

History as Narrative With Reference To Hemingway and Orwell

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The novel has been a source of delight and instruction where we find a resemblance to life in the setting, portraiture and in the managing of powerful co-incidence. As Scott James aptly comments, "The Novel is an art because it exhibits something which the artist believes to be lifelike or true to life and because he puts together these elements, in an intelligible external form, for no other purpose than to enable us to see what he has seen and to derive pleasure from it." (Scott 365-66) In the Late 16th and early 17th centuries, the word novel seems to have been used about both true and fictional events and even news reports were not considered factual. Thus novels and news reports were neither clearly factual nor clearly fictional. But in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the novelist became a conscious artist. It could be so "because the period provided the circumstances which made it possible for him to behave as one." (Walter 261) Novel is therefore a history of mankind without any distortion of facts and it is for the novelist to be truthful in tracing the history of mankind. It should also be a composite of impressions which the novelist's mind receives in his day-to-day life. The deeper the impression, the more effective and lasting the novel would become. As Henry James stated, "English fiction should have a conscious moral purpose" (James 509) and a novelist should breathe fine spirit in the craftsmanship of his fictive pictures which would always look fresh and entertaining. The complaint that the English novel, "had no air of having a theory, of conviction, a

consciousness of itself behind it – of being the expression of an artistic faith, the result of choice and comparison," (Wimsatt 681) did not hold for the novelist of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Novel is indeed a work of art depending upon the author's imaginative perception of life, and therefore, a novelist can no longer avoid social responsibility.

Literature is the representation of social life and its subject matter is closely linked with the socio-political background. The writer influenced by the prevailing social factors represents the contemporary issues in his work. These are blended with the writer's thoughts and feelings.

To show the relation between politics and literature Irving Howe, has used the term 'Political Novel' (Howe 17) by which he means a novel in which political ideas play a dominant role and in which the political milieu is the dominant setting. Thus, literature is to be understood in terms of the age in which it was produced. The eminent French historian Fernand Braudel has rightly asserted that socio-economic factors are significant in the unfolding and narration of history.

Literature reflects, shapes and represents history and literary texts are material products of specific historical conditions. For this reason, works and texts may be considered as carriers of the social emotion in so far as they mediate the fabric of cultural formations. It should be borne in

mind that history is not a coherent body of objective knowledge that can simply be applied to a literary text for unraveling what the text reflects. Literature is a representation of history and it contains insights into the formation of historical moments. It reveals the process and tensions by which historical change comes about. Without reflecting history as a mirror, literature identifies and shapes historical change. Also, it should be seen as an inseparable part of history in the making that constitutes the working of creative forces, disruptions and contradictions of history. (Brannigan 170). Louis Montrose has argued that the key concern of new historicist critics was about the historicity of texts and textuality of history. (Veesser 20). In his view, all texts were embedded in specific social and cultural contexts and all of our knowledge and understanding of the past could only exist through the surviving textual traces of the society in question.

Like oral history, which has been increasingly used as a documentary tool since 1940s, literature has come in its full form through encapsulating the shape of history. Even those periods of time in which records appear most complete will usually be found wanting since documents seldom adequately reflect considerations that contribute to key decisions; they rarely if ever, portray opinions of events and people with whom the principal actors worked. (Fogerty 207) It is evident that oral testimonies and literary works are important sources for writing history. Mushirul Hasan has argued that although literature cannot clearly portray significant changes, yet it can illuminate aspects of our collective existence left untouched by political and economic practices. (Hasan and Asaduddin 1)

This is supported by Hayden White who says that specifically historical inquiry is born less of the necessity to establish occurrence of certain events than of the desire determining a given group, society, or culture.

In the case of novelists in general, the aesthetic revisiting of this phenomenon is tampered with by an urge to understand, interpret and make sense of the past. It can be said that such a “present reappropriation of the past” as Joseph Riddle terms it, “is, nevertheless, inscribed on the subjective historical perspective of the author. This perspective is defined by a number of factors: the ‘truth/reality’ of the lived experience; the cast of the memories and nostalgia (both individual and collective); the atavistic resurfacing of this past in the present; the spatio-temporal location of the writer; the ‘use’ s/he makes of this history and the ideological and/or moral stance s/he brings to bear on the imaginative/fictive construct. The subsequent fictionalized history in its interpretive and evaluative endeavour of the historical context, thus, follows the contours of discursive historiography. As a result the boundary-line between the poetics of history and its story becomes fluid, yielding place to a notion of valence of realism. So history and story differ not in terms of the presence or absence of realism, but in their respective ontologies, in what they do to the sources from which they draw their materials. While the historian meticulously records all the little details of a huge canvas, the fictionalist, like a photographer, reduces – from the huge canvas of history, and like a painter, he fills into the vacancies he creates on the canvas the characters and events he fabricates in his mind. In this way, the novelist in being a combination of a photographer and a painter, differs from a

historian in his strategies of 'selection, reduction and enlargement', in his comparative freedom to make an epic of an episode, or a mere episode of an epic event." (Riddle 356)

"All stories are fictions", wrote Hayden White, one of the most influential and revolutionary thinkers in the humanities in the last 40 years, known for going beyond the surface level of historical text to a deeper structural level of linguistic form. Though generally known as a "theorist", White was trained as a historian. Since the 1973 publication of *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, his controversial ideas have revolutionized thinking about historical representation and the intersection of history and literary studies. White posed the nettlesome and controversial question, Why do we write history? at a time when historians did not want to deal with the question, says Robert Doran, a scholar of French and comparative literature who studied under White at Stanford University. According to Doran, White's challenge to history was that it is not a science, or a story told only in facts, but rather a form of discourse that relies on conventional narrative forms and the imagination.

No other historian has had the interdisciplinary influence of White, added Doran, also the editor of a forthcoming volume of essays by White titled *The Fiction of Narrative: Essays on History, Literature, and Theory, 1957-2007* (Johns Hopkins University Press). White's critical works have been a wellspring for literary scholars, philosophers, anthropologists, art historians, and film and media critics, as the large body of secondary literature on his thought attests. Indeed, Richard Vann, the longtime editor of the journal *History and Theory*, has

called White as perhaps the premier academic essayist of our times.

White's insistence that history is as much about how you narrate as what you narrate opened up the possibility of demonstrating the past's relevance to the present, said Paul Duro, professor of art history and visual and cultural studies at the University of Rochester. Furthermore, White's central thesis is that historical writing may be understood as a system of tropes, such as the metaphorical and the ironic, allowed for the beneficial expansion of historical thinking into the realm of literary and critical theory. In this last sense, all of us in the humanities are followers of White.

According to Hayden White, every history is shaped by its "metahistory"--- that is, the archetypal historical narrative that the historian uses to shape and structure a story about the past. Metahistories are not embedded in the past—they are imposed on the past, to give it continuity, coherency, and meaning. Metahistories prefigure the histories we write.

While some historians hailed *Metahistory* as a seminal work, others saw White as a gadfly, an unwelcome critic of a hallowed discipline with ancient roots, writes Doran in his editor's introduction. To them, White's rapprochement between literary or fictional storytelling and the historical or biographical account amounted to an indictment of history as a factual discipline, scientific in spirit, if not in method. Nevertheless, White's books and articles are standard reading in history and humanities courses.

Derrida in his essay on the "Theatre of Cruelty", refers to the difficulty of representing violence / war as such, 'the theatre of cruelty is not a representation. It is

life itself'. (Derrida 294) "Metaphor Interprets Memory", says: Cynthia Ozick when she discusses how metaphor presses hard on language and storytelling and is at the core of the use of language (Qzick 282). The strange and sometimes shocking experiences registered in memory force their way into expression in the language of communication, and turn even idiosyncratic, subjective responses into metaphors that make sense and reach out to others. In fact, all language is metaphorical because what is said is really a representation of what is experienced. But the representation is bound to be the interpretation of what is experienced, and has therefore the underpinnings of a point of view. Each creative text is a unique representation, a powerful metaphor of a specific memory or experience.

Creative writers' sensitive and powerful use of language in articulating their experience of war demands a close study of each of their texts if one wishes to reach a comprehensive understanding of the complex range and dimensions of war and its impact on the people. Every story is a distinct metaphor seeking to give concrete shape to some dimension of the historical phenomenon of war.

This takes us to the fiction of the early twentieth century. We may begin by saying that the 1930's was an ideologically surcharged decade. World War-I, and Spanish Civil War were the most terrifying and unsettling events that the 20th century witnessed. The dark clouds hanging dense and low over Europe and England in the 1930's were really ominous and by the end of the decade the catastrophe actually came to pass. The Economic Depression heralded by the Wall Street Crash of 1929 was no sudden event but had its seed in the Treaty

of Versailles (1919) that imposed an unbearable war debt upon Germany which in turn affected the financial structure of France, England and the USA. The War of 1914-18 that was to end all wars settled nothing, composed nothing and satisfied nobody. Political events followed swiftly in Europe. At the south west corner of Europe, the democratic forces of Spain fought a terrible civil war with the fascist forces of General Franco in which many freedom-loving Europeans and the British fought directly in the International Brigade in support of the former. The old European days were gone forever. As Benedetto Croce says, "We remember the old Europe with its riches, its flourishing trade, its abundance of goods, its ease of life, its bold sense of security. We see today the new Europe impoverished, each nation occupied solely with its own affairs, too distraught to pay heed to the things of the spirit and tormented by the fear of the worse to come." (Croce 17)

Great Britain which had long been an arbiter of world problems, could not play any effective role in the international affairs during the 1930's. According to Keith Alldritt, these were "the years of Economic depression and widespread unemployment heralded first by the wall street crash of 1929 and then again by the financial and political crisis in England in 1931. These are the years which marked the rise of fascism abroad and the tendency towards appeasement and indecision at home. They are the years of contending ideologies and also of paralysis, not only in the political and intellectual life but in the natural life as a whole." (Alldritt 1)

The nightmarish, ghastly and gruesome incidents and experiences of the wars left an indelible mark on humankind. The

disillusion caused by the wars was intense and it affected the literary world to a great extent. The first two years of the decade preceding the Second World War were the worst years of Economic Depression and widespread unemployment. Samuel Hyves has given a synoptic description of the situation then prevailing in words such as these: "In the national economy, 1931 was the year in which the Depression seemed to settle permanently over England. Outside England, there were violent beginnings of disorder that would continue through the 30's, a revolution in Spain and in Asia, the Japanese invasion of Manchuria", (Hyves 20) while by early 1933 hunger and oppression and chaos and despair were worsening the gathering storms of a catastrophic war, which really shook the hearts of English men. During the First World War the main outcry of the younger generation was that people of the old generation, alone were responsible for the war, "but in the nineteen thirties many who had raised that cry found that they were themselves helpless to avert the danger of war which was going to engulf the whole world." (Ward 18)

The economic depression, unemployment, revolution and war brought drastic changes in the main outlook. The literary output of the post-war period can be easily identified as it is marked by frustration, discontentment, subversion of values and above all spiritual decay. Most of the writers were born and nurtured in a politically critical period. They felt lost and insecure "when they were plunged at the moment of manhood into what looked like the Collapse of western civilization." (Spiller 186) The peaceful, progressive and secure world was threatened by barbarous acts of the world wars. Many of the writers participated in the war and had personally seen the violence

and brutal deaths in the battle field. When the war ended, most of them rejected the materialism of Post-War prosperity in the United States and returned to Europe "to discuss art rather than politics and if one may judge from their own accounts, to waste their disillusioned minds and bodies in drink and dissipation." (Spiller 186) The vigour and enthusiasm they had earlier put into fighting the war was now put into their writing. Their main concern was to present pictures of a decaying world order. There was a change in sensibilities and ideas and the chaotic time proved to be the catalyst helping in concentrating and consolidating ideas, giving rise to movements.

Life in the west in the early 20th century was greatly disturbed by the Spanish Civil War. The writers, poets and artists of the western world were drawn to the Spanish situation. Though the Spanish War was not between the Marxist and Non-Marxist forces, it did assume the semblance of that conflict because of the indirect support extended to the Spanish dictator Franco by the leading Western nations such as America and England. Foreign intervention in this revolt which had turned into a civil war was there for all to see. Russia was sending observers and volunteers, as well as financial aid which was donated by its citizens to help in the socialist cause. Germany and Italy were giving a great deal of aid in the form of material. Thus the foreign powers were taking sides in this bloody political turmoil. The failure of the Spanish Civil War and the defeat of the republican Spanish army left most of the intellectuals disillusioned and cynical. The Spanish Civil War which the intellectuals initially joined as anti-war propagandists eventually became a turning point in their life and writings. This war thus became a poets' war, a writers' war as much as it was a people's war. It brought

about a drastic change in their approach to life in general from the hitherto negative and nihilistic approach to a highly positive and constructive one. The post-war decades saw social, literal and Economic changes slowly yet steadily creeping in. The artist took on the task of remodeling and reshaping how the society looked at the reality.

Spanish Civil War and the Economic Depression led to a difficult situation with nagging unemployment, labour unrest and general disenchantment among the public. The existing political institutions failed to cope with the situation. Thus with the prevailing social and economic chaos and in the face of the menacing rise of Fascism, it was Marxism and Socialism that emerged as some benign and promising God that seemed to offer a viable alternative to the worn-out political institutions. This is the reason why about one third of the world's land area and population broke away from the existing system of capitalism and opted for communism in the spirit of live and let live. This was a period when every writer was compelled to re-examine his obligation to the society in which he functioned. It was but natural that the western writers and intellects should get attracted to Marxism. Political and historical events shook the complacency of even those artists who had not been upset by the world war. The new star on the horizon was that of communism which spoke about bread instead of beauty.

Ernest Hemingway and George Orwell belong to that category of novelists whose writings are rooted in history based on actual historical events which they observed as a challenging fact and took an active part in them.

Ernest Miller Hemingway (1898-1961) was one of those writers who attained adulthood during the period of First World War. He

belonged to the generation that experienced war in its youth and came to be known as the "Lost Generation". His desire to join the army as a soldier remained unfulfilled. He was content with a position in the Italian Red Cross Ambulance Corps. He participated in the war with an avowed purpose of ending the war and saving mankind as well as saving democracy. He was a liberal activist who opposed all forms of aggression on the dignity and liberty of the individual. He was a journalist transforming the report into art. He participated in the war not merely to pursue his ideas about life but also to experience life for creating a fiction that was true to life.

Hemingway graduated from Oak Park High School in June, 1917, when war was uppermost in the minds of young boys. Keeping Hemingway's interest in journalism in mind, his father decided to get him a summer job on the "Kansas City Star". Ernest found the city and his association with the "Kansas City Star", a stimulating engagement. Hemingway loved to be physically in the midst of action which he was required to cover. The period of seven months that he spent on the staff of the "Star" was marked by intense activity, movement and discipline. He was a reporter with a difference. With a positive distaste for second hand reports, he readily offered to accompany the ambulance and fire-engine teams in an anxiety to appear at the scenes of action. (Kaushal 19)

Besides, Hemingway was learning the rules of writing under the strict guidance of Pete Wellington, the editor of the paper, for whom he had a genuine admiration. Later in life, the novelist acknowledged his gratefulness to Wellington, who was among the first to teach Hemingway the art of writing "stories straight off the cuff".

(Kaushal 20) "Those were the best rules I ever learned for the business of writing", recalled Hemingway in 1940. "I have never forgotten them. No man with any talent who feels and writes truly about a thing he is trying to say can fail to write well if he abides by them". (Sheriden Baker, 10)

It was during his brief stay with the Kansas City Star that Hemingway felt deep within him irresistible stirrings, impelling him on to active participation in the adventure other young boys were experiencing on the front. He was finally accepted by the Italian Red Cross and allotted to Ambulance Unit 4 and sent to Italy on May 12, 1918, as a provisional acting second lieutenant in the Red Cross.

The American Ambulance Field Service-college-extension courses for a generation of writers, as defined by Malcolm Cowley, consisted of boys with strong literary, academic and newspaper background. During busy periods, the work of these units was organized in day and night shifts. (Kaushal 20) During the July counter offensive along the river Piave, Hemingway was on night duty. "In their letters and diaries the drivers expressed again and again their horror when at the end of a long drive, under shelling, they discovered they had been driving not an ambulance but a hearse. These are nights that bear no relation to reality", recorded one of them, "morning comes like the relief from pain". (Fenton 5)

"With Hemingway the impression was so deep, so natural and final as to make it seem that the war experience released his energies rather than inhibited them. We may almost say, to paraphrase Voltaire, that if there had been no war, it would have been necessary for Hemingway to invent one". (Geismar 54) In 1935, Hemingway wrote "I thought.... about what a great advantage an experience

of war was to a writer. It was one of the major subjects and certainly one of the hardest to write truly of and those writers who have not seen it were always jealous and tried to make it seem unimportant, or abnormal, or a disease, as a subject, while really it was just something quite irreplaceable that they had missed. (Kaushal 21)

Far back of the trenches, with his initial assignment to the Chicago, Hemingway had a rather safe job which disappointed him. But soon his disappointment gave way to excitement when he arrived at Paris under heavy shelling by the long-range German gun- known as "Big Bertha", the deadliest of new weapons. From Milan they were rushed on an emergency call to a place, completely devastated outside the city. Hemingway wrote to a friend on the "Star" that he had his baptism of fire his first day there, when an entire munition plant exploded. It was a horrible night and he carried the painful memory of it for fourteen years till he wrote it out of his system in 1932 in his story "The Natural History of the Dead".

After a short time, he left the Ambulance corps to join the Red Cross Canteen Service. In June, 1918, he took charge of a canteen within the shelling range. He saw around him many of the canteens blown off by the Austrians and the American lieutenants killed. Again not content with sitting in a state of hibernation at the tented canteen, he sought the permission of the area commander to cycle up to the trenches. He soon became a popular figure, dauntless and dedicated. He was in the midst of life and in the midst of death, assimilating the sensations and experiences of the perilous mission. From out of these experiences *A Farewell to Arms* was to be born. He followed his cycling routine for just a week. It was on

July 8, 1918 two weeks ahead of his nineteenth birthday and a week after his joining the Rolling Canteen Service, that he was badly hit by a heavy Austrian trench mortar shell named "miniwerfer". The man standing by his side was killed instantaneously while another had his legs blown to pieces. Hemingway fell down unconscious. As soon as he regained consciousness, he carried the wounded soldier on his back to the dressing station, under heavy shelling. It was a rare act of brute, physical courage, a matter of admiration for even the enemy. "An Austrian officer later said they had seen a man with a wounded soldier over his shoulders crawling toward the Red Cross tent. The enemy admired the courage and were not willing to fire the last final shot." (Singer 33)

For his gallantry, Hemingway was awarded the silver medal 'Croce de Guerra', the highest military decoration Italy gave to living men, at a specially organized formal ceremony at Chicago in the autumn of 1921. The war over, Hemingway was discharged by the Red Cross in the first week of January, 1919. "But all his experiences in war and the wound he received had a far more lasting influence on Hemingway himself who, came back figuratively as well as literally shot to pieces, completely a changed man, disillusioned and with all his earlier idealism and buoyancy shattered on the harsh rock of reality." (Kaushal 24) This was the trauma Hemingway suffered on the Italian front.

"Its distinguishing features are: the shock of the actual occurrence, the sudden cutting away of past experience and securities.... The mystery and impersonality of its source, the anger, fear and helplessness that are part of the reaction to it." (Hoffman 9) Talking of

that fateful midnight, Hemingway said that he died then... he felt his soul coming out of his body. He had his rendezvous with death, and his having escaped it was a kind of reincarnation. He stood completely alienated from the American past, from the Middle West. His entire view of the world he re-entered underwent a radical change so that he had to find a different perspective from which to evaluate the world. The spirited all rounder of the Oak Park High School was to become from now onwards the 'mournful singer of an empty age'. (Kaushal 25)

After his return home from war, Hemingway was on the verge of frustration. But this frame of mind did not last long. Soon, through the good offices of Mr. Connable, an old acquaintance of the Hemingways, he was introduced in 1919 to the editorial director and manager of the "Toronto Star" and was assigned a job as a feature writer. After having done commendable work for a short while, he finally left Toronto in the fall of 1920.

Hemingway's migration to Paris was motivated principally by his desire to get established as a writer and to stay in artistic environs, for which France had a reputation since the nineteenth century. For Hemingway what was moral was what you felt good after. In France alone could he live out his life in his own way without societal interference. "The attraction of the 'second country' has in it some of the quality of the Utopian myth ; freedom from one's native world suggests freedom from responsibility, a chance to criticize that world, and to make over one's life according to personal taste." (Hoffman 55) But Hemingway's non-political stance was only a temporary phase. The civil war in Spain broke out in 1936 and the fighter in him woke up anew. He said

good-bye to rest and security and was in the field again as a Republican.

The years of the Spanish Civil War once again awakened the soldier in him. Born out of his passion for Spain and one of the most intimately autobiographical of his works, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* contains a fuller account of Hemingway's association with Spain during the most difficult days of her history. His loving attitude towards Spain, expressed pinpointedly in *Death in the Afternoon* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, elicited a reciprocal sentiment from the Spaniards so that thousands of them, fastidious otherwise by temperament, applauded Hemingway many a time when he was in their midst. The ideals for which he was fighting sanity, decency, democracy were frustrated. The Loyalists could not help the fall of Madrid. And once again, as after World War I, Hemingway returned, forlorn.

Hemingway was probably the most wounded man of the United States. The history of his serious woundings began on July 8, 1918, when the Austrian trench mortar had hit his leg. The surgeons discovered more than 237 steel shrapnel splinters in his body. In war itself, he was shot through both his feet, both knees, both arms, both hands and the scrotum. He was wounded six times in the head, once in the eye all this in addition to three major air crashes which set off the obituaries in the world newspapers. One of the obituaries said that "the fatal air crash was simply a fulfillment of Ernest's well known death wish". (Kaushal 36)

Hemingway seeks insight into life not through thought or any psychological mode but by invoking his characters in some dangerous physical action which would give them a full and true view of life. He does not merely deal with the necessity of facing

violence but also shows us the way through which we can triumph over it. Herein lies the greatest value of his work. He has a message for mankind. The silence of his heroes during the time of crisis is more eloquent than speech. Life is continually a sorry affair, but what Hemingway seems to say is that pessimism is not the right attitude to adopt in such a predicament. Cultivating courage, endurance, and developing the virtue of fortitude, if inherited, can see us through the farrago of life. The highest value which Hemingway upholds in life conveys the greatest and most valuable message for mankind that when fate traps you, all you have to do is to be brave and face its consequences with calm.

Hemingway is a journalist who transforms the report into art. He has found in himself our own soft romantic centre, our sweet dream of despair and toughened it into bravery. He has caught man's essential nagging belief that we do not get all we deserve, that we are made for something better than brutality and death, that our virtues ought to be rewarded by some supreme and deathless love, by some grandeur that neither the rubble of two wars nor the glitter of the suburbs can supply. He was writing history as immediate experience. His work is really quintessential journalistic dream into fiction, and the power in his journalistic art lies in its intensely suggested meaning which depends on never being stated, always being poised under the non-committal surface.

George Orwell (1903-1950) is an important post-War novelist with deep and wide humanitarian awareness. His novels reflect manifold and profound humanitarian vision. Orwell's humanist perspective has an inexhaustible sense of sympathy and deep-seated generosity for the oppressed.

Universal brotherhood and restoration of fundamental human values are the basic concerns of the writer. Orwell has deep disgust and anger against the horror of war and destruction caused by it. He feels the misery and frustration of those soldiers who are sent to fight. He identifies the sufferings of all the soldiers who belong to different countries, because Orwell basically believes in the spirit of man. A poem written by him reflects feelings of agony and misery of soldiers in the world of regimentation and groupism.

"I don't want to join the bloody army
I don't want to go into the war,
I'd rather stay at home,
Living on the earnings of a whore".
(CEJL 79)

For Orwell it was the disintegration of individual integrity that caused spiritual imbecility, confusion and bewilderment in life. He was aware of the horror and disaster of the World War which was part of the consequences of man's restlessness and alienation from the mainstream of life.

George Orwell was the pen name of the English author, Eric Arthur Blair. Orwell was educated in England at Eton College. After service with the Indian Imperial Police in Burma from 1922 to 1927, he returned to Europe to become a writer. He lived for several years in poverty. His earliest experiences resulted in *Down and Out in Paris and London*. By 1936, Orwell had joined the Republican forces in the Spanish Civil War. Orwell was critical of Communism but basically considered himself a Socialist. He was wounded in the fighting. Later in the war, Orwell fought the Communists and eventually had to flee Spain for his life. Orwell documented many of his experiences

during the Spanish Civil War in his *Homage to Catalonia*.

Orwell's various experiences with totalitarian political regimes had a direct impact on his prose. Orwell's best-known books reflect his opposition to totalitarianism: *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. In an article entitled, "Why I Write" Orwell would explain:

"Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, against totalitarianism... *Animal Farm* was the first book in which I tried, with full consciousness of what I was doing, to fuse political purpose and artistic purpose into one whole." (Orwell 9)

During the Second World War, Orwell wrote a weekly radio political commentary, designed to counter German and Japanese propaganda in India. His wartime work for the BBC gave him a solid taste of bureaucratic hypocrisy. Many believe that this experience provided the inspiration for his invention of "newspeak," the truth-denying language of Big Brother's rule in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Throughout his lifetime, this English author continuously questioned all "official" or "accepted" versions of history. At the conclusion of the War in Europe, Orwell expressed doubt about the Allied account of events and posed the following question in his book *Notes on Nationalism*, "If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear... Is it true about the gas ovens in Poland?" (85-86)

Of all Orwell's writings, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has had profound influence on historical revisionism. Revisionist pioneer, Harry Elmer Barnes wrote an important essay,

"How 'Nineteen Eighty-Four' Trends Threaten American Peace, Freedom, and Prosperity," which documented the prophetic nature of Orwell's classic. Barnes proclaimed, that Orwell's book was the keenest and most penetrating work produced in this generation on the current trends in national policy and world affairs and to discuss world trends today without reference to the Orwell frame of reference is not unlike writing on biology without reference to Darwin, Mendel, and De Vries....

As an observer of the life of the poor and a writer of political pamphlets, Orwell had important predecessors in the nineteenth century. Like Cobbett, Mayhew and Dickens, he informed a largely middle-class audience about the actual details of working-class life which he himself had observed and shared. Orwell's narrative voice is a vital part of his books, and his personality has great moral and political relevance. Indeed, Orwell's persona in *Down and Out in Paris and London*, *The Road to Wigan Pier* and *Homage to Catalonia* fulfil many of the functions of the hero in a novel: he is a person with whom we may identify, through whom we may discover, and against whom we may measure and judge.

All Orwell's books are autobiographical and spring from his personal experience. The analysis of *Burmese Days* and "Shooting an Elephant" shows how Orwell experienced and then tried to understand the role of the oppressor. Orwell was the conscience of his age, and his whole life was a struggle against barbarism and for what he called 'comparative decency': a sane, clean, friendly world, without fear and without injustice. To alert his audience to social and political injustice, Orwell's weapon was language, and he emphasizes the value of the pamphlet as an art form. Orwell's

reports from Spain during the Civil War are the best example of how he attempted, almost single-handedly, to provide the factual basis of history. Polemical pamphleteering played an important part in Orwell's political books, for *Homage to Catalonia* contains long sections of political analysis.

Orwell and Hemingway were politically oriented even before the Spanish Civil War. They were already committed to the cause of democracy which meant individual liberty and human dignity. Their active interest in joining in the Spanish Civil War was therefore very natural, keeping in view their political, ideological and literary backgrounds. Orwell went to Spain as a war correspondent, joined one of the Spanish militias and fought against the Fascist forces. Hemingway went to Spain with a contract from NANA (North American Newspaper Alliance) to report on the Civil War. The period of his reporting was a little more than a year and covered the most crucial phase of the Spanish Civil War.

Now to evaluate their comparative merits and limitations as artists it would be rewarding to compare their novels on the historical events in which both participated. The major historical novels of Ernest Hemingway are *A Farewell to Arms* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and George Orwell's *Burmese Days* and *Homage to Catalonia*.

Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* is a novel about world war 1, which has been described as the most colossal, murderous, mismanaged butchery that has ever taken place on earth; it is about the predicament of man in a society rocked by the violence of war. It is a parable of 20th century man's disgust and disillusionment at the failure of civilization to achieve the ideals it had been promising throughout the 19th century.

Hemingway had a certain romantic notion of man - brave, virile, sporting, hard working, a kind of macho figure who strongly believed in individual courage and heroism. But in reality there is nothing glorious, sacred or heroic in modern mechanized warfare. War stands for disorder, violence and destruction. After his experience on the battlefield Hemingway perceives to his utter horror and dismay the shallowness of the war slogans. What he sees on the battlefield is not war but mass murder. This encounter with the reality of war results in disillusionment and disgust. His participation in the war enabled him to give literary reality to one of the major experiences of his generation and the generation that followed. The two aspects of war i.e. what it does to the non-combatants and the effect of war on the soldiers themselves are clearly depicted in the novel.

George Orwell's first anti-imperialist novel, "*Burmese Days*" is a powerful exposition of racial discrimination and colonial hatred. It brings out the corrupting effect of imperialism. It is a vivid recollection of one of his bitter realizations of the wide gulf between the natives and the agents of the immoral British colonial set up. The rulers themselves are inhibited in their affection, their friendship and are living in a world of artificial confines and narrowness. Orwell observed the harshness in the lives of the locals. They had to cultivate the hard unyielding land, and life for these people had no meaning outside their daily struggle. What shocked him was the naturalness with which these people accepted their lot and the respect they felt for the white races. The very basis of imperialism was thus founded on an attitude of callousness. It denied equality and it denied humanity. The pretence and hollowness of the British

imperialism has been very clearly projected in the novel.

For Whom the Bell Tolls marks the culmination of Hemingway literary response to the Spanish civil war. This war was a turning point in his career. He felt genuinely indignant at the social injustice in the world. *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is a novel of ideology. It is not about Spanish politics but about the fate of the republic and its people caught in the civil war. The struggle of the Spanish people against the fascists has been presented with special combination of sympathetic involvement and hardheaded detachment. It is a direct outcome of the writer's commitment to the cause of the Spanish people in their historic civil war. Hemingway is a true representative of his time in the sense that his novels offer a graphic account of the outer realities. As a novelist he is concerned with the sufferings experienced by men and women during the war times. *For Whom the Bell Tolls* depicts these sufferings realistically as the writer's concerns are the concerns of the common man. In his novel he expresses a great faith in man's power of tolerance and bravery in equal measure.

In '*Homage to Catalonia*' George Orwell explores the horror, disaster and banality of the Spanish civil war in which hundreds of men were slaughtered like cattle. He has deep disgust against the horrors of war and it is one of the elements of dehumanization exposed in his novel. Orwell writes about horrors of war and dehumanizing factors which the war triggers on. War strips men of glory and leaves them completely bereft of all myths. The machinations of war are always dehumanizing. With complete objectivity Orwell unveils the suffering of human beings caused by the machinations of war. He writes, "No one who was in

Barcelona then or for months later will forget the horrible atmosphere produced by fear, suspicion, hatred, censored newspapers, crammed jails, and enormous food queues and prowling gangs of armed men". (Homage to Catalonia 135) Orwell also states that his purpose of joining the Spanish war was to fight against fascism and if one asked him what he was fighting for, his answer would be 'Common decency'. His concern is far from being a journalist or a war correspondent. He firmly states his belief in the importance and sanctity of the past. *Homage to Catalonia* opens with an incandescent flash of human love putting beyond question the dignity, worth and immortality of mankind. It is interesting in the way form and subjects are identified in the book. The first clue to the nature of the book is to be found in the title itself for what follows is not primarily a description of how Catalonia won Orwell's admiration. The work is expressive of a personal debt, a personal gratitude for one more voyage of spiritual self-discovery. It was Catalonia in war time which provided for him the ideal community in which he could find and come to terms with himself. Orwell had committed himself to an empirical individualism where man's moral and spiritual integrity, historically authenticated, depends on the basic freedom of direct confrontation between the individual and the data of his experience and on winning a place in the stream of history.

Ernest Hemingway is widely considered to be one of the key representatives of modern American short stories. Hemingway was not only a writer of fictional texts, but also a journalist and a war correspondent. "The Spanish Civil War dominates the middle period of Hemingway's writing" (Josephs 313) During the Spanish Civil War he wrote

two texts, one fictional and the other non-fictional. The Spanish Civil War lasted from 1936-1939; it began on 17th July, 1936 with a military uprising of General Franco. At that time Spain was a republic with a liberal government under Giral. Franco had been deported to the canary isles due to political reasons, but with the help of German planes he could return to Spain accompanied by Spanish Foreign Legionnaires and Moroccans. Several more revolts took place throughout Spain during this summer, but the Eastern parts of the country remained republican in the beginning of the civil war. The Republicans were called *Rojos (Reds)* by the fascist insurgents. Monarchists, Catholics and the *Falange* (a fascist group consisting of mainly upper-class students, later the name for Franco's fascist party) supported the revolutionaries. Moreover military assistance was provided by Germany, Italy and Portugal. The republican government received support of France, the USSR and the International Brigades. On 30th September 1936 General Franco was accounted as the head of government of the Spanish state and became commander-in-chief of the forces. Support of the International Brigades and supply of arms from the Soviets helped to strengthen the Republicans, so that the Fascists' advance was slowed down. It came to bloody fights. In 1937 the Fascists got again the upper hand over the Republicans. Franco and his followers occupied and took the big cities gradually over the years. Barcelona was occupied by Franco in January 1939 and in March of the same year he took Madrid. The Republicans surrendered. About 1.2 million people (750,000 civilians) died as the civil war was fought with brutality on both sides. The Republican leaders escaped to France and Mexico. Franco's government was accepted by Germany and Italy in 1936 and

by France. England and USA in 1939. Spain remained neutral during World War-II. The Spanish Civil War evoked great interest all over the world because of which international correspondents were sent to Spain to report about the war for their respective countries. Hemingway had been to Spain before and returned in 1938.

Ernest Hemingway worked as a war correspondent in Spain. It was known that he was a supporter of the Spanish Republic. "The only positive 'cause' Ernest Hemingway ever really supported was the Spanish Republic" (Josephs 314). He travelled to Spain from Key West, USA in the spring of 1938. Originally he had planned to stay in the United States, because he wanted to write some stories, but then a little bit later he changed his mind and wrote in a letter, "I feel a bloody shit to be here in Key West when I should be in Aragon or in Madrid" (Watson 122). He left only two days later to return to Spain for the third time. He arrived in Perpignan, Spain, where he met two other correspondents on 30 April, 1938. He was asked to report about the Civil War for NANA (North American Newspaper Alliance) and Ken Magazine, a new political magazine. Every fortnight he was supposed to send an article to Ken Magazine. At the time of his arrival the political situation was difficult. "The front lines were changing dramatically almost every day, requiring that correspondents like Hemingway get as close to the action as they could and file their dispatches as quickly as possible" (Watson 121). On the day after his arrival in Barcelona he met Herbert Matthews, a correspondent of the *New York Times*. Together they left for the Aragon front. First they made their way to Gandesa where Hemingway hoped to meet the International Brigades. It was very difficult to get there and on the way they

were stopped near Falset by a group of refugees. Some soldiers informed them about the fall of Gandesa which had just been taken by the rebels. Only the bridge across the Ebro near Mora was still in the hand of the Republicans. One day later when he returned to Barcelona he wrote the first NANA dispatch about the fleeing peasants and soldiers he had seen the day before. He titled it "The Flight of Refugees" and it was cabled on 3th April, 1938.

The first volume of Hemingway's short stories published in 1925 was *In Our Time*. Later, all the short stories contained in this volume were published, along with *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, as *The Snows of Kilimanjaro and Other Stories* in 1963. The next volume of Hemingway's short stories to come out in 1927 was *Men without Women*. The third collection of his short stories was published in 1933 as *Winner Take Nothing*. However, the short stories included in this volume, along with 'The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber', were published as *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber and Other Stories* in 1963. Yet another collection of Hemingway's short stories, *The Fifth Column and the First Forty-Nine Stories*, came out in 1938, which besides containing all his short stories published earlier, contains a few short stories not published till then. The last volume of his short stories captioned *The Fifth Column and Four Stories of the Spanish Civil War* came out posthumously in 1969.

Fifteen of Hemingway's stories are based on the life of Nicholas Adams, supposedly a literary version of the young Hemingway himself. These stories are : 'Indian Camp,' 'The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife,' 'The Battler,' 'The Killers,' 'Ten Indians,' 'The End of Something,' 'The Three-Day Blow,' 'Big Two-Hearted River,' 'In Another

Country; 'A Very Short Story; 'Cross Country Snow; 'The Light of the World; 'Now I lay Me; 'A Way You'll Never Be; and 'Fathers and Sons'. Five of them tell us about young men, and they are 'The Revolutionist; 'My Old Man; 'God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen; 'A Day's Wait' and 'The Capital of the World'. Another twelve of them are the stories of war and love, and they are: 'On the Quai at Smyrna; 'The Soldier's Home; 'A Natural History of the Dead; 'Up in Michigan; 'Out of Season; 'Mr. and Mrs. Elliot; 'Cat in the Rain; 'A Canary for One; 'An Alpine Idyll; 'Hills like White Elephants; 'The Sea Change' and 'Homage to Switzerland.' Yet another eleven of them offer us the stories of the underworld and these short stories are 'A Simple Enquiry; 'A Pursuit Race; 'Banal Story; 'After the Storm; 'The Mother of a Queen; 'Wine of Wyoming; 'One Reader Writes; 'The Gambler, the Nun, and the Radio; 'A Clean, Well-Lighted Place; 'Two Tales of Darkness; and 'Get a Seeing Eyed Dog.' Three of Hemingway's short stories, namely, 'The Undefeated,' 'Fifty Grand' and 'Today is Friday,' are those of courage and endurance, while another two of them, such as 'Che Ti Dice La Patria' and 'A Meal in Spezia' deal with the menace of Fascism. And while four of his short stories namely, 'The Denunciation; 'The Butterfly and the Tank; 'Night before Battle; and 'Under the Ridge,' take us straight on to the Spanish Civil War, another three of them, 'Old Man at the Bridge,' 'The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber' and 'The Snows of Kilimanjaro,' mark the consummation of Hemingway's narrative art. Most of the stories describe man's alienation from himself from society. They either deal with war, violence or death and man's reaction to the crisis. Hemingway projects through these stories courage, zeal and endurance.

A careful study of the Hemingway criticism of the last ninety years reveals that his works have been subjected to a variety of interpretations. A representative sampling of these critical efforts would show that most of the scholars have focused on a few aspects of the writer's work, centered mainly on the study of the hero, the writer's code or his style. Some of these influential Hemingway critics have also remained unduly preoccupied with the man behind the work. A few critics have also examined such subjects as symbolism, themes, allegory, and narrative technique in the writer's work. It is surprising that some important aspects of Hemingway's work have not so far received adequate critical attention.

Wyndham Lewis in his essay "The Dumb Ox: A study of Ernest Hemingway" wrote in 1934 that his hero is dull-witted, bovine, monosyllabic simpleton who speaks with "the voice of the folk of the masses, The cannon fodder, the cattle outside the slaughter house, serenely chewing the cud of those to whom things are done, in contrast to those who have executive will and intelligence." (Lewis 302, 313). D.S. Sauage too supported the dumb ox evaluation and he says that Hemingway's contribution lies in, "the proletarianization of literature: the adaptation of the technical artistic conscience to the sub-average human consciousness." (Sauage 31). Sean O'Faolain takes the same stand and in his book *The Vanishing Hero* says that his hero is always as near as makes no matter to being brainless, has no past, no traditions and no memories. (Faolain 144) Edmund Wilson described the public Hemingway of mid-thirties whose name appeared in the gossip columns and whose writing appeared in *Esquire* as certainly the worst invented character to be found in the authors work.

There are three scholarly full-length studies of Hemingway. Charles Fentons *The Apprenticeship of Ernest Hemingway: The Young Years* is a carefully documented account of Hemingway's experiences as a journalist and World War 1 ambulance driver and soldier. Carlos Baker tells in his *Hemingway: The Writer as Artist* that he is not writing about Hemingway's private battles or public wars rather he presents a responsible and reliable account of his works from 1920 to 1955. He insists that Hemingway's writings rest on 'a structure of symbolic meanings which has gone unrecorded and for the most part unobserved'. (Baker 52-71)

Philip Young's *Ernest Hemingway* is a provocative, intellectually adventurous full length study of Hemingway that exists. It provides us with a brilliant exercise in biographical criticism. He sketches a portrait of the Hemingway Hero, the big, tough outdoor man who is actually a wounded man sickened by too much of violence. Sheldon Norman Grebstein devotes his book *Hemingway's Craft* to the study of "those aspects of structure, language and narrative technique which distinguish his writing from all others. He turns the reader's attention to "symbolic understructure" and examines Hemingway's use of some of the dominant structural designs in his works. Grebstein feels that Hemingway's vision is simplistic and as a writer he is mainly pre-occupied with the contrast between pastoral and civilized life. This study leaves one with the feeling that the critic has failed to take note of the full complexities of Hemingway's art. The variety of techniques Hemingway has employed and the profundity and richness of the view of life he has conveyed through his fiction escaped the attention of the critic because the latter does not take into account the significance of

the minor characters in the writer's work. Grebstein seems to be deeply influenced by the code theory. He accepts most of the points made by the critics for whom Hemingway's work is essentially autobiographical. Besides this, much has been written. There has always been a question whether the writer's limitations are his weakness or strength. But Hemingway has won his reputation as an artist of the first rank and has in his best work uttered a lyric cry.

Very little was written about Orwell during his lifetime. George Woodcock in his essay on *George Orwell in The Writer and Politics* made a criticism of Orwell's weaknesses, "the failure to penetrate deeply into the rooted causes of injustices and lies against which he fights and the lack of any real constructive vision for the future of man." (Woodcock 118) Victor Pritchett in his appreciation of Orwell in *Living Writers'* calls him 'a kind of Saint' (Pritchett 96). It was Arthur Koestler's obituary which said that: he was, "the only writer of genius among the litterateurs of social revolt between the two wars." (Koestler 103) Richard Voorhess has analyzed Orwell's paradoxical attitudes about rebellion and responsibility, power and socialism objectively. George Woodcock in his *The Crystal Spirit* provides a biographical discussion of Orwell, his fiction, his political ideas and his criticism. Robert Lee talks about his fiction and Keith Alldritt describes Orwell's development as a writer. Mirian Gross in *The World of George Orwell* attempts to see Orwell, "both in terms of what he means today and as a man whose achievement very much needs to be set in the context of his own period." (Gross i)

One of the first leftist critics, Raymond Williams has been consistently interested in

Orwell, as his studies on Orwell span from 1955 to 1984. Williams, a self confessed cultural critic inclined to the left, was naturally interested in Orwell, the most famous pro/anti communist writer. Starting with his *Review of George Orwell* (1955). Williams wrote a chapter dedicated exclusively to Orwell in his famous book *Culture and Society* (1958). In 1971, Williams came out, with his, monograph *George Orwell*. Finally, two more essays on Orwell came out, first in 1974 and later in 1984. His running history of response to Orwell may thus be read not just as a personal chronicle but as a sharply focused intellectual biography of the post-war radical British Left. William's book is a Marxist attack on Orwell as a reactionary and revisionist who made an unacceptable accommodation to capitalism. It also recalls the extreme left-wing condemnation of all of Orwell's books. Peter Stansky and William Abraham's *The Unknown Orwell* is a biography of his first thirty years. The theme of the book is that "Blair was the man to whom things happened; Orwell the man who wrote about them." (Stansky xiv) is not convincing because it does not show that Orwell changed his personality when he changed his name.

Much has been written by scholars in different languages regarding his attitude towards socialism, communism, imperialism, his criticism, style and nostalgia. E.M. Forster writes that, "He found which to discomfort him in his world and desired to transmit it and in 1984 he extended discomfort into agony." (Forster 72) John Wain argued that, "as a novelist Orwell was not particularly gifted but as Controversial Critic and pamphleteer he was superb, as good as any in English Literature." (Wain 71)

Satyabrata Das, whose book *George Orwell. The Man who saw Tomorrow*, attempts to focus on the prophetic vision of George Orwell in relation to the Spanish Civil War. In the course of discussion, the author treats almost the whole length of Orwell's writings, both fictional and non-fictional, to say Orwell's interest in the Spanish Civil War was deep and abiding.

Arun Joshi in his book *Fictional Style of George Orwell*, aims at finding out how Orwell used different techniques to demonstrate that the world is moving towards a planet inhabited by people deprived of human values, people who become robots under the complete control of their masters.

Besides this many biographies are worth mentioning such as Gordon Bowker's *George Orwell*, Bernard Crick's *George Orwell - A Life* and Jeffery Meyer's *Orwell : Wintry Conscience of a Generation*. Most of the works that one comes across on Orwell concentrate either on his life or on his socio-political ideology.

There is ample biographical evidence that both Hemingway and Orwell were political writers and both have written fiction and non-fiction

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