

The concept of expatriate in the sun also rises

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The concept of expatriate simply means “ a person who lives outside their native country” (Oxford University Press, 2019), but overtime the concept widened its meanings and it comprises notions like exile, identity, self or otherness. Therefore, the concept is quite ambiguous and it may cause confusion when it, “ the loss of citizenship, is sometimes used as conterminous with emigration, the physical change of domicile” (Green, p. 308). Although there are a few correlations, perceiving and understanding the concept of expatriate depends on some other elements like “ who is initiating the act, state or individual, and whether or not it is voluntary” (Green, p. 308). Moreover, the concept is not only linked with the geographical space, but it is also linked with the spiritual space when referring to the self, depicting an inner exile. Formerly, expatriation was viewed as an exclusive concept – when only outsiders came to the United States, and then at the beginning of the 20th century ‘ expatriates transformed’ – there were not only people coming to the United States, but also Americans leaving and emigrating (Green, p. 310). Due to cultural development, the term ‘ expatriate’ recalls the concept of ‘ Lost Generation’, especially the American writers living in Paris during the 1920s (Monk, p. 2), a generation driven by disillusionment, confusion and aimlessness in the period of First World War (Hynes, p. 386). The term is attributed to Gertrude Stein, another modernist writer from the expatriate’s circle in Paris: “ You are all a lost generation” (Bloom, p. 14) – concept used as the first epigraph of Hemingway’s novel, illustrating the spirit in which it was written.

In order to expand the meanings of such concepts as exile or expatriation, identity and, the self and the other we will analyse them in the light of the

novel *Fiesta: The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway. The author begun writing his first novel, partly fiction, partly autobiographical work in 1925 and it took him almost nine weeks; it was published in 1926 and suffered many revisions including the title which originally was *Fiesta* or *Lost Generation* (Bloom, p. 12). Some types of discourses produce a unique effect on the mind, changing one's perception about the mental representation of the world. Hence, from the interaction between "a textual form with a reader's pre-existing mental representations", the discourse will have attached a certain value which can be universal or not (Cook, p. 4). All the same, some have praised the novel, others have despised it, but certainly it caught critics attention: it has been considered "as nihilistic: a book about no thing with people going nowhere", or it has been recognized as a forceful depiction of the war generation whose ideals and values for "country, family, and religion" had been devastated (Bloom, p. 13). Moreover, Hemingway's artistic creed suggests a desire for balance and for an accurate description of the essence from real events : "I am trying ... to get the feeling of the actual life.... You can't do this without putting in the ugly as well as what is beautiful" (Bloom, p. 13).

As it has been said, *The Sun Also Rises* is partly an autobiographical work due to Hemingway's inspiration from real life events. Ernest Hemingway was born in on July 21, 1899, in Oak Park, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago (Charles, p. 3) and as a teenager he excelled in English classes and practiced and enjoyed sports such as boxing, water polo, track and field, and football. Before being a novelist he was a journalist and a correspondent (Mellow, p. 21). Moreover, his father taught him to hunt, to fish and to camp in the

woods and on the strength of this, Hemingway developed love and appreciation for outdoors adventures and nature (Beegel, pp. 65-68). Just before turning 18 years he tried to join the American troops but was rejected due to poor eyesight and then he enlisted in the American Red Cross as an ambulance driver in order to help the Italian army. His service lasted only 34 days for he was extremely bad injured while delivering supplies: “ a trench mortar shell exploded a few feet from him”; he went through two operations on his legs from where were removed “ 227 shell fragments” (Charles, p. 7). During hospitalization he fell in love with Agnes Von Kurowsky, an attractive and good humored 26 year old nurse but the relationship lasted only five months, because she was engaged with a doctor. Their relationship became cold slowly and Hemingway was devastated by the breakup, thinking that she was also in love with him. (Charles, pp. 7-8).

For the author, Paris was the “ town best organized for a writer to write in that there is” (Donaldson, p. 57), but he loved to travel and, therefore he firstly visited Spain in 1923 in order to attend with his wife the Festival of San Fermín in Pamplona, where he was thrilled by bullfighting (Meyers, pp. 117-8). They returned there a third time in June 1925 together with a company of British and American expatriates: Ernest’s boyhood friend, Bill Smith – the model for Bill, Donald Ogden Stewart, Lady Duff Twysden – the model for Brett Ashley character, Pat Guthrie – inspiration for Mike Campbell, “ a perpetually drunk Scottish debtor”, and Harold Loeb, “ a product of Princeton” and one of New York city’s greatest and wealthiest Jewish families” (Blume, pp. 18-9) inspired Robert Cohn (Nagel, p. 89). All these events, the entire experience from Spain and its surroundings, the fiesta and

bullfighting, the human relationships, his circle of friends and the climate of post war Paris inspired the author in writing *The Sun Also Rises*.

The main character, Jake, resembles his writer: he is a journalist who was badly wounded in war, who likes to travel and drinks heavily; he is also the story's narrator, introducing the other characters and their hedonistic journey through France, its selected cafés, and Spain's mesmerizing landscapes in their search for meaning and for missing pieces of their identity. The plot revolves around the love triangle between the main characters Brett, Jake, Mike and Cohn, and the rising tension between them, but it also illustrates the expatriate life in Paris, the natural life as a shelter and a place of retreat, all of them in the light of the events lived by characters that reveal their restlessness, their identity markers and their inner exile. The events from Pamplona become tangled and the climax is revealed when Cohn beats up Mike and Jake due to his love and jealousy for Brett who had an affair and will not respond to his affection. Although a substantial part of the novel is constructed around surroundings description, the dialogues and the subtleties offers us an insight into what really troubles the characters and how exactly are they lost in their exile. Perhaps the most visible novel's theme is the one of "lost generation" highlighted in the character's "sense of loss — of purpose, of meaning, of permanence and connection" (Bloom, p. 20) from their marathon in cafes and bars from boulevard du Montparnasse, and endless company of others suffering from the same "disease".

The novel's second epigraph from the Ecclesiastes' mirrors a double-sided interpretation: an optimistic one and a pessimistic one. The first instance proposes a state of solace due to imagery of the "earth's recurring cycles and the perfect harmony of natural rhythms" (Bloom, p. 14), while the second one suggests human's limitation in front of the cruelty of time and in front of the most frightening catastrophes such as the IWW: "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever". In the light of this we can conclude that all the expatriates from the novel are in an exile imposed by the circumstances of war, but also in a self-imposed exile where they wanted to experiment the lively Paris, cheap, always animated, with exuberance and full of expat circles.

Consequently, it appears that the "lost generation" lost its moral quality when they deserted their "moral bearings" (Monk, p. 4) and here they "estranged themselves from traditional principles" (Dolan, p. 16). As a response to the bitter disillusionment of war's scars they fill their voids with an attitude of "Hedonism and cynicism" (Bloom, p. 20), reflected mostly in their unremitting drinking sessions. Moreover, in this case alcohol serves as a mechanism of defense or as a "survival kit", helping blurring disturbing and unbearable thoughts or postponing the meeting with the lost real self in an unsettled and uncertain world: "It was like certain dinners I remember from the war. There was much wine, an ignored tension, and a feeling of things coming that you could not prevent happening. Under the wine I lost the disgusted feeling and was happy." (Hemingway, p. 66).

Jake Barnes, the main character is a newspaper man and an aspiring writer and, his expatriate status is best illustrated in a description offered by Bill, his friend: “ You’re an expatriate. You’ve lost touch with the soil [...] Fake European standards have ruined you. You drink yourself to death. You become obsessed by sex. You spend all your time talking, not working. You are an expatriate, see? You hang around cafés” (Hemingway, p. 53). This paragraph highlights the traditional character of Paris’s expats and it draws out the internal dynamics and habits within the exile groups: diminishing values, drinking, flirting, always moving from one place to another with no actual direction. In addition, the places frequented by expats in Paris and their circle of expats represent an interdependent microcosmos, constituting an “ other” society. In the same way, picturesque Spain and especially the area of Irati River represent an “ other space”, namely a heterotopia; the concept was elaborated by Michael Foucault and it describes a liminal space, different from the other places, a space of alternate social ordering, a “ space of deferral, where ideas and practices that represent the good life can come into being, from nowhere, even if they never actually achieve what they set out to achieve — social order, or control and freedom” (Hetherington, p. ix). This space is capable of bringing a break within the traditional time, offering an escape from the ordering spaces of domination (Michael Foucault, Info.). In other words, this space has the quality of having “ an alternative and often oppositional relation to society’s central pillars” (Linde, p. 139). As Bloom suggests, in the intermission between Paris and Pamplona Hemingway constructs an “ oasis that exists outside linear time and the tensions of civilization” (p. 31).

Between the “ pestilential city” of Paris, always “ crowded with Americans” (Hemingway, pp. 37-38) and the never-ending tensions and hum of Pamplona’s fiesta, Spain’s countryside represents a place of retreat, a shelter from the aimlessness society and a way of coping with the brutal post war reality. For Jake, the landscape “ meant a search for a solid form not existentially present in [his] life in Paris” (Berman, p. 55). Moreover, it illustrates a way of anchoring one’s self through the reconnection with the true self and with the original values of beauty, peace, stability: “ Then in the quiet water I turned and floated. Floating I saw only the sky, and felt the drop and lift of the swells [...] The water was buoyant and cold. It felt as though you could never sink” (Hemingway, p. 103). The phrase “ you could not sink” alludes to the fact that in this heterotopia one’s self will not be forced to hide or will not be suppressed by uncontrolled circumstances. Jake is different from the other characters for he searches meaning in various ways or tries to reconnect with his old self from before the war. Even that in the post war context the religious feeling is abolished and one cannot relate to religion or divinity, Jake is the only one who tries at least to reconnect his self with the religious feeling that brings serenity and confidence for a better world: “ I saw the cathedral [...] I went inside [...] I knelt and started to pray and prayed for everybody I thought of [...] I only wished I felt religious and maybe I would the next time” (Hemingway, p. 46). He feels like a “ rotten Catholic” because he cannot experience the religious grandeur for his decadent self, always involved in parties, always thinking at money, in perpetual connection with the materialistic world cannot connect with spirituality. Furthermore, Jake’s war wound is something that makes him

ashamed and afraid because it attacks his masculinity and overthrows its meaning; the wound nature is almost never revealed, only suggested like in the scene where Georgette tries to touch him but Jake refuses: “‘ Never mind.’ ‘ What’s the matter? You sick?’ ‘ Yes.’ “ Everybody’s sick. I’m sick, too’” (Hemingway, p. 12). Moreover, the author accentuates his character insecurities for the adjective “ impotent” is mentioned only two times in the novel and the character does not accept his condition: “‘ Another group claims you’re impotent’ ‘ No, I said.’ ‘ I just had an accident’” (Hemingway, p. 53). The wound made him impotent, therefore “ his sense of masculine identity is lost — he is less than a man” (Elliott, p. 87). He lost a part of his identity and he cannot manage mentally to accept this loss caused by the war that overthrown the significance of gender roles: “ the traditional masculine values of honour, martial prowess, and emotional restraint were severely compromised by the futility of the mass-slaughter and the trauma that followed” (Humble, p. 197). Considering all of these, we can say that the entire fishing trip and the pleasure brought by bullfighting are linked with a sense of freedom and masculinity which is tried to be recovered by Jake. Due to his wound he is incapable of having a fulfilled relationship with his loved Brett; although this reason is not stated specifically in the novel it is clearly that it is a significant part of why their relationship cannot work anymore. He suffers because he cannot be together with her and because their relationship has a potential of destruction. In conclusion, almost all the characters are visible affected or wear war’s scars that transposes them into their inner exile. Mike is in love with Ashley but he never shows directly his dissatisfaction or anger, but instead he prefers to be terrible drunk to

suppress his own feelings and thoughts. Cohn is constantly mocked about his Jewish identity, he is not fully accepted in group, probably because Jake is jealous of his affair with Brett. In addition, Cohn's values of love do not match the actual post war society because he is a romantic, as suggested with his reliance on the novel *The Purple Land*, a novel "about amorous adventures with happy endings" (Bloom, p. 21). Most of the time, communication fails the characters because their thoughts are always soaked in alcohol and therefore they cannot truly communicate their feelings and they are revolving around mockery, fighting or stating other empty words. The author wrote the story of *Fiesta: The Sun Also Rises* as a mean of therapy: he wanted to reveal his pain about the unfulfilled relationship with Brett, to stigmatize Cohn for his affair with her and the entire post war atmosphere from Paris; but he also wrote as a mean of understanding the world around him by trying to find a way to live in it: "Perhaps as you went along you did learn something. I did not care what it was all about. All I wanted to know was how to live in it. Maybe if you found out how to live in it you learned from that what it was all about." (Hemingway, p. 67).

Symbolically, the fiesta can be associated with how expatriates chose to live their life and how "the lost generation" perceives it: "The dancing kept up, the drinking kept up, the noise went on. The things that happened could only have happened during a fiesta. Everything became quite unreal finally and it seemed as though nothing could have any consequences" (Hemingway, p. 69).