtle feeling of uncertainty and indeterminacy, the *logic* of which is pertinently unveiled in the essay.

- 94 If Émilie Walezak’s essay attends to the enunciative problem of *who speaks?*, Shigeo Kikuchi’s theoretically robust study of “Cat in the Rain” problematizes the question *who sees and how?*. However superfluous it might seem, the question is in fact very apt and leads the author to reveal Hemingway’s ethical vision at the root of the strategic and formal choices he had to make in terms of space, motion, and gaze. Taking into account the nature of perception and its fictionalized context, it appears that the object of perception, a cat, is not at all a stable object (as many commentators think), but a blurred, hesitant, purely *verbal* object, a linguistic creation or “fiction.” One might well remember George Berkeley’s claim that *esse est percipi* (“To be is to be perceived”). Indeed, the existence of the cat depends on its very perception. This suggests that, while writing this story, Hemingway was not interested in the description of a stable realistic object, but a buoyant sign.
- 95 Not unlike Emilie Walezak’s essay, Shigeo Kikuchi’s shows relevantly how the detail in Hemingway’s fiction, far from creating the illusion of reality (which is philosophically an illusion of certitude as the referent is supposedly *there*), questions its supposed certainty and reveals
- 96 its imaginary scaffoldings. This quite short and yet so complex story as Shigeo Kikuchi demonstrates, stages Hemingway’s ideas about the limits of language. Hemingway is aware of “what lies beyond words,” as Georges Bataille would have it, and knows that fiction will never reach it.
- 97 If the two previous essays highlight the symbolical importance of the narrative in regard to the use of linguistic and narratological devices (unidentifiability and indeterminacy), the three following essays, all concerned with early Michigan stories (especially “Big Two-Hearted River”), look at the textual organization of the stories from poetic, syntactic, plastic, and, to a lesser extent, cultural perspectives.
- 98 Is “Big Two-Hearted River” to be viewed as the young Hemingway’s *ars poetica* or as a culturally oriented story, deeply rooted in the nature-writing tradition in America? Is landscape to be considered as a scene, a mere artifice skillfully used for staging the protagonist’s inner tensions and artistic will, or is it a “human territory” appropriated and built by the protagonist according to his own ethics? Does the aesthetic and ethical value of nature partake of the realm of the protagonist considered as the vehicle of the finely narrated artistic vision, or does it belong solely to the narrative stance? These are among other important questions that the three following essays raise in this final section. This does not mean that they are paradoxical, nor opposed in terms of methodology. All of them value the textual intricacies and the structural force of detail. They differ rather in emphasis.
- 99 Marie-Christine Agosto’s essay deals with the “poetics of the homely” in the story. She rightfully refutes the critical approaches that see in Nick Adams a historical type or the mere autobiographical projection of Hemingway. Nick is rather involved here in a process of self-invention through the invention of nature. According to the author, the story



represents a *bildung* process, the aim of which is the constitution of oneself and the attempt to reach a form of wisdom. The author's stance is cultural and philosophical. She situates Hemingway's narrative in the wider realm of the American pastoral tradition, both modernized and internationalized by Hemingway. Following Clément Rosset's theories on the idea of nature as an "ideological fantasy," and Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception, she analyses Nick's perceptive experience as the manifestation of his presence in and to the world. The protagonist's is a quest for vital energy, and his presence in the narrative is made to be felt sensually not meditatively.

- 100 Dealing with "Up in Michigan," "The End of Something," "The Battler," and "Big Two-Hearted River," Marie-Odile Salati insightfully unveils the subtle structures that interconnect these early stories all centered on the experience of loss and underlain by repetition. If the theme of repetition has been abundantly dealt with, at least since Philip Young's famous "trauma theory" (Young, 1952, 1966), the discussion of the theme is yet unsatisfactory as most critics focus on the signified of repetition, not its signifier. What is of interest in Marie-Odile Salati's essay is not *what* is repeated, but *how* it is repeated. To put it differently, it is not the level of *énoncé* that retains the attention of the author, but the plane of enunciation where repetition, as an *act*, is the means allowing the writer to approach the central experience of loss, and the critic to reveal the structure of these narratives that take the shape of concentric circles revolving around a "central void."
- 101 The author does not say what this "void" is, and she is right not to do so as the aim of the analysis is not the imaginary signified, but the way the symbolical signifier operates on the surface. She reveals in this close analysis the poetic coherence of these stories. The fundamental combinations at the prosodic, syntactic, lexical, and narrative levels are pinpointed and analyzed with much precision and rigor. This textual analysis helps Marie-Odile Salati demonstrate how repetition is in these early Hemingway stories the manifestation of the unspeakable experience of loss, released and defused at once. Thus, the experience of loss becomes productive and can, consequently, be dealt with in terms of artistic creation.
- 102 As it has already been noted above, many interesting studies have been devoted to the "influence" of Cézanne on the young Hemingway, or to inter-textual links between Hemingway and the post-impressionist master. But Monika Gehlawat's article on Cézanne and Hemingway is very original and suggests new keys for a much more adequate appreciation not only of the early stories but of some general aesthetic aspects of Hemingway's work. The Cézanne hypotext helps Monika Gehlawat reveal fundamental aspects of the story related to plasticity and visuality. The experience of looking is not reproductive but creative in "Big Two-Hearted River." Phenomenologically speaking, the examined story is about how to see the world and about the renewal of one's perceptive experience of the world, which eventually leads to its recreation. Looking goes here with making; it has a productive power, and the protagonist is granted a sort of "painterly vision."

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## NOTES

1. For scholarly biographies, see also Scott Donaldson (1977), Peter Griffin (1985, 1990), Jeffrey Meyers (1985), Kenneth Lynn (1987), James Mellow (1992).
2. See, for example, Leicester Hemingway (1961), Marcelline Sanford (1962), A. E. Hotchner (1966, 1989), Madeleine Miller (1975), Gregory Hemingway (1976), Mary Hemingway (1976), Jack Hemingway (1986).
3. We can also mention the popular biographies. Singer Kurt's *Life and Death of a Giant* is a fair example: "May this book help to describe for the young and old generation the great individualist—one of the last men with guts and courage; a human being who was *all man* in a world where automation, luxuries, and wealth shine brightly in a gutter of hunger and confusion; a world which without Ernest Hemingway, will never be the same" (12).
4. Hemingway could rival in terms of fame any Hollywood star: "He alone of his generation enjoyed the double distinction of being a respected novelist and a celebrity. His fame was so large that *Look* editors could legitimately place him beside Charlie Chaplin, Cary Grant, President Eisenhower, Marlon Brando, and other luminaries from the worlds of politics and entertainment. Hemingway was a 'star,' he was a culture hero to millions of his countrymen, not all of them intellectuals or even readers of books" (Raeburn 1).
5. I do not mean to discuss the point in this introduction beyond a limited definition of ideology, which is a very controversial notion. Ideology is not considered in my discussion as political doctrine, but as a social system of beliefs, which is, as Talcott Parsons has it, "held in common by the members of a collectivity, i.e., a society, or a subcollectivity of one—including a movement deviant from the main culture of the society—a system of ideas which is oriented to the evaluative integration of the collectivity, by interpretation of the empirical nature of the collectivity and of the situation in which it is placed, the processes by which it has developed to its given state, the goals to which its members are collectively oriented, and their relation to the future course of events" (Parsons 349, emphasis mine). Saying that Hemingway criticism is ideological means that his works are systematically referred to the general system of beliefs of the American society, and associated to its cultural symbolisms, ideals, aspirations, and evolutions. The writer's work is hence considered as the positive or else negative mirror of his society.
6. Jackson J. Benson (1975) considers Hemingway as "a true existentialist" (273). See also Wirt Williams (1981).
7. Hemingway lived in Paris from 1921 to 1928. After eleven years in Key West, Florida (1928-1939), he moved to Cuba to live in a house – "Finca Vigia" – near Havana, where he spent the rest of his life.
8. See the bibliography at the end of this volume.



9. "Chapter VI" in subsequent editions where the *in our times* vignettes were added.
10. Jackson J. Benson contends that this chronological order is one of the major unifying devices of the *In Our Time* collection: "Hemingway must have decided to proceed roughly chronologically, filling in with stories from Nick's childhood, through his adolescence, to young manhood. This personal chronology becomes the second major unifying force in *In Our Time*." See also Linda Wagner (1975) and especially Joseph Flora's full-length study of *The Nick Adams Stories* (1982) that matches perfectly Philip Young's theories.
11. The following anecdote, as reported by John Clark Pratt, is quite relevant: "As a Dartmouth undergraduate in 1952, I had read a reasonable amount of Hemingway, but never before in a college course where the professor seemed determined to destroy otherwise fascinating fiction by harping on structure, theme, style, sources and, of all things, symbol. At that time, I saw all literary works so much as realistic depictions of the way life really was that I resisted (although I did pass the course) most of my professor's efforts to increase the maturity of my approach to fiction. As for Hemingway, the professor said one day, 'He's finished. Just look at *Across the River and Into the Trees*.' That was also the year that Philip Young published the statement in the preface to his fascinating, code-defining book *Ernest Hemingway* that 'he is part of our reading past,' a comment that Phil later told me over a cocktail that he really wished he had never made" (Pratt, 2001, 78).
12. See, for example, the book edited by Linda Wagner (1998), which brings together interesting essays dealing with Hemingway from this angle.
13. *To Have and Have Not* is certainly an exception, and so are some rare stories written in the same period like "The Capital of the World," a narrative that draws on the authority of mimetic knowledge. The story stages a mimetic bullfight that leads to "real" death, creating thanks to this structural embedding a powerful "real effect."
14. The mimetic function of literature, or *mimesis*, was originally defined by Plato and Aristotle. The two philosophers saw in mimesis the mere *representation* of nature. According to them, the poet cannot convey the truth, but only copy it. Truth is the concern of the philosopher only. What is more, for Plato nature itself, the physical world are an imitation of the Ideal which is the essential truth. Consequently, the poet and, by extension, the writer are nothing but the imitators of an imitation.
15. I am referring here to the two stories "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" (1936), and "The End of Something" (1925). The same shift from one realm (the page, the symbolical, the unconstrained) to another (the flesh, the limited) appears in many other commentaries, especially on stories that play on the "referential illusion." "The Battler" is interpreted through external links - namely the identification of the "real" boxer whom Ad Francis is supposed to be the representation of. Textually speaking, Ad Francis might be read rather as the symbolization of the mutilated and horribly suffering *and* violently enjoying figure of the double. The same can be said about the other boxer Steve Ketchel who plays a pivotal role in "The Light of the World." Numerous critics have checked the Annals of boxing to verify who says the truth and who does not in the story.
16. For the relationship between realism and masculinity in American literature (especially in the works of Dean Howells), see Phillip Barrish (2001).
17. Realistic discourse, which generally shuns self-reflexivity, creates a "real effect," i.e. the impression or illusion that what lies under the gaze of the reader is not a discourse with specific rules but reality (Barthes, 1968).
18. Amy Kaplan views realism as "a strategy for imaging and managing the thrusts of social change - not just to assert a dominant power but often to assuage fears of powerlessness" (Kaplan 10).
19. "Babel" is pronounced [bæbl] in American English.

20. A sufficient knowledge about Hemingway's *secret* life is arbitrarily presupposed from the outset: "[...] this too helps to explain why heterosexual sodomy and the 'psychotic flash' seem to have become key elements of Hemingway's erotic rituals in the last decade of his life. But most importantly, this can help us to understand the very different treatment of the erotic—a difference between a comparative reticence and a comparative openness—in early and late Hemingway" (Eby, 2005, 90).
21. See also Wolfgang E. H. Rudat who believes that Jake (*The Sun Also Rises*), despite his wound, can engage in "anal homosexual intercourse" (176).
22. See Meyer (1985), Wilkinson (1986), Davison (1999).
23. See also Wendolyn Tetlow's brief, yet interesting "lyrical" reading of *In Our Time* (1992).
24. As Frederic Jameson has it, "once upon a time at the dawn of capitalism and middle-class society, there emerged something called the sign which seemed to entertain unproblematic relations with its referent. [That was the] initial heyday of the sign – the moment of literal or referential language or of the unproblematic claims of so-called scientific discourse" (Jameson 95-96). Modernism strove precisely to disjoin the sign from the referent, as a distance was introduced between language and the objective reality it was supposed to represent unproblematically. The sign entered thus a moment of autonomy or, at least, "semi-autonomy": "This autonomy of culture, this semi-autonomy of language, is the moment of modernism, and of a realm of the aesthetic which redoubles the world without being altogether of it" (*ibid.*).
25. It is worth noting that Hemingway did not belong to any esthetic or ethical school and, *To Have and Have not* and some other exceptional posthumously collected stories apart, never spoke in his works on behalf of a social or historical group.
26. I am thinking especially of "The Mother of a Queen" (1933), "The Capital of the World" (1936) and certain passages from "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" (1936).
27. Metafictional discourse appears relevantly in posthumous works such as "On Writing" or *The Garden of Eden*.
28. According to Henry James, the ideal realistic novel subjects action to character: "What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character? What is either a picture or a novel that is *not* of character?" (James 6).
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## AUTHORS

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