THE ART OF THE IMPOSSIBLE: THE ESTHETICS OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY

A Thesis

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by

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MEETING

He went, to the crowd of tourists furrowing,
As if barely from the helm.
And like the sea's foam, the beard,
White, bordered his face
. . . . . .

The ground under him seemed to cave in--
Thus heavily he walked on it.
And someone amongst us said to me, smiling:
"Look, just like Hemingway!"
He walked, in each short gesture suppressing
The burdened step of a fisherman.
Entirely from granite scales hewn out,
Walked, as through bullets, through the ages.
He walked, bending down as if in a trench;
Walked, moving apart chairs and people . . .
He so resembled Hemingway!
. . . And later I found out
that it was Hemingway.

--Evgenii Evtushenko

For my mother and my sister,

and also my uncle Pep

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PREFACE

Hemingway was always a fascinating author to me. For a long time, I have wanted to investigate the esthetics of the man who appears to be acutely easy to read and understand, and yet his seeming simplicity is pure deception. There are facets of Hemingway's writing which are constantly being revealed to the light, as though for the first time. The esthetics of Hemingway as patterned after Aristotle's concept of tragedy is a case in point. With Dr. Wyrick's help, I began to investigate this distinct relationship.

Although the critics have admired and respected the writing of Hemingway as artist, rarely have they given due credit to Hemingway as a man of deep thinking. Rather than search for a prevailing esthetic in both Hemingway and his art, the critics have attached the label of "sportsman's code" to the esthetics of both Hemingway and his fictional heroes. This label of "code" has been allowed to suffice.

In the following study, I will attempt to prove that the critics have been wrong in their judgments regarding the non-fiction of Hemingway, where his personal esthetics are found. I will also attempt to show that Hemingway's non-fiction follows closely Aristotle's theory of tragedy.

The tragic esthetic theory which Hemingway evolved, although impossible to live up to as an individual, was eminently successful in Hemingway's art, yet this has been completely ignored by the critics. A man like Hemingway may have flaws in his make-up which disqualify him from living up to an ideal around which he has built his personal esthetics, but at least he has given it all of his honest effort. The importance of Hemingway's prose in the canon of American literature bespeaks its own triumphant stability.

I should deeply like to thank Dr. Green D. Wyrick for his invaluable suggestions and his unending kindness in helping me make this study a reality. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Charles E. Walton for his careful reading and his many corrections which have made this thesis vastly smoother in style. I also want to thank my typist, Sharon Watson, for her patience, and my best friends, Rip and Marilyn, who were constant in their moral support. Finally, I must admit that without my mother's perserverance, I should not have accomplished this endeavor. She never lost faith in me.

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Emporia, Kansas

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CHAPTER I

INVESTIGATION OF PREVAILING ATTITUDES

Most authors have esthetic theories which they either consciously or subconsciously adhere to and endeavor to follow. The more time that a man has devoted to a study of the philosophy of his esthetics, the more complex they will be, quite naturally. When that man is a writer of stature, the complexity of his esthetics will increase as proportionately as his scope of writing increases. The esthetics of Ernest Hemingway which are to be found in his non-fiction, being of a classic nature, and drawing inspiration from Aristotle's idea of Greek tragedy, have, therefore, escaped the critics.

Those objects and events which a man finds beatiful and inspiring and which give him great pleasure and enjoyment are the ones which contribute toward his esthetic development, and they should not be equated with his esthetics, per se. A man's esthetics, then, should not be judged subjectively upon the reputation of the objects and events which give pleasure, but, instead, objectively on those elements contained within that a man draws out for himself and

contributes to that core of personal esthetic theory. On this matter, the critics have gone wrong when judging or criticizing Hemingway's books. They have judged them on their face value or for subject matter instead of for the integral and inherent value which Hemingway was attempting to project in the form of his esthetic principles, and by the critics, esthetic was either misunderstood completely or deliberately distorted.

For many years now, and almost without exception, nearly every American literary critic has attempted to explain the work of Ernest Hemingway. His fiction has been analyzed, dissected, and scrutinized down to the smallest detail, from a conjecture by Levin on Hemingway's early debt to Stein[1] in Up in Michigan to the significance of Santiago's "hero worship of Joe DiMaggio, the great Yankee outfielder"[2] in The Old Man and The Sea.

From this combing of Hemingway's novels and short stories has arisen the famous Hemingway "code" which his characters have either lived up to or fallen short of. The same critics, Wilson, Cowley and Young, just to name

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[1]Harry Levin, "Observations on the Style of Ernest Hemingway," Kenyon Review, in Hemingway and His Critics, p. 110.

[2]Clinton S. Burhans, Jr., "The Old Man and The Sea: Hemingway's Tragic Vision of Man," American Literature, in Hemingway and His Critics, p. 264.

three, have closely and carefully documented this "pose,"[3] as Wilson refers to it. Readers of Hemingway have come to be extremely familiar with the Hemingway hero, a tight-lipped, hard drinker who remains outwardly stoical in the midst of any emotionally gripping circumstance, perhaps best personified by Jake Barnes in the novel, The Sun Also Rises, (1926). Hemingway has Jake say during one of the nights of heavy drinking at the Pamplona fiesta:

> 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.[4]

With slight variations, this code or pose has served to distinguish the characters in Hemingway who are to be admired from those who are not; Robert Cohn, for example, is one of those who is not. Because his actions clash with the rest of the crowd, Cohn acts "badly," thereby, failing to live up to the code.

This code, then, which has been refined out of Hemingway's fiction, with its elaborate rules for proper manner and conduct, is held up against the fictional creations in order to judge their character, providing them with

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[3]Edmund Wilson, "Hemingway: Gauge of Morale," The Wound and the Bow, in Ernest Hemingway: The Man and His Work, p. 217.

[4]Ernest Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, p. 148.

what must serve as an esthetic theory. Yet to stamp Hemingway the artist with this same code and look no further for any use of esthetics in his work is not only a glaring error, but demeans the intelligence of the man who, in the opinion of O'Hara, "is the most important author living today [1950], the outstanding author since the death of Shakespeare."[5] In referring to O'Hara's words, Levin tries to disparage O'Hara's high praise but is forced to add, "yet Hemingway too, one way or another, is literature."[6]

In the lesser read non-fiction, Death in the Afternoon, The Green Hills of Africa, and A Moveable Feast, there has always been a finer and more sensitive theory of esthetics than the critics have either given Hemingway credit for or have taken the time to find. They have been content to give these books a thorough but cursory reading and have, then, relegated them to a category of interesting but inferior works. This judgment, although undeserved, has persisted down to the present because the early reviews of the critics of stature were negative and unfavorable. Other critics read the reviews and fell into line like

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[5]John O'Hara, New York Times, VII (October 1, 1950), 37.

[6]Levin, op. cit., p. 93.

"little tin soldiers." Hemingway's esthetics are not a sportsman's code as Edmund Wilson would call it. Nor are his esthetics of chest-pounding and baggadocio as other critics would have the reader believe. The critics who would ascribe this type of code to Hemingway have only given Hemingway's non-fiction a superficial reading and have missed the true esthetics which are to be found there. Hemingway's esthetics are not even Christian-oriented; they are more closely allied to a Grecian-pagan philosophy. Frye, in his splendid book, Anatomy of Criticism, comes closest to divining the image Hemingway would have projected into his esthetics. Frye writes:

> If superior in degree to other men but not to his natural environment, the hero is a leader. He has authority, passions, and powers of expression far greater than ours, but what he does is subject both to social criticism and to the order of nature. This is the hero of the high mimetic mode, of most epic and tragedy, and is primarily the kind of hero that Aristotle had in mind.[7]

This "high mimetic mode" is the basis for the actions involved in Hemingway's esthetics, and as Frye points out, this mode is linked directly to Aristotle, (384-322 B.C.). Quite naturally then, it must follow that Hemingway's esthetics are a twentieth century metaphor of the Aristotelian concept of tragedy which entails six classic elements,

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[7]Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, p. 34.

spectacle, music, diction, character, thought, and plot.[8] The individuals who are measured in terms of Hemingway's esthetics either embody the five facets of Aristotle's ideal character or, through some personal flaw, they fail. The ideal tragic character must engender the following qualities:

1. Must pass from happiness to misery (not the reverse).
2. Must not be perfectly virtuous and just.
3. His downfall must not result from vise or baseness.
4. His downfall must come about because of a flaw of character (tragic flaw) and error in judgment.
5. Must belong to distinguished family, so that the fall will be all the greater.[9]

Very few people, in view of Hemingway's esthetics, are able to meet the requirements based on Aristotle's definition of the ideal tragic character, including Hemingway, himself.

One man has sarcastically pictured Hemingway as "The Dumb Ox,"[10] while another critic enjoyed referring to Death in the Afternoon as Bull in the Afternoon but added that Hemingway was a man of full stature whose "flying strokes of the poet's broad axe" he greatly admired.[11]

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[8]Meyer Reinhold, Essentials of Greek and Roman Classics, p. 240.

[9]Ibid., p. 241.

[10]Wyndham Lewis, "The Dumb Ox: A Study of Ernest Hemingway," American Review, XX (June, 1934), 75.

[11]Max Eastman, "Bull in the Afternoon," Art and the Life of Action, in Ernest Hemingway: The Man and His Work, p. 54.

But since these early and somewhat personal reviews, it is surprising to find that skilled and highly intelligent men such as Wilson, Cowley, Baker and Young, who have prided themselves on their astuteness and perceptivity, have never gone back to the early non-fiction and the posthumous A Moveable Feast for a closer examination and re-evaluation for it is here that Hemingway is striving hardest to project his personal esthetic theories.

Whenever anyone has mentioned Hemingway's esthetics, the old "chestnuts" are brought out and tritely put on display and then returned to the bottom drawer along with other outdated and unfashionable oddities. Foremost among the chestnuts is the ultra-overworked quotation from Death in the Afternoon, "I know only that what is moral is what you feel good after . . . . "[12] This illustration, in its entirety, coming early in the book, has completely satisfied many critics. Those, nevertheless, who have wanted further to substaniate their criticism of Hemingway's esthetics have used probably the most often quoted paragraph in all of his works: "I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice . . . . "[13] The critics became so eager to fit Hemingway to his own code that they confused

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[12]Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, p. 4.

[13]Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 184.

him with his characters, as did Kashkeen in speaking of Hemingway's face as being only a mask for Nick Adams, Lieutenant Henry, Jake Barnes and the rest.[14] These overworked examples will no longer function as the esthetics of Hemingway, and it is embarrassing how long they have had to function.

"Code" is a poor synonym for esthetics. "Pose" is worse. Yet, these are some of the terms Wilson used in his critical essay of 1941. In a sense, Wilson is blaming Hemingway for the pseudo-gallantry and the pseudo-chivalry in the twenties, that great age of disillusion and social upheaval, because of the dialogue which Hemingway wrote that was so appealing to his generation.[15] Writing of Death in the Afternoon, Wilson finds Hemingway's use of the first person "unexpected and disconcerting,"[16] giving no other explanation than to say that the book is infected by a "queer kind of maudlin emotion."[17] This seems to be Wilson's case, and this analysis is adequate for him to condemn this work of an artist who, Lincoln Kirstein wrote, "has penetrated further into the anatomy of a kind of

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[14]J. Kashkeen, "Ernest Hemingway: A Tragedy of Craftsmanship," International Literature, XI (June, 1934), 64.

[15]Wilson, op. cit., p. 217.

[16]Ibid., p. 218.

[17]Loc. cit.

bravery and cowardice than perhaps any living writer except T. E. Lawrence."[18] But Wilson does go on to say that Hemingway is able to use bullfighting as a subject for stating his idea of man who has "eternally" placed himself in a challenging position against the power of the bulls and the risk of death.[19] This is precisely the concept which Hemingway wanted his readers to grasp, as Wilson did, for much of Hemingway's esthetics regarding death is found in this general statement. And Wilson also agrees that the matador in the bullring alone is "impressive" alongside much of the banality of the contemporary business world,[20] yet states that he finds the book "hysterical."[21] Later, Wilson comments that, by writing in the first person, Hemingway loses his "disciplined and objective art, . . . becomes befuddled, slops over . . . . "[22] Wilson also notes that Winner Take Nothing deals more effectively with contemporary decadence than Death in the Afternoon.[23] Barea, a

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[18]Lincoln Kirstein, "The Canon of Death," Hound and Horn, VI (May, 1933), 341.

[19]Wilson, op. cit., p. 218.

[20]Loc. cit.

[21]Loc. cit.

[22]Ibid., p. 219.

[23]Loc. cit.

Spaniard who fought in the Spanish Civil War, has written of Hemingway, "He wrote what to my knowledge is the best book on the bull ring, Death in the Afternoon."[24] Baker, the official Hemingway biographer, has displayed sensitivity in discussing Death in the Afternoon and, at one point, offers the conjecture:

> Some of Hemingway's critics have even professed to find evidence of a kind of hectic hysteria within the book itself, a point for which the objective reader is likely to discover little support.[25]

Baker's praise of Death in the Afternoon is effuse and intelligent. He begins by recalling that the book has been termed the finest of its kind in English and that it is the finest of its kind "in any language" because of the time and effort that Hemingway spent on it[26] so that the work would not become confused with the "one-visit books,"[27] such as Julius Meier-Graefe's The Spanish Journey and Waldo Frank's Virgin Spain.

Aldridge prefers that his readers take a different view of Hemingway's non-fiction, and, even better, writes that:

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[24]Arturo Barea, "Not Spain but Hemingway," Horizon, III (May, 1941), 211.

[25]Carlos Baker, Hemingway: The Writer as Artist, p. 160.

[26]Ibid., p. 144.

[27]Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, p. 52.

> Hemingway became so hypnotized by the legend that it and his function as a writer became confused in his mind. He got so he wasn't sure when he was supposed to be the writer and when he was supposed to be the legend. After a while the legend began writing his books for him and the writer began spending more and more of his time fishing for marlin off the Florida coast. The Green Hills of Africa, Death in the Afternoon, and To have and Have Not were all written by the legend and, as a result, almost everything in them read like cheap Hemingway parody.[28]

In his preface, Aldridge stated, however, "we knew Hemingway, Dos Passos, Fitzgerald, Eliot, Stein, and Joyce even better than we knew one another."[29]

Young, one of the critics who certainly should have been sure of himself regarding the literary merit of Death in the Afternoon, is particularly indecisive as to which side of the fence he should be on. He begins by saying that Hemingway has almost come "to the end of his rope" in an effort to leave society behind him just as [Henry] had repudiated it in A Farewell to Arms.[30] Hemingway, Young feels, has descended into a mood of "pessimism"[31] because of the subject matter (death) and points to Hemingway's talking to the old lady in Death in the Afternoon, saying, "There is no remedy for anything in life. Death is a

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[28]John W. Aldridge, After the Lost Generation, p. 200.

[29]Ibid., p. xiii.

[30]Philip Young, Ernest Hemingway, pp. 66-67.

[31]Ibid., p. 67.

sovereign for all our misfortunes . . . . "[32] Before leaving the subject, Young writes that Hemingway's "tortured theories of art and tragedy and bulls--though not entirely silly-- . . . accounts for [Hemingway's] presence in the grandstands."[33] When Young has failed to see the classic overtones behind Hemingway's dialogue about death as being the ultimate remedy, it is easy to understand that he should wish to attach the label of "tortured theories of art" to Hemingway's esthetics. In the classic view of Hemingway's esthetics, there is nothing "tortured," they are stated simply and a man either selects them as his governing passion or he ignores them.

But, then, so as then to protect himself, Young injects the statement, "the Spanish critics, who ought to know about these things, said that it was the best book on bullfighting ever."[34] Rather lame praise after having personally found the book only not entirely "silly."

Young wrote the above analysis of Death in the Afternoon in 1952. By 1959, he was once again to write on the same subject, but in the intervening seven years, he had not only kept very much the same opinion, he had also

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[32]Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, p. 104.

[33]Young, op. cit., p. 67.

[34]Loc. cit.

begun to use adjectives to describe the book which are reminiscent of Edmund Wilson's words. Regarding Death in the Afternoon and The Green Hills of Africa, Young wrote, "Neither of them is of primary importance," since they are both essentially about death.[35] Young also felt that both books are "a little hysterical, as if written under a great nervous tension."[36] He ends by explaining:

> But more clearly than anything else the books present the picture of a man who has, since that separate peace, cut himself so completely off from the roots that nourish that he is starving.[37]

Scott's looking at this period of Hemingway's life as one of industry and accomplishment clashes sharply with that of Frohock, writing in 1947. Frohock was want to believe this to have been a period of retirement for Hemingway, stating that in the three books at this stage, Death in the Afternoon, The Green Hills of Africa and To Have and Have Not, Hemingway is the protagonist and the other figures who people the books are the minor characters.[38]

Thus one critic envisions Hemingway busily at work while another sees him in retirement. Another critic has

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[35]Philip Young, [illegible] Hemingway, p. 14.

[36]Loc. cit.

[37]Loc. cit.

[38]W. M. Frohock, "Violence and Discipline," Southwest Review, in Ernest Hemingway: The Man and his Work, p. 250.

a fuller treatment in regard to Death in the Afternoon. D'Agostino writes, "The impulse toward autobiography, which Hemingway had hitherto so wisely restrained, thrusts itself to the fore at the beginning of the Thirties . . . . "[39] He feels that Hemingway was undergoing a crisis in his basic romanticism and that "the very nature of his talent and his cultural background forced toward an accentuated aestheticism."[40] Looking at Hemingway in this light, the critic deduces that Hemingway adopted the code of behavior which he had prescribed for his heroes which reversed the code into a purely ridiculous search "for excitement for its own sake."[41] Calling Death in the Afternoon a "treatise,"[42] D'Agostino believes "The whole book is debased by the incomprehension implied in this impoverished idea of death,"[43] mainly because he feels the book is filled with too much verbosity, rhetoric and fake lyricism and finds the only authenticity in the accounts of the matadors.[44] In

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[39]Nemi D'Agostino, "The Later Hemingway," The Sewanee Review, LXVIII (Summer, 1960), 482-493.

[40]Loc. cit.

[41]Loc. cit.

[42]Ibid., p. 153.

[43]Loc. cit.

[44]Loc. cit.

an effort to clear the air of his condemnation, D'Agostino soothes himself with this thought:

> But after all the book on bullfighting should be seen as one of those unpleasant but useful outlets which sometimes serve to purify an author's talent.[45]

One famous New York newspaper columnist found Death in the Afternoon "enthralling." Writes Franklin P. Adams:

> In the evening I began to read E. Hemingway's Death in the Afternoon and knowing that it treated of bullfighting thought that I would read a page or two, but became so enthralled in the writing of it, which I thought was the best Hemingway had done, that I read the whole book until late in the night.[46]

Other men, not so much interested in the book, were rather more interested in the title, as was Gingrich:

> Arnold offered to send Ernest a complete set of the files of Apparel Arts, if he could get Ernest to inscribe his first edition copy of Death in the Afternoon, which he described as the greatest four word poem ever written.[47]

Gingrich, although ignoring the book completely, was paying Hemingway a compliment for, as Hemingway told Leonard Lyons, "I want titles that are poetic and mysterious."[48]

Lewis, who recently completed a study on Hemingway's

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[45]Ibid., p. 154.

[46]Franklin P. Adams, in The New York Herald Tribune, quoted in Saturday Review of Literature, XLIV (July 29, 1961), 29.

[47]Leicester Hemingway, My Brother, Ernest Hemingway, p. 118.

[48]Leonard Lyons, "Trade Winds," Saturday Review of Literature, XLIV (July 29, 1961), 6.

absorption on the subject of love, calls Death in the Afternoon a "holiday book."[49] Lewis says that Hemingway was hinting at a connection between love and death,[50] the idea to which Geismar is referring when he writes that "beneath the formalized murder which joins these curious lovers lies the true protagonist of the book, death itself."[51] Nevertheless, Geismar thinks the tone of Death in the Afternoon is wrong, "denying and accusing, wrangling and quibbling; yet again often rich and amusing, and including some of Hemingway's sharpest studies of the human constitution."[52]

With keenness of perception, Wyrick writes that Death in the Afternoon is Hemingway's "spiritual autobiography," and while representing a study of Spanish manners, it may symbolically be interpreted as a study of world manners.[53] Quoting Kirstein's phrase, "ecstasy of valor,"[54] Wyrick feels that:

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[49]Robert W. Lewis, Jr., Hemingway on Love, p. 58.

[50]Loc. cit.

[51]Maxwell Geismar, "You Could Always Come Back," Writers in Crisis, in Ernest Hemingway: The Man and His Work, p. 141.

[52]Ibid., p. 140.

[53]Green D. Wyrick, The World of Ernest Hemingway, (Emporia State Research Studies, Emporia, Kansas, II, September, 1953), p. 23.

[54]Kirstein, op. cit., p. 336.

> of fair play between man and nature, and of honesty in thought and directness of action.[55]

And so the critics have their own opinions concerning the merit of Death in the Afternoon, many seeing it as worthless, several viewing it as written during a period of interlude but only a very few noting any esthetics inherent in it. The feelings about Death in the Afternoon have been mixed as this cross-section of criticism has tried to show. Yet as to the value of The Green Hills of Africa, the critics have marched as little tin soldiers even more perfectly in unison. D'Agostino, echoing Aldridge, and characteristically expressing his own subjective view, wrote:

> From Death in the Afternoon to The Green Hills of Africa, another book which, as Aldrich says, was written not by Hemingway but by his legend, the pursuit of excitement becomes less convinced, nearer to the point of crisis. The second is certainly the least important and most untidy of Hemingway's books.[56]

The thoughts of Melvin Backman follow, somewhat, the same pattern. He reads Death in the Afternoon and The Green Hills of Africa as a "seeking of violence as a means of asserting oneself in despite the world,"[57] and finds in The Green Hills of Africa an "uneasily insistent and

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[55]Wyrick, op. cit., p. 23.

[56]D'Agostino, op. cit., p. 154.

[57]Melvin Backman, "Hemingway: The Matador and the Crucified," Modern Fiction Studies, I (August, 1955), 9.

belligerent note . . . . "[58]

It would appear that Backman had read and remembered quite accurately Young's earlier 1952 study of Hemingway wherein Young detected that The Green Hills of Africa reflected even more strikingly "the grinding need for self-justification and the nervous, eloquently belligerent attitudes struck in . . . [Death]."[59] Before concluding his criticism, Young informs the reader that in The Green Hills of Africa there is "something for everyone,"[60] finally conceding it is "moderately entertaining."[61]

Wilson's literary evaluation of The Green Hills of Africa, like that of Young, echoes that of his analysis of Death in the Afternoon. Presupposing our agreement with him, Wilson begins by stating that Hemingway's journalism contributed to the writing of several unsatisfactory books,[62] allowing that The Green Hills of Africa's failure can be attributed to the book's falling between two genres, "personal exhibitionism and fiction."[63] Wilson is also

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[58] Ibid., p. 11.

[59] Young, op. cit., p. 69.

[60] Loc. cit.

[61] Ibid., p. 70.

[62] Wilson, op. cit., p. 221.

[63] Loc. cit.

quick to assure the reader that The Green Hills of Africa is a failure because, unlike Death in the Afternoon which gave its reader information on bullfighting, its successor gives little information on Africa.[64] Wilson is unable to accept that Hemingway would go on safari, "a costly anaesthetic,"[65] as D'Agostino calls it, for, because he enjoyed big game hunting, there has to be another, more sinister motive:

> It is as if he were throwing himself on African hunting as something to live for and believe in, as something through which to realize himself; and as if, expecting of it too much, he had got out of it abnormally little, less than he is willing to admit.[66]

Baker has other opinions:

> One suspects that Mr. Wilson's misunderstanding of Hemingway's plan underlies his belief that The Green Hills of Africa is "one of the only books ever written which make Africa and its animals seem dull."[67]

Baker is fully cognizant of the plan of The Green Hills of Africa and explains that, besides Hemingway's sincere attempt at complete 'verisimilitude' and 'architetonics' (the pattern of a month's action), he also

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[64] Loc. cit.

[65] D'Agostino, op. cit., p. 154.

[66] Wilson, op. cit., p. 222.

[67] Baker, op. cit., p. 170.

> . . . wished to project accurately and sharply his own apprehensions of the lie of the land, the habits of the animals, the living personalities of the natives he met, the state of the weather, the quality of the food, the methods of the camp, the procedures of the hunt, and--running through it all like elastic threads in a pattern--the emotional tensions and relaxations which gave the events of each day their tone and meaning.[68]

By this use of form, Baker feels that The Green Hills of Africa surpasses the status of a "noble experiment and becomes a work of art in its own right."[69] "Nothing that I have ever read," said Hemingway, "has given any idea of the country or the still remaining quantity of game." To this, Baker adds that the reader of The Green Hills of Africa cannot have this complaint.[70]

Kazin felt differently about the matter. He depicted Hemingway as a Tarzan standing against a backdrop called nature and grinning over the many animals he had killed while the style became more mechanical, the philosophy more juvenile, and the pleasures more desperate.[71] Kazin was another who pictured "the old man" in a drought, but a few years later, wrote:

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[68] Ibid., p. 167.

[69] Loc. cit.

[70] Ibid., p. 166.

[71] Alfred Kazin, "Hemingway: Synopsis of a Career," On Native Grounds, in Ernest Hemingway: The Man and His Work, p. 178.

> When Hemingway ran out of human death, he fell back on animals, took to big game hunting, and described in The Green Hills of Africa the supreme thrill of drawing his rifle sights on a buck and dispatching it with an accuracy and released tension beautiful to behold.[72]

A much more unusual look at The Green Hills of Africa is that of Lewis, who endeavors to fit the book into his love thesis, eros versus agape. Lewis believes that Hemingway wrote The Green Hills of Africa, because it represents agape rather than the simple love life of bull and matador; thus, the book divides the early and the late Hemingway.[73] A little later in his book, Lewis makes the point that if one reads the African book as a love drama and not an adventure story, the opening discussion on writing and love is not so incongruous or gratutitous,[74] and also that the book can be interpreted as a story of Hemingway's maturation through a struggle within himself.[75]

The Green Hills of Africa has not, therefore, except in the case of Baker, and, possibly, Lewis, been understood. The critics have been content to read and judge it as a shallow book about Hemingway on safari and, then, assail

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[72]Leo Gurko, "Hemingway in Spain," The Angry Decade, in Ernest Hemingway: The Man and His Work, p. 233.

[73]Lewis, op. cit., p. 61.

[74]Ibid., p. 65.

[75]Ibid., p. 61.

it for its belligerent tone and its failure to make its animals real. As Baker so succinctly points out, Death in the Afternoon came out at the bottom of the Depression, and Hemingway was damned for having the temerity to publish a manual of the bullfight while Americans were selling apples on street-corners, fighting over restaurant garbage cans for food, or being laid off in wholesale lots.[76] And, again, regarding The Green Hills of Africa, Baker writes:

> Why did Hemingway waste time and talent in Tanganyika which might better have been employed in writing of the American scene, labor strife, money barons, municipal slums like those that produced Stephen Crane's Maggie, or the lengthening bread-lines-- . . . ?[77]

Baker responds to this question with conviction and great intelligence. He states that Hemingway was not only interested primarily in improving his prose dexterity, but also was interested in attacking the problem of the cultural synecdoche and thus summarizing the moral situation of the times.[78] Baker noted this tendency in Death in the Afternoon and The Green Hills of Africa and its depiction in To Have and Have Not as a microscopic treatment of the

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[76]Baker, op. cit., p. 202.

[77]Ibid., p. 203.

[78]Ibid., p. 206.

ills of United States society.[79] Baker writes:

> A major difference between this novel and depression-inspired proletarian fiction was that it really embodied the diagnostic notes on decay; it did not preach them.[80]

This is Baker's rebuttal to the query by the critics of Hemingway in the 1930's, and he concludes, "Hemingway was not out to please the 'recently politically enlightened critics'."[81]

But Hemingway had struggled, gone without, and worked hard for what he had, and as he said in The Green Hills of Africa, " . . . it was my own damned life and I would lead it where and how I pleased."[82] This was Hemingway's answer to the critics.

Twenty-nine years were to elapse before Hemingway again ventured into the field of non-fiction. A Moveable Feast appeared posthumously and, as usual, received varied reviews. A Moveable Feast was a book of reminiscences by Hemingway of his contemporary artists in Paris in the Twenties. Many critics were angered by Hemingway's candid portraits of the people he knew; other critics were delighted.

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[79] Loc. cit.

[80] Loc. cit.

[81] Loc. cit.

[82] Ernest Hemingway, The Green Hills of Africa, p. 72.

Manning, now executive editor of Atlantic Monthly, visited the Hemingways at their Cuban home in 1954, but did not publish his article on them until 1965. Speaking of A Moveable Feast, Manning wrote, " . . . [Hemingway] had a curious and unbecoming compulsion to poke and peck at the reputations of many of his literary contemporaries."[83]

Manning may have been a good friend of Hemingway's, or he may just have been another journalist on assignment, but, in either case, there is some doubt as to whether or not Manning knew what Hemingway's work was all about. The objective writer feels that Hemingway was not deliberately poking fun at his old acquaintances; instead, one feels that Hemingway is forcing himself to be very honest about his early Paris days, to tell, as exactly as he can remember, what Paris society was like, how the other expatriates lived and worked, and "how the weather was."

Another writer, Kazin, wrote that, "In the early chapters there are details on a writer's daily regime that are more vivid than anything I have ever read."[84] Hemingway certainly had the power to invoke a spell over his readers. One of Hemingway's secretaries, Valerie

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[83]Robert Manning, "Hemingway in Cuba," Atlantic Monthly, CCXVI (August, 1965), 103.

[84]Alfred Kazin, "Hemingway as His Own Fable," Atlantic Monthly, CCXIII (June, 1964), 56.

Danby-Smith, whom he had with him in Spain in the summer of 1960, remembers Hemingway's working in the quiet of the early mornings in Malaga:

> I did not know whether he was working on the Paris sketches then, but one day in August he brought several chapters downstairs, and I remember reading them and thinking how wonderful it must have been to be poor, and a writer, and to have lived in Paris in the Twenties.[85]

Of course, the critics were grateful for the autobiographical material contained in A Moveable Feast. Kauffmann, reviewing the book for The Reporter, found it "highly affecting and biographically invaluable,"[86] and felt that reading A Moveable Feast was, " . . . like getting a clear view back thru the thick forest of his own self-imitation and the imitations of others."[87] Recalling Gertrude Stein's remark on Hemingway in The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas, Kauffmann writes:

> This book is probably not the confession that Miss Stein and Anderson envisioned . . . but their intuition was sound. The Hemingway who went back to himself found much of himself and made this book about his youth the best work of his later years.[88]

On the other hand, Kazin found A Moveable Feast

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[85]Valerie Danby-Smith, "Reminiscence of Hemingway," Saturday Review, XLVII (May 9, 1964), 30.

[86]Stanley Kauffmann, "Paris and Hemingway in the Spring," New Republic, CL (May 9, 1964), 17.

[87]Ibid., p. 23.

[88]Ibid., p. 17.

a "fable," not because of any dishonest material but because the material "has been so lovingly cherished and retraced by the author himself,"[89] adding that autobiographies probably get written in order to justify the narrator.[90]

An anonymous reviewer for Time found the "artless" sketches to be "glittering trivia,"[91] but Krauss, upon reading it, wrote, "I liked it. I liked it very much. It was very good, I thought. And very sad."[92]

Kauffmann, noting that Hemingway had slipped in critical esteem in the latter half of his writing career, concludes:

> A novelist once said to me: "We all know what it takes to be a great writer, even if you have the talent. You have to give your life." Hemingway gave his life; then by circumscribing his growth, he took it back again. This book suggests that he came to realize it and that, at the last, he wanted to say so.[93]

Young feels, like Kauffmann, that Hemingway wrote A Moveable Feast in the manner "of his best prose of nearly forty years before,"[94] and discusses A Moveable Feast at

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[89]Kazin, op. cit., p. 56.

[90]Ibid., p. 57.

[91]Time, LXXXIII (May 8, 1964), 98.

[92]William A. Krauss, "Footnote from Hemingway's Paris, 1964," Harper's, CCXXXI (August, 1965), 92.

[93]Kauffmann, op. cit., p. 24.

[94]Philip Young, Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration, p. 279.

the very end of his book because he felt it should be " . . . saved for last so that we may finish as is proper with the cognac . . . . "[95] Young feels that Hemingway, like Yeats, had his success in language[96] through the "shock of immediacy,"[97] which Hemingway is extremely able to project as any reader of the twenty vignettes realizes.

But Young does not concede that A Moveable Feast is faultless. He writes, "There are flaws in the diamond."[98] One of the flaws is the criticism which the book has drawn for "telling tales out of school"[99] or telling anecdotes about such people as Stein and Fitzgerald which, Young feels, perhaps justly, may have been damaging to their descendents.[100] But it was not of the descendents that Hemingway was concerned; it was of the people themselves, and he wrote of them as he remembered them.

Another flaw that Young points out is the unreal and embarrassing dialogue that Hemingway and his wife, Hadley, speak in the book. It is the kind of dialogue which

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[95] Loc. cit.

[96] Ibid., p. 282.

[97] Loc. cit.

[98] Loc. cit.

[99] Ibid., p. 281.

[100] Loc. cit.

Hemingway worked so hard to perfect in the early Paris years and Young contends that the Hemingways sound affected in speaking the way Hemingway writes it.

Mary Hemingway has objected that very little in the book deals directly with Hemingway,[101] but Hemingway preferred that he remain in the book as by reflection, or remote.[102] Perhaps, because of this point, Young has referred to the book as "almost trivial,"[103] but, in like manner, he also concedes "that this little collection of anecdotes and reminiscences is a minor work of art."[104] Although Young found errors in the book, as many critics did, he also felt that "for the most part the prose glitters, warms and delights. Hemingway is not remembering but re-experiencing; not describing, making."[105]

As evidenced, then, in this survey of criticism, the non-fiction works of Hemingway at best have not been accorded much praise and at worse have been placed alongside his poorer novels, such as To Have and Have Not and Across the River and into the Trees.

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[101] Ibid., p. 284.

[102] Loc. cit.

[103] Ibid., p. 289.

[104] Loc. cit.

[105] Ibid., p. 283.

The fact of Hemingway's choosing his non-fiction in which to express his esthetics has escaped all but the most perceptive of critics. A few of the critics have identified Hemingway in the role of hero of the code, or "grace under pressure,"[106] which he created for his fictional characters, but the personal esthetics of Hemingway are not quite the same as those which his characters lived by, and his esthetics should not be confused with theirs. A man whose life is as complicated as Hemingway's must have a more highly developed and refined esthetic "gyroscope" by which to steer his course in a world where nada is common and the clean and well-lighted places are rare.

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[106]Young, op. cit., p. 35.

CHAPTER II

SETTING UP OF THE ESTHETIC

The esthetics of Ernest Hemingway which are to be found in Death in the Afternoon, by necessity, surround and have to do with the death of the bull in a ritualized, formal ceremony in which the matador has approximately fifteen minutes to kill the bull in a prescribed manner. If, for some reason, the matador cannot kill the bull, then the bull is let back into the corrals and destroyed and the matador may suffer a great loss to his reputation.

Death in the Afternoon was not a book that Hemingway had done hurriedly, nor was he ill-prepared to write it. Commencing about 1922, Hemingway spent much of the next ten years of his life in Spain and the personal witnessing of the death of more than 1500 bulls had convinced him that the bullfight was neither simple, barbaric, cruel or a sport;[107] it was a "tragedy."[108] Here, then, is one of the first references by Hemingway to the acknowledgement of tragedy which operates in his esthetics. To Hemingway's

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[107]Baker, op. cit., p. 146.

[108]Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, p. 16.

way of thinking, a matador either measured up to the requirements of Aristotle's ideal conception of character, or, through some basic flaw, he failed. The bulls in the fight who oppose the matador are judged by their ability to arouse the emotions of pity and fear, as in the classic plot, and, then, at the end of the fight, if the bull has been a good opponent, these emotions of pity and fear will be purged, providing a pleasurable catharsis.

It is, therefore, evident that Hemingway had evolved considerable theory from his fascination with a corrida de toros or a running of bulls.[109] And he did not think that the Anglo-Saxon world would catch on to bullfighting.

> We, in games, are not fascinated by death, its nearness and its avoidance. We are fascinated by victory and we replace the avoidance of death by the avoidance of defeat. It is a very nice symbolism but it takes more cojones [courage] to be a sportsman when death is a closer party to the game.[110]

In the action of the bullring there were many things which Hemingway could admire and respect, but horses were not one of them. Speaking of the role of the horse in the ring, Hemingway felt the horse plays the comic role while that of the bull is tragic, "the tragedy is all centered in the bull and in the man."[111] From this statement,

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[109] Ibid., p. 26.

[110] Ibid., p. 22.

[111] Ibid., p. 6.

the readers of Hemingway deduced that he thought of the horses as comic because of the many times he had seen the horses gored when the bull was in the act of being picted. But Hemingway says that he did not become insensitive to a thing from seeing it many times, "However I feel about horses emotionally, I felt the first time I saw a bullfight."[112]

Horses in the bullring are not generally an animal to be admired. They serve a strictly utilitarian purpose which is that of placing the picador in a high enough position that he may be able to perform his part in the ceremony with accuracy and skill. If the horse on which the picador sits is gored by the bull, it is only incidental and although this fact is regrettable, as Hemingway admits, it should not detract from the ritual as a whole. Hemingway writes that esthetically:

> The aficionado, or lover of the bullfight, may be said, . . . to be one who has this sense of tragedy and ritual of the fight so that the minor aspects are not important except as they relate to the whole.[113]

Early in Death in the Afternoon, Hemingway states his premise or reason for his close study of bullfighting. He writes, "As in all arts the enjoyment increases with

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[112] Ibid., p. 8.

[113] Ibid., p. 3.

the knowledge of the art [illegible]."[114] Thus, in "tauromaquia," or the art of passing the bull, there are essentially only two things to be studied and admired, which are the basis of Hemingway's esthetics in Death in the Afternoon, the matador and the bull.

In the study of the matador, a man may come to discover many things about himself of which he is not consciously aware. The matador who struts into the brilliant sunlight of the ring from out of the shadowy recesses is a man who symbolizes many things to the Spanish people. He may certainly personify bravery and courage in the face of death. He may symbolize the glamor and romance of a ritual whose roots are very, very old. But as he strides across the ring and bows before the president, the matador will most assuredly represent that virtue which men everywhere and at every time have sought after and prized, dignity. Dignity, to Hemingway, as to almost all men, is that virtue from which other virtues may radiate and without it a man is very little. Hemingway cites the instance of a bullfighter he once watched in Madrid named Domingo Hernandorena. Characterized as being graceless, nerveless and without courage, Hernandorena epitomized that which Hemingway found unbearable, a man without

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[114] Ibid., p. 10.

dignity. Hemingway comments that it was clear when the first bull came out into the ring that if Hernandorena was going to kill the bull, he would either make a fool of himself or be gored.[115] With the simple statement, " . . . he could not control the nervousness of his feet,"[116] Hemingway captured for the reader, along with everyone else who witnessed the fight, the man for whom there can be no sympathy. As one would naturally expect, the matador was severely gored. If Hernandorena, instead of trying to conceal his nervous feet, as he did by dropping to the sand on his knees in front of the bull, had been gored while remaining afoot and honestly trying to control his nervousness, the audience would have sympathized because there is honor in being gored honestly, but instead, Hemingway said, "that night at the café I heard no word of sympathy for him. He was ignorant, he was torpid, and he was out of training."[117] Hernandorena was guilty not only of the flaw which was in his error of judgment but also the flaw of vice or baseness, i.e., cowardice, which caused his downfall, thus arousing no sympathy from the crowd or from Hemingway.

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[115] Ibid., p. 17.

[116] Loc. cit.

[117] Ibid., p. 19.

Hemingway is making the point that any man in any pursuit in which there is bodily danger may show nervousness and lack of confidence and courage. In this only there is no dishonor; the dishonor lies in admitting it.[118] And in any job, whether it is truck driving, school teaching, or bullfighting, there is an inherent dignity which a man entering that profession should assume as naturally as breathing, or stay out.

Not only did Hernandorena lack dignity and the ability to control his nervousness but he also lacked confidence, both in himself and in the bull. In contrast to Hernandorena, his nerves and his bad goring, Hemingway offers the example of Cagancho, the gypsy bullfighter. Although subject to cowardice and usually without integrity, Cagancho, when he receives into the ring a bull he has confidence in, can do things most bullfighters can do but in a way that they have never been done before.[119] In a bit of admittedly florid writing, Hemingway writes of Cagancho:

> . . . standing absolutely straight with his feet still, planted as though he were a tree, with the arrogance and grace that gypsies have and of which all other arrogance and grace seems an imitation, moves the capes spread full as the pulling jib of a yacht before the bull's muzzle so slowly that the art of bullfighting, which is only kept from being one of the major arts because it is impermanent, in the

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[118] Ibid., p. 20.

[119] Ibid., p. 13.

> arrogant slowness of his veronicas becomes, for the seeming minutes that they endure, permanent.[120]

The ability of Cagancho to perform marvelous capework with the right bull lay in his wrist technique. By this "purist magic,"[121] Cagancho was able to slow down the movements of a bullfight as though it were being shown in slow motion photography. Hemingway felt that the only other bullfighters who had this spectacular ability were Juan Belmonte, Enrique Torres and Felix Rodriguez.

Although Hernandorena and Cagancho had one characteristic in common, that of displaying cowardice and lack of integrity, Cagancho may be excused, as Hemingway sees things, because at certain times Cagancho is able to redeem himself from his disgraceful qualities through his own excellent technical skill and bearing while Hernandorena never could. Hernandorena was altogether without dignity. Cagancho rarely had dignity but when he did he was able to give more of the emotion of the bullfight through his artistic sculpturing with the cape and his esthetic vision of how bullfighting could be done than his contemporaries who performed decently and to the best of their ability on most occasions.

Ethically then, Hemingway was able to forgive a

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[120] Ibid., pp. 13-14.

[121] Ibid., p. 13.

man some of his vices if, when called on in the right situation, he could, with skill and dignity, display those virtues of his profession, which men have come to admire, in such measures as would put the same talents of other matadors in the shadows. And esthetically, Hemingway was in search of dignity no matter where he was or no matter what was going on around him. It was to him a chief indication of a man's personality and character. Cagancho was skillful with the cape and sword when he was in the presence of a bull he trusted, but too often, Hemingway reports, Cagancho was guilty of the vice of cowardice, as was Hernandorena and could not be found esthetical, in the classic sense.

Another quality which not only Hemingway but the Spanish people put great esthetic value in is what is termed "pundonor" and it takes on the meaning of honor, probity, courage, self-respect and pride.[122] Hemingway writes that bullfighting is the only art where the degree of brilliance of the performance is left to the honor of the matador.[123] Therefore, if the bullfighter is greedy but not honorable, he will try to obtain as many contracts throughout the season as he can and then, in order to fulfill them with

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[122] Ibid., p. 91.

[123] Loc. cit.

the minimum of personal danger, he will kill the bulls in any disgraceful or cowardly way that he can and, consequently, he will omit whatever brilliance was possible because for brilliance in the ring to be possible and present, there must also be honor, and that is precisely what a greedy matador will lack.

Naturally enough, the one thing which can put out the flame of honor in a matador the quickest is a painful goring. The number of bullfighters who have forsaken their dignity and lost their honor through goring would comprise a long, long list. A good example of this would be Cayetano Ordonez, Nino de la Palma.

After the death of Joselito on May 16, 1920, and the retirement of Juan Belmonte the next year, Palma was the brightest and most promising of the young matadors. Unlike most of the earlier matadors who had fought and gained their knowledge through their apprenticeship, Palma was made a full-fledged matador after only twenty-one fights.[124] In his first season in this capacity, he produced some beautiful performances, and in a brief competition with Belmonte, who came out of retirement for the occasion, he displayed himself to remarkable advantage. Palma had a good season, but at the end, he was seriously gored in the

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[124] Ibid., p. 88.

thigh and, as Hemingway said, "That was the end of him."[125] At the beginning of the next season, Palma had more contracts than any other matador in Spain, but because of his goring, he was so afraid of the bulls that he could barely stand to look at them. Not only was the fear in his eyes embarrassing, Hemingway reports, but the way in which he assassinated the bulls in order to fulfill his contracts was disgraceful. Hemingway's conclusion on Palma is fitting, "It was the most shameful season any matador had ever had up until that year in bullfighting."[126] Palma, through his flaw of peripety, or reversal, in the classic sense, was a dishonor to himself, his profession and the Spanish people. Hemingway's esthetics, founded on the basis of Greek tragedy, were repulsed in the highest degree by Palma. Palma's downfall did not arise through a flaw in character, it arose through a goring and totally nullified his being a tragic character.

A few matadors, Hemingway recalled, when gored did not have their honor or their courage affected at all by the goring and these are truly the men that Hemingway esthetically admired. Probably the choicest example of this type of man in Hemingway's eyes was Manuel Garcia Maera.

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[125] Ibid., p. 89.

[126] Ibid., pp. 89-90.

Some matadors, after being gored, only lose their courage for that one season and then regain it the next, such as Valencia II who began "every season as brave as a fighting cock,"[127] but after a goring he was finished until the next year. Or there was Gitanillo who consistently used the stunt of kneeling a few yards in front of the bull and smiling to the crowd after he had "fixed" the bull in place. Naturally, he was always gored at least once a season and eventually, through a horn wound that pierced his lung, ended his life as a cripple.[128] Other matadors, after being gored once, are finished forever, and these are the kinds of men that Hemingway truly despised. The one prime example was Nino de la Palma, but a second example with a slight difference was another "boy wonder" matador named Chicuelo. Chicuelo was a splendid fighter until he was first touched by a bull, and, then, unless the bull was almost perfect, that is, offered absolutely no difficulty and charged as though mounted on rails, Chicuelo was truly a coward. Hemingway writes that in the case of Chicuelo, in between the times of the perfect bulls, one could witness "some of the saddest exhibitions of cowardice and shamelessness it would be possible to see."[129] These three

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[127] Ibid., p. 76.

[128] Ibid., p. 77.

[129] Ibid., p. 76.

examples, Valencia II, Citadillo, and Chicuelo are prime examples of matadors who would, except for the fatal flaw of vice and baseness, that being cowardice through their being gored, these men lost their chance, in Hemingway's esthetic estimation, at being classic tragic characters.

If, for one of many reasons, the bullfighter is not careful, he may be seriously gored. Wind is the worst enemy of the bullfighter since it is unpredictable and may blow the cape or muleta out away from the matador, leaving him completely exposed to the bull. Or, if the bull in passing, jerks his horns slightly, he may catch and spin the man. Also the angle at which the bull should pass the matador must be precisely calculated or it would be possible for the bull to hook the man. In the last part of the bullfight, when the matador must go in over the horns of the bull and place the sword in a spot between the bull's shoulders which is about the size of a quarter, the matador is exposing himself to the maximum danger of goring or death and this is the time when the bull and the man, theoretically, become one. The Spanish speak of it as "the moment of truth, and every move in the fight was to prepare the bull for that killing."[130] The matador who is a coward and who is without dignity and pundonor will

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[130] Ibid., p. 68.

show his cowardice at this moment more than at any other time, for if he passes the bull at all, which many will not, choosing to run past the bull and stab at it, he will keep the maximum of distance between the bull and himself and the emotion that one is expecting will not be there because of it. Trick capework and fakery in passing the bull cannot cover the lack of emotion at the moment of death. The bullfight, then, as has been previously emphasized, is designed to produce powerful emotions through the three separate but extremely interrelated acts. In the first act the bull is wild and free and attacks with unleashed ferocity; in the second act, through calculated punishment, the bull is more subdued in nature and more intelligent and logical in his charges at the matador. In the final act, the bull is tired but still in control of his energies and it is the duty of the matador to dominate him and kill him cleanly with one sword thrust. The action of the bullring sequence follows exactly Aristotle's instructions for the unity of plot in a classic action:

> A unified plot does not consist of disconnected events about the same hero, but rather of organically unified events in which all the parts are absolutely necessary and in perfect order. There must be one central theme . . . . Its plot must be a complete whole, having a beginning, middle, and end. It must be neither too short nor too long, so that we may grasp both the separate parts and the unity of the whole in a single memory span.[19]

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[19] Reinhold, op. cit., p. 240.

The ability to carry oneself and perform gracefully has always occupied a high place in Hemingway's esthetics. Just as it is impossible for all professional dancers to dance with the grace of Fred Astaire, so it is impossible for all matadors to fight bulls gracefully. The one matador, of the many, that Hemingway knew personally and held in highest affection and esteem was Rafael El Gallo.

El Gallo inaugurated a school of bullfighters whose goal was purely that of performing gracefully in the bullring and avoiding, as much as possible, the dangerous aspects of the fight.

> In this way he developed a way of working with the bull in which grace, picturesqueness, and true beauty of movement replaced and avoided the dangerous classicism of the bullfight as he found it.[132]

Gallo, then, it seems, was the first man in fighting to openly and without shame admit his fear and, if the bull looked at him in a peculiar way, to drop his muleta and sword and run.[133] Gallo, by 1932, had already given many farewell performances and was still continuing to do so to the amusement of his audiences. But although Gallo showed fear, acted simpleminded and lacked courage, this was the same cigar-smoking Gallo to whom Hemingway was devoted. Gallo "had more grace and was finer looking than

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[132]Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, p. 212.

[133]Ibid., p. 157.

any other bullfighter of any age."[134] Hemingway wrote that for a bull to kill El Gallo would be neither ironic, tragic or dignified, but "Killing El Gallo would be bad taste and prove the bullfight was wrong, not morally, but aesthetically."[135] And, then, Hemingway paid Gallo the very well-known and oft-quoted compliment:

> Do you know the sin it would be to ruffle the arrangement of feathers on a hawk's neck if they could never be replaced as they were? Well, that would be the sin it would be to kill El Gallo.[136]

By this statement, Hemingway means that the death of El Gallo in the ring would be wrong esthetically because for Gallo to die would be to disprove all of the five traits of character that Aristotle instituted and Western civilization has believed in for the last two thousand years. Not only would Gallo's death negate Aristotle's image of the ideal character but also destroy the validity of Aristotle's belief that:

> All acts and words should be the probable or necessary outcome of the inner character. It is necessary to portray character flaws naturally, but the character as a whole must be made better than average [idealized].[137]

For Gallo to be killed in the ring would be to prove that

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[134] Ibid., p. 158.

[135] Ibid., p. 159.

[136] Loc. cit.

[137] Reinhold, op. cit., p. 242.

the bullfight is not a tragedy at all but a travesty.

Because of his high admiration for Gallo's irreplaceable gracefulness, Hemingway's writing almost takes on the tone of a respectful son toward his beloved father. El Gallo worked closer to the bulls despite his fear of that certain look in the eyes of some of the bulls, and combined with his pundonor and grace, Hemingway found him exceedingly pleasing, esthetically. If this seems unusual, Gallo was unusual.

Even though a fighter may be a complete and skilled fighter in all areas which are required, he may have a fault which will prevent him from being esthetically pleasing. One of these matadors was Andreas Merida, from Malaga, a gypsy. Hemingway refers to him as "a genius with cape and muleta,"[138] and yet Merida seemed to have had a completely absentminded air about him, as though he were thinking of something far away.[139]

This is not the type of man Hemingway could appreciate esthetically, for although Merida was capable, he did his job remotely and mechanically, who, through his own distraction, produced none of the emotion he may have.

Another example of a matador who was "a perfect

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[138]Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, p. 223.

[139]Loc. cit.

bullfighter,"[140] was Jesus Solorzano, or Chucho. The problem that Chucho had, as defined by Hemingway, was that he was utterly without personality which

> . . . seems to consist of a sort of apologetic, slinking, faulty, hump-backed way of carrying himself when he is not directly involved with the bull.[141]

These types of defects in the bullfighter would completely spoil, for Hemingway, any of the other very fine work which they might be quite capable of performing. In Hemingway's estimation, they did not merit much praise. The flaw that Merida and Solorzano had in common was that they lacked one of the essential six elements of tragedy--thought, which in order of importance Aristotle placed third. These two men spoil the inherent tragedy by their common flaw.

Nicanor Villalta, "the courageous telephone pole of Aragon,"[142] is another interesting example of a man with an abnormality and yet, despite of it, able to produce much emotion and be very praiseworthy. The feature of Villalta which Hemingway found grotesque was Villalta's height and extreme neck length. If Villalta were unfor-

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[140] Ibid., p. 225.

[141] Loc. cit.

[142] Ibid., p. 70.

tunate enough to draw a bull that he was forced to work with his feet spread apart, he would be "as awkward looking as a praying mantis."[143] But if Villalta received a good bull which permitted him to work with his feet together, he was able to be extremely graceful and to work so close to the bull that the horns would leave welts on Villalta's abdomen and there would be blood on his shirts.[144] Hemingway attributed Villalta's courage to his great valor and his magic wrists. Few of the matadors had valor, such as Villalta had, and Hemingway had great respect for those men who had it. In the case of Villalta, the flaw, in the classic, that he had to overcome was his lack of consistency and unity throughout the tragic action. Villalta may have been good on some occasions, but more often his abnormality forced upon him a character flaw that was not portrayed naturally.

A bullfighter that Hemingway was impressed with in the 1929, 1930, and 1931 seasons was Marcial Lalanda.[145] Lalanda had a faulty style to begin with but had improved himself steadily. Hemingway wrote of him:

> . . . the . . . bullfighter who dominates the bulls most completely . . . , who masters them quickest . . .

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[143] Ibid., p. 221.

[144] Loc. cit.

[145] Ibid., p. 215.

> and executes most often all the classic and dangerous passes . . . , and yet is excellent in the picturesque and graceful work before the horns is Marcial Lalanda.[146]

Beside the fine ability which Lalanda possessed, the other characteristic which Hemingway found exceedingly admirable was the fact that Lalanda had on three separate occasions been gored severely and yet these gorings had only given him more courage in the ring instead of taking it away.[147] For Hemingway, it was the mark of a true matador to have his courage increased, rather than lessened by a goring. It was Hemingway's esthetic belief that "the two great causes of failure, eliminating bad luck, are lack of artistic ability, which of course cannot be overcome by valor, and fear."[148] Hemingway's esthetic belief fits perfectly in the classic sense of character which, in addition to the two causes for lack of success that Hemingway names, Aristotle supplies two more. The ideal character must be true to life, and in his actions, he must be consistent throughout. Hemingway's esthetics merge with the aristotelian tragic esthetics at every point.

The two matadors who brought fighting to its peak and sustained it for seven years, in what Hemingway called

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[146] Loc. cit.

[147] Loc. cit.

[148] Ibid., p. 224.

"a golden age,"[149] were Joselito and Juan Belmonte. Juan Belmonte was the older of the two men and, being too poor in his youth to be properly taught the art of bullfighting, he had had to teach himself. In order to

> practice with the cape he and Maera and sometimes Valelito, . . . would swim across the river, their capes and a lantern on a log, and, dripping and naked, climb the fence into the corral to where the fighting bulls were kept at Tablada to rouse one of the great full-grown fighting bulls from his sleep. While Maera held the lantern Belmonte passed the bull with the cape.[150]

Because he had had to work so close to the bulls, in the near blackness, in order to see them at all, Belmonte developed his own technique of working very close to the really fast and fierce bulls "and could torear . . . , as it was known to be impossible to torear."[151] Here was a weak and sickly man who could consistently pass the bulls very close to his body in "the decadent, the impossible, the almost depraved, style of Belmonte."[152] Hemingway called Belmonte a genius and a great artist and said of him, "The way Belmonte worked was not a heritage, nor a development; it was a revolution."[153]

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[149] Ibid., p. 69.

[150] Ibid., p. 77.

[151] Ibid., p. 69.

[152] Loc. cit.

[153] Loc. cit.

Hemingway felt, however, of Joselito, that he was "the inheritor of all great bullfighters, probably the greatest bullfighter who ever lived . . . . "[154] It was Joselito who, in contrast to Belmonte, was strong and healthy and although the big bulls were often difficult for Belmonte, all bulls, either large or small, were easy for Joselito and it was necessary for him to make his own difficulties.[155]

Hemingway wrote that Joselito, who lived for bullfighting and seemed to be made and bred to the measurements of what a great bullfighter should be, had to learn to torear [the ability to perform all of the actions of a matador without fault] the way Belmonte did.[156] Joselito said:

> They say that he, Belmonte, works closer to the bull. It looks as though he does. But that isn't true. I really work closer. But it is more natural so it doesn't look so close.[157]

And so when Joselito was killed in 1920 and Belmonte retired that next year, the golden age came to an end and all that was left was the impossible technique, and matadors who did not please because they could not learn the method.[158]

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[154] Loc. cit.

[155] Ibid., p. 70.

[156] Ibid., p. 69.

[157] Loc. cit.

[158] Ibid., p. 70.

These two men, to Hemingway, although he never saw Joselito fight, symbolized the pinnacle of bullfighting with their overwhelming skill and artistic genius. They could handle all bulls well, they had dignity and pundonor, and they could kill cleanly, a factor of immense importance in the esthetics of Hemingway. He wrote:

> Killing cleanly and in a way which gives you aesthetic pleasure and pride has always been one of the greatest enjoyments of a part of the human race.[159]

The last bullfighter whom Hemingway held in the highest veneration because he typified almost all of the qualities which were of consumate importance to Hemingway, was Manuel Garcia, Maera. Maera, the man who had gotten his start in bullfighting along with Belmonte as a banderillero and could banderillear as well as Joselito although Belmonte could not banderillear at all.[160]

After working for Belmonte for a long time, Maera grew dissatisfied with his wages and when he was refused a raise, he told Belmonte he was going to quit and that he would make him look "ridiculous."[161] As he was getting started, Maera was not too skillful with the cape, and he had other faults, such as too much movement, which a matador

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[159] Ibid., p. 232.

[160] Ibid., p. 78.

[161] Loc. cit.

should never have, but he had such a complete knowledge of bulls and such complete valor, that he made it all seem easy. And Hemingway wrote, "He was the proudest man I have ever seen."[162]

Maera improved so much in the next two years that he raised the quality of bullfighting from the poor level it had sunk, to the level where fighting again had dignity and passion.[163] Hemingway said he was so brave that he shamed the other matadors; he always gave emotion, and as he improved, he became an artist.[164]

Unfortunately, however, in the last year in which he fought, Maera had tuberculosis, or galloping consumption, and he knew it. Consequently, the horn wounds which he received that final year, and there were several very painful ones, he paid absolutely no attention to. He ignored them. "He was a long way beyond pain."[165]

Hemingway makes the point that although most matadors keep themselves aloof from their caudrilla, or paid group of assistants, Maera ate, traveled and lived with his caudrilla at all times and they "respected him as I have

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[162] Loc. cit.

[163] Ibid., p. 79.

[164] Loc. cit.

[165] Loc. cit.

seen no other matador respected by his caudrilla."[166]

In describing Maera, Hemingway attributed to him characteristics which he felt were extremely fitting for a man in that profession.

> He was generous, humorous, proud, bitter, foulmouthed and a great drinker. He neither sucked after intellectuals nor married money. He loved to kill bulls . . . .[167]

Of all the bullfighters that Hemingway wrote of, Maera seems to have been the one that he had the most respect for. Hemingway certainly admired and respected Joselito and Belmonte but he did not personally know them as he knew Maera. Maera was proud; he knew his job as a matador, and he executed it to the best of his ability on every occasion. He corrected the faults he had; he completely ignored personal pain and made no complaints whatsoever. He commanded the respect of his fellowmen; he gave all he had to bullfighting, and that last year he fought death as hard as he could. Hemingway paid him a fitting tribute when he said of Maera, "Era muy hombre. [He was quite a man.]"[168] And so Belmonte, Joselito and Maera come closer to Hemingway's classic esthetic sense of a tragic character than any of the other bullfighters he knew of. They were excellent in

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[166] Ibid., p. 80.

[167] Ibid., p. 82.

[168] Loc. cit.

performance of their profession, they were true in respect to both their life and their type, and throughout, they were always striving hardest for consistency of action. Hemingway found them sterling examples of the type of esthetics he tried to live up to himself.

The bullfighters, or matadors, were primarily the subject from which Hemingway drew his esthetics. Being a man himself who enjoyed almost all outdoor forms of sport and competition, Hemingway was particularly drawn to the bullring by his fascination with other men who would fight bulls in the afternoon, literally risking their lives against the fatal horns of the bulls. From these men, Hemingway became inspired and drew much of his esthetics. But there were also the bulls to be reckoned with, and as he came to know more about them, Hemingway came to realize that they also were a source of esthetic principles. From Aristotle, Hemingway could draw his classic definition of esthetics and then hold it up against the matadors and measure them in relation to it, along with himself. In studying the actions of the bulls, there were naturally discrepancies, but surprisingly, there were similarities, too.

Just as there are brave matadors and cowardly matadors, so also are there brave bulls and cowardly bulls. Hemingway makes the comparison that "the fighting bull is to the

domestic bull as is the wolf to the dog."[169] Although both bulls may be vicious and evil-tempered, the domestic bull will never have the quality of muscle and sinew nor the peculiar build of the fighting bull just as the dog will never have the cunning, sinews and width of jaw as the wolf.[170]

Bulls which are to be fought are bred from strain that comes in direct descent from those wild bulls that once roamed the Peninsula[171] and the whole theory of bullfighting is based on the premise that this meeting in the ring between matador and bull is the first encounter by the bull with an unmounted man.[172]

Hemingway lists:

> The physical characteristics of the fighting bull are its thick and very strong hide with glossy pelt, small head, but wide forehead; strength and shape of horns, which curve forward; short, thick neck with the great hump of muscle which erects when the bull is angry; wide shoulders, very small hooves and length and slenderness of tail.[173]

A good bull, writes Hemingway, will not be too big, too tall at the shoulder, too strong, or have too much horn,

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[169] Ibid., p. 105.

[170] Loc. cit.

[171] Loc. cit.

[172] Ibid., p. 21.

[173] Ibid., p. 105.

but will have good reaction to color and movement, good vision, be brave and frank to charge.[174]

Of the many bulls killed which Hemingway witnessed, there were certain qualities which he had respect for. Of course, bravery is the essential characteristic of the fighting bull, and that bull which becomes " . . . braver under punishment . . . has that technical quality that the Spanish call 'nobility'."[175] Without bravery, the bull in the ring will go on the defensive and become exceedingly dangerous and difficult to kill. Naturally, all bullfighters wish for a bull which is not only brave, but also one " . . . that will charge perfectly straight . . . as though he were on rails."[176]

Hemingway writes that no one knows, just by seeing a bull in the corral, whether or not the bull will be brave, but there are certain indications that one can look for. If the bull appears quiet and calm, it is more likely he will be brave because of his confidence in himself, thus, not needing to show signs of bluffing, such as pawing the ground, bellowing or threatening with his horns.[177] And the bull that is completely brave and

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[174] Ibid., p. 27.

[175] Ibid., p. 13.

[176] Ibid., p. 160.

[177] Ibid., p. 124.

in excellent condition will not open his mouth once during the entire fight and at the end will not even open his mouth to let the blood out.[178]

Hemingway voices his feelings about the esthetic quality of the bull when he writes, "A true fighting bull fears nothing and, to me, is the finest of all animals to watch in action and repose."[179] Hemingway also comments that "a really brave fighting bull is afraid of nothing on earth."[180] He adds that this is not the courage of a bull who has been cornered and forced to fight, this is the pure fighting strain of bulls and yet, when they are unchallenged out of the ring, they are " . . . the quietest and most peaceful acting in repose, of any animal."[181] Some of these bulls possessing that purest courage called nobility and who recognize their herder, will even permit this man "to stroke and pat them,"[182] and Hemingway recalls one bull which would allow "the herder to stroke its nose, curry it like a horse, and even mount on its back,"[183]

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[178] Loc. cit.

[179] Ibid., p. 109.

[180] Loc. cit.

[181] Ibid., p. 113.

[182] Loc. cit.

[183] Loc. cit.

but upon entering the ring, this same bull was as "vicious as a cobra and brave as a charging lioness."[184]

But there are bulls which will naturally run the same extreme into cowardice all the way down to the bulls that will try to jump, and often succeed, the barrera, or four foot high fence surrounding the ring, in an effort to escape. Other cowardly bulls will take a defensive stance, as previously mentioned, with their back to the barrera and refuse to leave it. These bulls are highly dangerous, for they are just waiting a chance to catch the matador and gore him. Thus, these bulls must be killed as quickly and as safely as possible. But these cowardly bulls are exceptions and do not come along often.

In the true fighting bull, Hemingway respected the esthetic virtues of bravery, nobility, or the capacity to withstand punishment and grow braver under it, and utter fearlessness, combined with speed, strength and courage. Hemingway found the fighting bull a splendid beast to watch in action and in tranquility.

In the bullring, therefore, there are many factors by which a fight can be judged as to the degree of emotion produced by man and bull. All bullfights, just as any of the other impermanent arts such as opera or the ballet,

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[184]Ibid., p. 114.

are supposed to furnish excitement and emotion but, of course, many do not for many reasons. The bullfights which awed Hemingway had their subtler fascination in their inherent ritual and pattern which Hemingway recognized as Aristotelian tragedy and founded his esthetics therein. He was aware of the three act sequence as a retelling of Aristotle's ideal plot and the image of the matador pitted against the bull as the ideal tragic character figure, testing himself against odds as men have done for thousands of years in an effort to define for themselves their identity and their place in the world. Hemingway was drawn to the bullring, because he wanted to study death, and he wanted to explore the tragic ramifications of man facing the bull, symbolizing death, and ultimately, man facing himself, or through a flaw, man turning away from himself. After seeking a definition of esthetics and finding it in the classic tragedy of the bullfight, from which he was restricted from participating, Hemingway moved into a realm where he could place himself as the protagonist in order to measure his own worth against his own esthetics. The realm he chose was the green hills and the dusty plains of Africa.

CHAPTER III

THE ESTHETICS IN PRACTICE

Three years had elapsed since Hemingway had written non-fiction, and in this story, concerning the hunt, he again voices his esthetics just as he had done in Death in the Afternoon. Ernest Hemingway wrote The Green Hills of Africa for a specific reason. He wanted "to write an absolutely true book" and see if it could compete with a book of fiction.[185] The Green Hills of Africa is the story of the happenings on safari of Hemingway and his companions over a period of one month and except for the changing of names, it is written completely straight.

In Death in the Afternoon, Hemingway had been the spectator on the outside, looking in and observing all of the action, but in The Green Hills of Africa he is the central character and the main participant of the action. He is now in the position of finding out whether he can live up to his own esthetic principles. Therefore, one sees that the safari was Hemingway's truly initial experience at finding out whether his art of esthetics

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[185]Ernest Hemingway, The Green Hills of Africa, p. vii.

which he first worked out through the classic structure of the bullfight could stand up to the test of the action of the big game hunt. The Green Hills of Africa was purely an experiment testing Hemingway's art versus his action.

The Green Hills of Africa, being a story of pursuit, is divided into four parts: Pursuit and Conversation; Pursuit Remembered; Pursuit and Failure; and Pursuit as Happiness, which, as Baker sees it, is a serious pun on the Declaration of Independence.[186] Hemingway and a man named Karl are the pursuers throughout the book, while the white hunter, Jackson Phillip, called Pop, and Mrs. Hemingway, called P.O.M. (Poor Old Mama), and the natives of the hunting party are the onlookers. Specifically, what Hemingway and Karl are hunting, are the giant kudu, a common type of antelope, and the other animals they kill occasionally are secondary.[187] Hemingway and Karl hunt separately, but for the same sort of game and, hence, there has grown up a rivalry between them of which they both are very much aware, for while Hemingway is the more experienced hunter, Karl is luckier and has consistently bagged bigger game than Hemingway, "his grumpily loyal opposition," Baker calls him.[188] Hemingway is using

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[186]Baker, op. cit., p. 169.

[187]Ernest Hemingway, The Green Hills of Africa, p. 14.

[188]Baker, op. cit., p. 171.

this rivalry as an element of the Aristotelian plot to show conflict and create tension.

This competitive rivalry becomes very irksome to Hemingway, and although he tries to be big-hearted and generous toward Karl, his inner-self, fighting the smart of constantly being second best, will not let him. Even though Hemingway realizes that he is endangering himself as seeming distasteful to the reader, he remains perfectly honest by making no effort to conceal the fact that he is irritated by Karl's luck. Of course Hemingway is aware that this is a classic flaw in one sense. Hemingway's envy of Karl dismisses Hemingway from being the ideal character through his failure to be consistent and unified in his emotions throughout the safari. He fluctuates from friendship to envy to dislike and back to friendship many times. However, Hemingway very carefully worked out this feeling of dissention between he and Karl in order to give the book the added dimension of a classic plot, that of peripety or reversal, which is the second type of mechanism in the tragic plot.[189] In this way, Hemingway is able to arouse the feeling of pity which is finally resolved in the catharsis of the book.

But the first time that Hemingway complains to Pop

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[189]Reinhold, op. cit., p. 240.

about Karl, it is not because of Karl's superior luck but because Karl is not killing well. Hemingway voices his disgust, saying:

> If he'd only killed it [kudu] clean instead of following it through the whole damned countryside. Christ if he'd only kill any damn thing clean . . . he's spooked this country to hell.[190]

Hemingway uses the term, spooked, to mean spoiled, or to signify that, by not killing his animal cleanly and without mess, Karl has allowed the wounded kudu to trail through the whole area alerting the other animals to the presence of hunters. Karl, then, has spooked that area, just as the truck driven by Kandisky, the Austrian native recruiter, had spooked the animals at the salt lick where Hemingway was waiting at dusk for the giant kudu to come for salt. Hemingway wrote, "The truck had spoiled it."[191]

In an effort to pacify Hemingway, Pop takes Karl's side and reminds Hemingway that

> He's a good lad. He made a beautiful shot on that leopard you know. You don't want them killed any cleaner than that. Let it quiet down again.[192]

Hemingway is forgiving and says, "I don't mean anything when I curse him."[193]

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[190]Ernest Hemingway, The Green Hills of Africa, p. 15.

[191]Ibid., p. 4.

[192]Ibid., p. 15.

[193]Loc. cit.

But the problem actually went much deeper than that. Although Hemingway said he did not "mean anything" and in that way forgave Karl, what he was genuinely aggravated about was Karl's not killing cleanly which violated Hemingway's cardinal rule for shooting big game esthetically. The hunter, above all, must take pride in his shooting and be very serious about it. In doing so the hunter will naturally wish to dispatch, or kill his game, whether it is a rabbit or a rhinoceros, with the least amount of shells and with the least amount of pain to the animal. Hemingway knew, of course, that many wounded animals are extremely dangerous and, even if they are not, they should not be made to suffer a lingering death at the hands of a hunter who cannot shoot accurately or kill cleanly.

The second cardinal rule of Hemingway's esthetics was to always play fair with the animals and that meant there was absolutely never to be any shooting from the car. Hemingway would not shoot from the car in any situation. Even when shooting as lowly a bird as a guinea, Hemingway writes, "As I jumped from the car and sprinted after them they rocketed up, . . . I dropped two . . . ."[194] Hemingway came to despise riding in the car at all, feeling that it ruined him for the kind of hunting in the timbered

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[194] Ibid., p. 36.

hills which was his favorite way to hunt. Later, he writes, "This was the kind of hunting I liked. No riding in cars . . . ."[195] Or again, when talking to Pop, he speculates to whether they could ever hunt sheep in the high country, and Pop answers that it is probably only a matter of conditioning, and Hemingway replies, "It's riding in the damned cars that ruins us."[196] Hemingway's esthetics in the classic sense will not permit him to hunt from the car, because to shoot from an automobile would be a violation of one of the essential virtues for an ideal character, i.e., it would be a violation of the requirement of being true to type, or Hemingway would be transgressing the role of hunter.

Following the shooting of the guineas along the side of the road, the Hemingway safari gets its first chance to kill a lion but the lion killing proves to be unsatisfactory and confusing for a strange reason. They encountered the lion at sundown and P.O.M., Mrs. Hemingway, was to have the first shot. If anything went wrong after she fired, then anyone could shoot, because it was getting dark, and if the lion were wounded and got into the bushes, " . . . it would be too dark to do anything about it without

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[195] Ibid., p. 55.

[196] Ibid., p. 59.

a mess."[197] But this time there was no mess and no sloppy killing. P.O.M. shot and missed. Mr. Hemingway shot and dispatched the lion cleanly with one bullet. Hemingway explains his disappointment over the kill by saying:

> We had been prepared for a charge, for heroics, and for drama . . . . I felt more let down than pleased. . . . this was not what we had paid to see.[198]

Baker writes, "Of course it was what they had paid for, like everything else recorded in the book."[199]

Esthetically, Hemingway had killed the lion perfectly and there could have been no complaints in that area. There were two other reasons, however, for his dissatisfaction. One reason lay in the fact that all of the safari had supposed dramatics to be a big part of any lion hunt, and when they found out how easy it was, especially Hemingway, and that the killing really only took one bullet and no theatricality, they felt cheated. This feeling of being cheated arises naturally from the first element of the classic plot which is complexity, an element of Hemingway's aesthetics. The killing of the lion without complexity is too easy and thus relieves any feeling of accomplishment. Secondly, the writing of the lion hunt is disappointing

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[197]Ibid., p. [illegible].

[198]Ibid., p. [illegible].

[199]Baker, op. cit., p. 179.

was deliberate on Hemingway's part in order to build up the readers' emotions for the much more sought after and highly prized kudu. Baker noted, "Hemingway carefully reduces it [lion hunt] to an emotionally unsatisfactory event."[200] To even further lessen the event in importance, Hemingway does not take credit for the kill at all, but, instead, everyone pretends that P.O.M. had killed the lion, when she had not actually hit it, and the natives carry her on their backs and dance and sing in her honor.[201]

After eight days of hunting alone, Karl returns to camp without a kudu, and again the antagonism flares up between him and Hemingway. Hemingway recounts that Karl has killed the best buffalo, waterbuck, lion, and leopard, but Karl is still discouraged and disgusted at not having killed his kudu yet.[202] Hemingway is disgusted with Karl because Karl has been so lucky in his shooting, all of his game, or most of it, being better than Hemingway's, and yet, still, he is not happy. Hemingway admits that, "I rattle him . . . . "[203] Pop agrees, "you're a little hard on him sometimes."[204] Hemingway answers that Karl

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[200]Loc. cit.

[201]Ernest Hemingway, The Green Hills of Africa, p. 42.

[202]Ibid., p. 63.

[203]Loc. cit.

[204]Loc. cit.

"knows me. He doesn't mind."[205] Hemingway is using the classic device of peripety to keep the reader aware of the competition involved between the two men and, also, the fact that Hemingway is not able to live up to his own esthetic standards. Perhaps Karl does not mind, but Hemingway does. Shooting well, he tries to convince himself, is triumph enough and there should be no need to be selfish or greedy about the animals which are shot. As long as one kills cleanly and does not hunt from the automobile, Hemingway is satisfied esthetically. Speaking of the hunting of big game, Hemingway writes:

> In shooting large animals there is no reason ever to miss if you have a clear shot and can shoot and know where to shoot, unless you are unsteady from a run or a climb or fog your glasses . . . .[206]

Hemingway truly believed this, for he was a fine shot and knew what part of the anatomy of each animal to shoot for. He was always careful not to get "blown," or winded and he carried four handkerchiefs in order to always have a dry handkerchief when he needed one.[207]

When pursuing the rhinocerous, Hemingway was also esthetically successful. The safari spotted the rhino at three hundred yards, and Hemingway said, "I'll bust

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[205] Loc. cit.

[206] Ibid., p. 56.

[207] Loc. cit.

the son of a bitch."[208] Then, as the rhino came into view, Hemingway writes, "I was watching, freezing myself deliberately inside, stopping the excitement as you close a valve, going into that impersonal state you shoot from."[209] At the crack of the rifle, the rhino "exploded"[210] forward and went into tall grass. The hunting party cautiously followed him, but caution was not needed as the animal was dead. At three hundred yards, Hemingway had killed his rhino in one shot, as he should have, and Pop congratulated him, "That was a hell of a shot you made on him though, brother."[211] They were all quite pleased with Hemingway's success, and they ribbed him about it considerably. "Mustn't ever let him realize what a shot that was or he'll get unbearable,"[212] says Pop. Killing the rhino at three hundred yards is another example of peripety. After the discharge of the rifle, the safari expects to encounter difficulty but there is none as the animal has been killed cleanly.

On their return to camp, the hunters encounter a

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[208] Ibid., p. 76.

[209] Loc. cit.

[210] Loc. cit.

[211] Ibid., p. 79.

[212] Ibid., p. 80.

reedbuck and Hemingway writes, "I made a fancy shot . . . at about two hundred yards, offhand, breaking his neck at the base of the skull."[213] This is another very esthetically pleasing kill to Hemingway and he again takes teasing about his skill. Pop says, "We've got to put a stop to him . . . . Where did you shoot for really?"[214] Hemingway lies and Pop calls him "a damned liar."[215] Hemingway answers, "None of us great shots is appreciated. Wait till we're gone."[216] And so the jubilant hunting party returns to camp after two very pleasing kills by Hemingway. But Karl is in camp and he also has killed a rhino. Hemingway, trying to find out if Karl killed cleanly asks, "Did you get in trouble with him?"[217] Karl replies, "No, we killed him."[218] When Hemingway, Pop, and P.O.M. go to look at Karl's rhino, they find that it makes Hemingway's rhino look like a "lousy runt."[219] Again, Hemingway cannot be cheerful about the difference in

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[213] Ibid., p. 81.

[214] Loc. cit.

[215] Loc. cit.

[216] Loc. cit.

[217] Ibid., p. 83.

[218] Loc. cit.

[219] Ibid., p. 84.

sized, and although he realizes how badly he is acting toward Karl, he cannot be cheerful. In his esthetic art, Hemingway is using this conflict as a device of plot. Karl is naturally happy about his kill, but Hemingway's depression drains away his happiness. Later, Hemingway writes:

> He [Karl] had done some of the worst shooting at game I had ever seen and I had shot badly twice . . . Still he beat me on all the tangible things we had to show. For awhile we joked about it and I knew everything would even up. But it didn't even up.[220]

Although Hemingway was doing some beautiful shooting, esthetically, and it is shooting that he is personally pleased with until he gets back to camp and finds that Karl has been less skillful but more lucky. It is then that Hemingway becomes unhappy emotionally and begins to feel his animosity for Karl well up. Hemingway is able to control himself physically during the hunt, as when he freezes himself inside, but not emotionally back in camp in the face of Karl's "luck." Karl brings forth the classic element of reversal in Hemingway, as always. Hemingway was expecting to be the better hunter, but instead, the opposite has taken place.

Buffalo is the next game that the hunting party goes for. After a rather suspenseful and dangerous walk

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[220] Ibid., p. 86.

down a streambed filled with high grass and vines, the porters spot two buffalo climbing the opposite bank. Once again Hemingway puts his Springfield rifle to his shoulder and after sighting on one of the buffalo, writes:

> I froze myself inside and held the bead on the top of his shoulder . . . . I swung ahead of him and loosed off . . . . I saw him lower his head like a bucking horse and . . . I knew I had him.[221]

It was a fine shot by any standards. As Pop says, "It must have been four hundred yards. By God, you can shoot that little pipsqueak."[222] And again there is the comradly teasing but the shot had been superb and had put Hemingway in a generous mood toward Karl. "Since a long time we had all felt good about Karl's rhino. He was a fine fellow, Karl, and it was good he got these extra fine heads."[223] Hemingway used Karl for an explicit purpose, that of being a standard by which Hemingway could measure himself, both in hunting and in esthetics.

This frame of mind lasts only as long as the two men hunt separately, however. Soon, Karl and Hemingway are out shooting zebra on the hot dusty plains and in the heat, tempers flare and Hemingway records a bitter quarrel between two men characterized as the smug one and the

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[221] Ibid., p. 118.

[222] Ibid., p. 119.

[223] Ibid., p. 123.

desperate one.[224] The argument is over nothing and as the men ride back to camp, they are able to grin about it.[225]

The zebra had been shot for the skins for friends back home[226] and so following that, the pursuers head for Lake Manyara where they want to shoot ducks from the marshes to eat. Hemingway was a fine wing shot and everyone shot as many as they wanted and Hemingway writes, "We all had good shooting."[227] The duck hunt is one of the few peaceful interludes in the book where everybody can hunt together without an argument. This duck hunt is used by Hemingway as a part of the classic plot known as discovery or anagnorisis, which may be interpreted as a change from ignorance to knowledge, or love to hate, or vice versa.[228]

Having failed to shoot, or even see, any decent kudu in their camp, the safari moves off for new country where the natives had reported that kudu came out into the open and one only had to select and kill the biggest ones.[229] Hemingway inserts the jaunt to new game as a

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[224]Ibid., p. 131.

[225]Ibid., p. 132.

[226]Ibid., p. 127.

[227]Ibid., p. 134.

[228]Reinhold, op. cit., p. 241.

[229]Ernest Hemingway, The Green Hills of Africa, p. 143.

classic device of interlude or transition.

Through a strange coincidence, the ride into the new country which resembled Spain so much, reminded Hemingway of a broken right arm he had once had which had gone untreated until the flesh finally rotted.[230] In a nightmare of pain in the fifth week of not sleeping, Hemingway suddenly thought of what an elk must feel that is wounded and gets away. Then in a bit of Christ-like symbolism, Hemingway

> . . . thought what I was going through was a punishment for all hunters. Then getting well, decided if it was a punishment I had paid it and at least I knew what I was doing.[231]

This incident made a lasting impression on Hemingway, who felt he was always going to be killed by something and so he did not mind anymore.[232] He concludes, saying, "Since I loved to hunt I resolved that I would only shoot as long as I could kill cleanly and as soon as I lost that ability I would stop."[233] And in The Green Hills of Africa, he uses this reminiscence to illustrate the classic Aristotelian element of self-knowledge through the "discovery

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[230] Ibid., p. 148.

[231] Loc. cit.

[232] Loc. cit.

[233] Loc. cit.

that grows in a probably manner out of the incidents themselves."[234] In The Green Hills of Africa, this is probably the purest and most succinct statement that Hemingway makes regarding his feelings of esthetically hunting big game. From the personal experience of pain, he had come to appreciate the injustice done to lower forms of life, and in his own realm of experience, Hemingway wished to abolish this injustice as completely as possible. This most probably was also his experience which moulded his feelings for the unfairness of shooting from a car, the other tenet of faith in which he believed most strongly.

While moving toward the new country, the party stops to hunt around the base of a hill. In camp, Karl is silently furious, thinking Hemingway had overstepped his boundary, and the old irritating rivalry comes to the surface. Hemingway again tells Pop he is tired of being second place, but then finally concedes, "I'm just a crabby bastard . . . . "[235] Here, again, is Hemingway using Aristotelian self-discovery in a personally depreciating way. By depreciating himself, Hemingway is building up the artistic device of conflict. Later Karl

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[234]Reinhold, op. cit., p. 242.

[235]Ernest Hemingway, The Green Hills of Africa, p. 154.

emerges from his tent, "quiet, friendly, gentle and understandingly delicate."[236]

When they reach the new hunting grounds, it is Karl who gets first chance to hunt the salt lick and thus is first to kill a kudu bull. When Hemingway returns to camp and looks at the head which has been severed for mounting, he is not envious because instead of being beautiful, he thought, "It was a freak head, heavy and ugly."[237] That evening, talking to Pop, Hemingway says, prophetically, "I'll bet he'll [Karl] get the biggest one ever known now."[238] Hemingway, as writer, is aware of the events which later transpire, but as hunter, he is anticipating peripety.

Thus, Karl goes off to hunt sable, as was the plan, and Hemingway continues to hunt for a kudu without luck. Several days later, a very old native comes into camp and describes to Pop a place where kudu are plentiful. With four natives, Hemingway hurriedly packs the truck and departs.

Hemingway had pursued the kudu bull throughout the entire safari, regarding it as the one choice animal he

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[236] Loc. cit.

[237] Ibid., p. 173.

[238] Ibid., p. 174.

wanted to kill. However, there may have been one other animal, the hyena, which gave Hemingway as much pleasure in killing as did the kudu, but in another sense. Whereas the killing of the kudu was an esthetic experience in which Hemingway could utilize his beliefs to their fullest extent, Hemingway killed hyenas because they were considered a dirty joke, and he could rid Africa of one less obnoxious beast. After the hyena was "gut-shot," Hemingway writes:

> The classic hyena . . . would circle madly, snapping and tearing at himself until he pulled his own intestines out, and then stood there, jerking them out and eating them with relish.[239]

This was the one wild animal of Africa that Hemingway truly despised, and he released his venomous hatred for the hyena in one long vituperative sentence:

> Fisi, the hyena, hermaphroditic, self-eating devourer of the dead, trailer of calfing cows, ham-stringer, potential biter-off of your face at night while you slept, sad yowler, camp-follower, stinking, foul, with jaws that crack the bones the lion leaves, belly dragging, loping away on the brown plain, looking back, mongrel dog-smart in the face; whack from the little Mannlicher and then the horrid circle starting.[240]

Hemingway was very proud because he had killed a number of them and, once, boasting sarcastically, he announced, "Tell him I am B'wana Fisi, the hyena slaughterer . . . ."[241]

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[239] Ibid., pp. 37-38.

[240] Ibid., p. 38.

[241] Ibid., p. 162.

But now, Hemingway is heading into "virgin country"[242] after the big kudu bulls, and all the nastiness of the hyenas is forgotten. The hunting party arrives at the camp late in the day, but Hemingway wants to hunt in the last hour before darkness. They go out, and within a short time they encounter two kudu bulls, and Hemingway kills both bulls with one shot apiece. The first bull is not as large as the second one, and M'Cola, the gunbearer, indicates that "This bull was the policeman or bodyguard for the bigger one."[243] The kudu bull about which Hemingway becomes so excited is:

> . . . a huge, beautiful kudu bull . . . big, long-legged, a smooth gray with the white stripes and the great, curling, sweeping horns, brown as walnut meats, and ivory pointed, at the big ears and the great, lovely heavy-maned neck the white chevron between his eyes and the white of his muzzle . . . .[244]

For Hemingway, this is the climax of the book and the hunt; everything had been a preparation for this great kudu killed at twilight in virgin country which "smelled sweet and lovely like the breath of cattle and the odor of thyme after rain."[245] They try to take pictures, but it is too late; the sun is down, and so they take the

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[242] Ibid., p. 218.

[243] Ibid., p. 233.

[244] Ibid., p. 231.

[245] Loc. cit.

skinned heads and the best parts of meat back to camp. Around the campfire they roast the kudu delicacies; everyone is very jolly, and Hemingway, after many beers and his two victories, gets very talkative; they all have a grand time. Hemingway was extremely pleased with the way he had killed the kudu. In the classic Aristotelian tragedy, this is, of course, the denouement or unravelling. As Reinhold writes, "The complication is all that precedes the crisis, the change in the hero's fortune; the denouement . . . is all that follows the crisis to the end of the drama."[246] Hemingway has developed his "African drama" so that it would lead naturally up to the kudu kill, bringing with it a catharsis and a purging of emotion.

Very early the next morning, they set out to pursue the last game they are seeking, the sable bull. Several miles from camp, in a dry watercourse, they discover a herd of seven or eight sable, and because Hemingway had never before seen a sable,[247] he shoots and wounds a cow the first time. As they chase the cow, a black sable bull jumps up and passes them at a distance, and suddenly Hemingway realized he has made a mistake. He hurriedly fires at the bull, which he knocks down with his first

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[246]Reinhold, op. cit., p. 242.

[247]Ernest Hemingway, The Green Hills of Africa, p. 255.

shot, but it gets up and runs out of sight. Hemingway is guilty of the flaw of not being able to perform well in his profession. Eventually the hunter and his natives find the sable cow and skin her out in probably one of the most disappointing passages of the book; Hemingway describes the futile failure of looking for the wounded sable bull. Hemingway knew that it was wrong to shoot quickly at the whole animal instead of at the correct place on the bull, and he writes, "But it was unskilled shooting, all of it, and I was not proud of it."[248] After they hunt without success for the wounded and bleeding bull through the heat of the day, the party rests in the shade, and Hemingway thinks about what he has done. He has made a mess of the hunt instead of killing cleanly, and he wishes to God, he had never hit him.[249]

> Tonight [the sable bull] would die and the hyenas would eat him, or, worse, they would get him before he died, hamstringing him and pulling his guts out while he was alive . . . . I felt a son of a bitch to have hit him and not killed him. I did not mind killing anything, any animal, if I killed it cleanly . . . . But I felt rotten sick over this sable bull . . . . I was a son of a bitch to have gut-shot him.[250]

Hemingway ends in frustration and disgust with the thought, "We were beaten."[251] He is following the classic form of

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[248] Ibid., p. 259.

[249] Ibid., p. 272.

[250] Ibid., pp. 271-272.

[251] Ibid., p. 272.

Aristotle's dictum.

> The simple unhappy ending is best in tragedy. The double ending, happiness for the good and unhappiness for the evil, is liked best, and is a concession to popular taste.[252]

This had been only the third time that Hemingway had shot badly, and it was the worst, for in the two earlier cases, he had eventually destroyed the game. This sable which he had merely wounded had escaped, and Hemingway, with his personal esthetics of killing cleanly and without mess, was to blame. Later, he again curses himself and argues with his conscience about the sable. He finishes self-chastisement by writing, "Every damned thing is your own fault if you're any good . . . . I know just what kind of a son of a bitch I am . . . . "[253] Thus, Hemingway is admitting his own failure to live up to the esthetics he has set himself. By wounding the sable, he is guilty of several flaws. One is his failure to be good in performing the functions of the role of hunter. He also fails to be uniform and consistent in his performance throughout his endeavors. By his own classic esthetics, then, Hemingway is not a successful Aristotelian character and he admits it.

Not only does Hemingway fail himself esthetically

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[252]Reinhold, op. cit., p. 241.

[253]Ernest Hemingway, The Green Hills of Africa, pp. 281-282.

in the middle hunt, but he also fails himself emotionally when he rejoins Pop and Karl and the main party. Karl had shot another kudu, and Hemingway asks of the size of Karl's kudu. Karl tells him his kudu's horns are fifty-seven inches long.[254] "'Let's see him,' I said, cold in the pit of my stomach."[255] Upon seeing the kudu horns, Hemingway writes:

> They were the biggest, widest, darkest, longest-curling, heaviest, most unbelieveable pair of kudu horns in the world. Suddenly, poisoned with envy, I did not want to see mine again; never, never.[256]

But Pop tells him he will always have the memory of how he shot his kudu.[257] And Hemingway is bitter all that night, but the next day his bitterness is gone.[258] Pop summarizes what they are all feeling, "We have very primitive emotions . . . . It's impossible not to be competitive. Spoils everything, though."[259] The experience Hemingway has gone through has the features of classic self-hate and remorse. He regrets his past actions and would like

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[254] Ibid., p. 291.

[255] Loc. cit.

[256] Loc. cit.

[257] Ibid., p. 293.

[258] Loc. cit.

[259] Loc. cit.

to atone for them.

And so Hemingway and Karl overcome their emotions and end the safari as friends. Hemingway had tried to live up to his esthetics although it was not always easy and he was not always successful. In esthetics, as in friendship, or Africa, there are always obstacles which one encounters, as Hemingway discovered, and one tries to work his way past them or live through them the best way he knows how, or the best way his conscience will let him. Hemingway had his esthetic beliefs about hunting, just as anyone may have theirs about any facet of life, and although he was not always successful in living up to them, he worked at keeping them the best he could. He had suffered just as the animals he killed had suffered. While on safari, Hemingway came to realize that, in the classic sense, he was not a tragic character through his various flaws which had emerged. He was not of that stature which Frye described as the "high mimetic mode;" rather, he was only a man who realized his shortcomings but continued to try to live with his esthetics.

CHAPTER IV

ESTHETICS IN RETROSPECT

A Moveable Feast was a very different kind of a book than Hemingway's other, earlier two works of non-fiction had been. Death in the Afternoon had been an instructive book while The Green Hills of Africa had been an experiment. A Moveable Feast was a looking, and a kind of yearning, backward.

Hemingway had learned a deep lesson in personal happiness when he made the simple comment that " . . . the only thing that could spoil a day was people . . . People were always the limiters of happiness except for the very few who were as good as spring itself."[260] From this statement, Hemingway shows evidence that his personal esthetics had come to be formed around the simply philosophy that every person finds his own true happiness in the best way he can, without the interference of other people. And he came to believe that a person derives joy and beauty from that which makes him personally joyful, not from that which he is told by others should make him happy. As

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[260]Ernest Hemingway, A Moveable Feast, p. 49.

George Santayana maintained, "the beauty we attribute to objects is not in the objects, it is in us."[261] In his book on esthetics, Sense of Beauty, Santayana believed that "Beauty is 'pleasure objectified',"[262] although he felt that a sense of beauty is quite naturally subjective.[263] But unlike Santayana's esthetics of beauty which held that the senses of touch, taste and smell were unesthetics because of their being organs of a lower bodily function,[264] Hemingway's esthetics took into account the pleasures and the beauty he received from all of his senses, not just from sight and sound. Hemingway found beauty and pleasure in walking along the Seine, searching through the old bookstalls that lined the quais, watching the fishermen catching the fish called goujon[265] and later eating the goujon and drinking white wine at the open air restaurant called La Pêche Miraculeuse built out over the river at Bas Meudon.[266] Hemingway wrote that with the fishermen and the life on the river, the barges and the tugs, the

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[261]Peyton E. Richter (ed.), Perspectives in Aesthetics, p. 327.

[262]George Santayana, The Sense of Beauty, p. 52.

[263]Richter, op. cit., p. 327.

[264]Santayana, op. cit., pp. 65-66, 68-70.

[265]Ernest Hemingway, A Moveable Feast, p. 43.

[266]Loc. cit.

great elms, the plane trees and the polars, he could never be lonely along the river.[267] All of Hemingway's sensory perceptions gave him great and unending esthetic pleasure and beauty, such as eating trout and drinking Sion wine at Aigle, Switzerland, looking down and across the lake to the Dent du Midi and the mouth of the Rhône flowing into the lake.[268]

In Death in the Afternoon, Hemingway had looked closely to observe the inner workings of the kind of man who would face death as a way of earning a living. In The Green Hills of Africa, Hemingway portrayed himself as the hunter who had a firm grip on his esthetic and his beliefs and was putting them to the test. In A Moveable Feast, he remembered the people he had known in the beginning of his career in Paris, the places he had lived and visited and the things which had impressed him and from which he was later to draw inspiration for many of his stories. Not all of the people, places or things he remembered were of esthetic value to him but from all of them he learned as he matured into a writer and he remembered. The scenes that Hemingway sketches in A Moveable Feast are all striking and memorable although they are by no means

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[267] Ibid., pp. 44-45.

[268] Ibid., p. 55.

all picturesque or lovely. The twenty carefully polished and styled reminiscences bring to life the milieu of Paris in the 1920's, the people who worked, or wasted themselves, the lovely places one could go which had not yet been spoiled by progress, and the fine foods and wines one could buy cheaply, or do without. Hemingway and his young wife Hadley were very much a part of this society and the impressions they gained as they walked the sidewalks of Paris and the quais of the Seine were to have a lasting and moving effect on young Hemingway at the outset of his literary career and at the inception of his esthetic beliefs.

By rereading the old notebooks he had left in a trunk in the basement of the Ritz many years ago, and thinking about his early development as a writer, Hemingway, after a span of many years, was quite able to see his esthetical theories beginning to take shape. In a real sense, Hemingway was developing esthetics which were modeled perfectly after Aristotle's dictates for an ideal character enumerated earlier. If, perhaps, Hemingway, as big game hunter, could not measure up to his esthetical standards, he could most certainly measure up to them as artist. The rigid discipline that he enforced on himself made it easy for him to recognize those artists who were sincere in their profession from those that were not.

For himself, Hemingway set the esthetic discipline of work before pleasure, and he clung to it fiercely all of his life. He worked best when he would get up very early while his wife was still asleep and the goatherd was just piping his goats up the street and the cobblestones were beginning to dry after the rain.[269] And he liked to work well very early when only he and his son Bumby and the cat, F. Puss, were the only ones awake. Hemingway could also write in the room which he had at the top of a hotel, the same one Verlaine had died in,[270] that looked across all the roofs and chimneys of that quarter of Paris.[271] Another fine place where Hemingway could often work, and well, when let alone, was the cafés of Paris. One of his favorites was the Closerie des Lilas on the Place St.-Michel.[272] He would go there early, order a cafe au Lait to warm him and begin writing in his notebook. Sometimes, he would have trouble getting started with a story and so he would say to himself that all he had to do was to write one true sentence, the truest one he knew, and then write another one.[273] The writing of true sentences was extremely

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[269] Ibid., p. 49.

[270] Ibid., p. 4.

[271] Ibid., p. 11.

[272] Ibid., p. 5.

[273] Ibid., p. 12.

important to Hemingway's esthetics. He felt that a writer who tried to write of things about which he knew nothing was cheating by not being true either to himself or his readers. Cheating and faking were things that Hemingway detested, both in his life and in his writing. When Hemingway missed a day's writing for some reason, he would feel the loss deeply, as on the trip he took with F. Scott Fitzgerald to Lyon to pick up the car which Fitzgerald had left there. Hemingway writes, " . . . already I missed not working and I felt the death loneliness that comes at the end of everyday that is wasted in your life."[274] The only training that Hemingway mentions in regard to his writing is in reference to drinking. "My training was never to drink after dinner nor before I wrote nor while I was writing,"[275] although in his room at the top of the hotel, Hemingway had a bottle of kirsch, and he writes, "I took a drink of kirsch when I would get toward the end of a story or toward the end of a day's work."[276] By adhering to his esthetics, Hemingway found that there was no way in which he could drink and write at the same time. This would have been concession to vice or baseness

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[274] Ibid., pp. 165-166.

[275] Ibid., p. 174.

[276] Ibid., p. 12.

and, thus, could not be termed a "tragic flaw," but just simply a personal vice.

Part of Hemingway's esthetic discipline toward his work involved a careful attitude toward luck, which he seems to have had much faith in. He mentions that he always carried a horse chestnut and a rabbit's foot, although the fur had worn off the foot long ago, so that, when he walked, he felt the claws scratching in the lining of his pocket, and he knew he still had his luck.[277] At another point in the book, Hemingway mentions how lucky he and his wife are, and, then, on an ominous note says that he was a fool not to knock on wood, although there was wood everywhere in their apartment.[278]

The writers of great fiction that Hemingway held in high admiration, because of the reality and immediacy they conveyed to a reader, were the "Rooshians,"[279] as Ezra Pound called them. Hemingway was striving for the same unchanging timeless quality in his works, and so he was very glad to be allowed to borrow from Sylvia Beach's bookstore, Shakespeare and Company, such books as Turgenev's Sportsman's Sketches and Constance Garnett's translation

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[277] Ibid., p. 91.

[278] Ibid., p. 38.

[279] Ibid., p. 134.

of Dostoyevsky's War and Peace and The Gambler and Other Stories.[280] Hemingway wrote:

> In Dostoyevsky there were things believeable and . . . true they changed you as you read them . . . madness . . . and the insanity of gambling were there to know as you knew the landscape and roads in Turgenev, and the movement of troops . . . and the fighting in Tolstoi.[281]

Hemingway felt Dostoyevsky had made the people in his books come alive as almost no one else had ever done.[282] Hemingway also read Chekov and Gogol, and, later, he said that trying to read the stories of Katherine Mansfield after he had read the Russian authors was like drinking near-beer.[283]

The one thing that came closest to sidetracking Hemingway in his career of writing was his gambling on the horses, which he preferred to call racing.[284] Racing never came between Hemingway and Hadley, but he writes that it stayed very close to them like a demanding friend for a long time.[285] And he finally quit, because he found it was taking up too much of his time and that he was

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[280] Ibid., p. 36.

[281] Ibid., p. 133.

[282] Ibid., p. 134.

[283] Ibid., p. 133.

[284] Ibid., p. 61.

[285] Loc. cit.

getting too involved. He finally broke himself from gambling with the same philosophy as had his friend, Mike Ward, "Anything you have to bet on to get a kick isn't worth seeing."[286] And Hemingway discovered that everything that is good and bad leaves an empty place when it is gone and if it is bad the emptiness will fill up of its own accord but if it is good, one must find something better to fill the empty place with.[287] Gradually, Hemingway filled up the empty place left by the horse races by going to watch the bicycle races.[288]

The esthetics Hemingway has concerning writing are very stable and very private, and they saved him several times from straying away from writing in those days when he was not making any money and was always hungry, " . . . explaining at home that you were lunching out with someone . . . "[289] and then going to the Luxembourg gardens. Almost inherently, Hemingway was obsessed by the compulsion to remain faithful to his esthetics as the only means of ever achieving success. This obsession was remarkable in a young man facing so many obstacles and being in

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[286] Ibid., p. 63.

[287] Ibid., p. 62.

[288] Ibid., p. 64.

[289] Ibid., p. 69.

a society where there were so few artists who were genuine in their endeavors. The privacy of Hemingway's esthetics arose from his policy of doing his work alone, and in not discussing it. The stability of his esthetics lay in the fact that, as a classic statement of character, they allowed for absolutely no deviation, and although Hemingway was tempted to yield several times, he did not.

The constant hunger that haunted Hemingway was a severe ordeal for a young man just beginning a new career, and although being hungry then, as now, was never a pleasant experience, he still had the esthetic courage necessary to continue to write "straight and true" instead of sacrificing his art for money and writing what would have been, to him, inferior literature. Once, after being broke and very hungry, Hemingway stopped to see Sylvia Beach, who had an envelope for him containing six hundred francs for a story that a German magazine had bought. Now, he was able to eat and drink. He spoke to Sylvia about his hardships and grievances, but when he was back out on the sidewalk, he was very angry with himself:

> You God damn complainer. You dirty phony saint and martyr . . . Sylvia would have loaned you money. Sure. And the next thing you would be compromising on something else.[290]

By holding out against his hunger, which he thought was

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[290] Ibid., p. 72.

healthy, Hemingway had kept his honor and not compromised his esthetic principles.

There were plenty of people in Paris who played at being writers or artists who did not feel strongly about maintaining one's dignity over hunger or maintaining one's dignity over anything. Hemingway could not tolerate these people or their phoniness.

In the beginning, Hemingway had affection for Gertrude Stein. He liked some of her early writing, such as "Melanctha," and he thought that the very long book, The Making of Americans, had great brilliance in it at the start,[291] but as it went on, he felt it became repetitious garbage and that any less lazy writer would have thrown it away.[292] Stein, as a writer, was of some talent when she began to first write, Hemingway felt, but as she had become entranced with her own inventions of word rhythms and patterns and repeated them endlessly, thereby turning her writing into unintelligible gibberish.[293] As Hemingway became more and more acquainted with Stein, he found that she refused to admit that certain things existed which were contrary to her beliefs or were objectionable. One

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[291] Ibid., p. 17.

[292] Ibid., p. 18.

[293] Loc. cit.

of the foremost ideas which she would not acknowledge, or even give thought to, was that there was anything wrong with the relationship between Stein and her companion, Alice Toklas. Stein tried to make Hemingway believe that, whereas a friendship which might exist between two men was always ugly and repugnant, the relationship of two women was the opposite because women were made happy by it and could live together happily.

Stein was exceptionally narrow minded about any idea or any person holding differing opinions. She tried to convince Hemingway that many of his ideas about writing were wrong and that hers were right. At this time, Hemingway was selling his stories to Der Querschnitt, the Frankfurter Zeitung and The Transatlantic,[294] while Stein was publishing nothing except what Hemingway was forcing Ford Madox Ford to publish from The Making of Americans in The Transatlantic, and she was becoming increasingly bitter. Stein wanted publication in the Atlantic Monthly, and she told Hemingway he was not good enough for the Saturday Evening Post.[295] Hemingway wrote that, in order for her to be happy, Stein had to be published, but added, "This had not become an acute situation when I first knew her . . . . "[296]

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[294] Ibid., p. 71.

[295] Ibid., p. 18.

[296] Ibid., p. 17.

In addition to not admitting her sexual relationship with Toklas to be unusual, nor her inability to get herself published, Stein would also not face the evil of the world outside her door. When Hemingway went on journalistic trips and returned, Stein would want to know all of the amusing details, the "gallows-humor stories."[297] Hemingway writes, "She wanted to know the gay part of how the world was going; never the real, never the bad . . . . The other things I did not talk of and wrote by myself."[298] Stein was pitifully small minded; she would not read D. H. Lawrence because she thought him pathetic;[299] and she would not allow James Joyce's name to be mentioned.[300] Her smallness reached its peak when she became angry at Ezra Pound, because he had cracked a chair in her apartment.[301] Stein had told Hemingway that he was of the "lost generation," and that it did no good to argue with her.[302] Thus, it was not long before Hemingway became disgusted with her and wrote, "But the hell with her lost-generation talk and

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[297] Ibid., p. 25.

[298] Loc. cit.

[299] Ibid., p. 26.

[300] Ibid., p. 28.

[301] Loc. cit.

[302] Ibid., p. 29.

all the dirty, easy labels."[303] Stein's lazy writing habits, her narrowmindedness and her intolerance of other writers whose works contradicted her own beliefs marked her, by Hemingway's esthetics, as having all the flaws alien to a classic character. Stein did not perform her functions as a writer; she was not true to type or to life and she was inconsistent. Originally, Hemingway had become friends with her through Sherwood Anderson, and Hemingway had enjoyed her paintings, her generosity and her conversation, but the Stein of their early acquaintanceship wore off as Hemingway realized that there was no esthetic discipline behind Stein's writing and very little unity or discipline in anything she undertook. Disenchantment was the next step in Hemingway's relationship with her and soon they parted friends.

The one person in Paris who seemed completely to typify Hemingway's idea of a kind and sincere friend, an individual to whom Hemingway was to be attracted all of his life, was Sylvia Beach. As Hemingway had written of the Masai natives in The Green Hills of Africa:

> They certainly were our friends . . . . They had that attitude that makes brothers, that unexpressed but instant and complete acceptance . . . . That attitude you only get from the best of the English, the best of the Hungarians and the very best Spaniards;

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[303] Ibid., pp. 30-31.

> the thing that used to be the most clear distinction of nobility . . . the people who have it do not survive, but very few pleasanter things ever happen to you than the encountering of it.[304]

Hemingway encountered this feeling in Sylvia the first time he ever met her. Although Hemingway lived in one of the poorest sections of Paris and did not have enough money to join her lending library, Beach was not concerned with the problem of a deposit and told him to take as many books as he wanted.[305] She even asked him and his wife to come to dinner at the time of their first encounter.[306] There was absolutely no reason for Beach to trust Hemingway, but she did, and Hemingway found her delightful and charming, and wrote, "No one that I ever knew was nicer to me."[307] Of course, Hemingway as an author was perfectly unknown at that time, but Beach accepted him immediately, almost as though she was blessed with that quality of nobility which Hemingway referred to in The Green Hills of Africa. Although Sylvia Beach ran a bookstore and was not a practicing artist as such, she typified for Hemingway a woman of remarkable adherance to her own set standard of values which closely resembled Hemingway's, for which he held

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[304]Ernest Hemingway, The Green Hills of Africa, p. 221.

[305]Ernest Hemingway, A Moveable Feast, p. 35.

[306]Ibid., p. 37.

[307]Ibid., p. 35.

her in high esteem. In an Aristotelian sense, she would have measured up to the classic concept of the ideal character, and Hemingway admired her for it, although she was only a shop-keeper and never aspired to anything else.

Ford Madox Ford was one of the expatriates in Paris whom Hemingway knew but did not particularly like. Ford published The Transatlantic, and Hemingway had helped to get Stein published in it. As Hemingway pictures him, Ford is a pathetic figure, boasting of how he "cut" Hillaire Belloc until later, when Hemingway finds out the man who Ford thought was Belloc was actually Aleister Crowley, the diabolist.[308] Hemingway tries to be polite to Ford because Ford is a mutual friend of Pound's, but the prose portrait of Ford is very derogatory, because Hemingway finds Ford pompous and stuffy and more interested in ancient and outdated habits, such as "cutting" someone, rather than pursuing the more important matter of attending to the profession of writing. Ford is guilty of the flaw of baseness, i.e., smugness and pomposity. Ford exhibits no sense of esthetics and degrades himself by stooping to petty snobbery.

Another writer with little talent and few scruples was a man Hemingway identified only once as Hal, probably

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[308] Ibid., p. 88.

Harold Stearns, who served as a model for Harvey Stone in The Sun Also Rises. Hal found Hemingway writing in the Closerie des Lilas, and he began to whine and complain about his writing with such false statements as, "Suppose you wanted to be a writer and felt it in every part of your body and it just wouldn't come,"[309] or even more theatrical, "Suppose once it had come like an irresistible torrent and then it left you mute and silent."[310] Hemingway had no use for men like Hal who talked in fake emotional language and only wasted his time instead of working hard at writing and taking it as the serious profession that it was.

Hal is guilty of the flaw of expecting life and success to come easy to him without working. He is a complainer who mouths sad stories about fate's injustice but makes no effort to better himself or improve his situation. He is not true to life as he makes no sincere effort at working seriously, and he finds no sympathy in Hemingway.

In Paris, Hemingway knew the artist Pascin who was a strange combination of man who outwardly flaunted the reality of the world as though it was of no importance but who inwardly was very deeply troubled at the reality

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[309] Ibid., p. 93.

[310] Loc. cit.

that surrounded him and so he eventually destroyed himself.[311] The time that Hemingway met him in a cafe, Pascin was drinking heavily in the company of two of his models and was the only one at the table who was comfortable and enjoying himself.[312] They all had a drink together and Pascin was in a fine frame of mind. Later he hung himself and Hemingway wrote:

> I liked to remember him as he was that night at the Dôme. They say the seeds of what we will do are in all of us, but it always seemed to me that in those who make jokes in life the seeds are covered with better soil and with a higher grade of manure.[313]

Of the many artists whom Hemingway knew, Pascin probably came the closest to being a tragic character in the classic sense. Pascin lived unconsciously by the esthetics that Hemingway tried to follow, and yet Pascin was unable to face death rationally. He ended his life through an act of vice, or suicide, which is an ultimate act of cowardice to escape having to face life's demands.

Hemingway had affection for Ezra Pound: "Ezra Pound was always a good friend and he was always doing things for people."[314] Pound was always helping others, his

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[311] Ibid., p. 104.

[312] Ibid., p. 103.

[313] Ibid., p. 104.

[314] Ibid., p. 107.

only fault as Hemingway saw it, if overgenerosity of nature can be a fault. Hemingway said, "[Pound] liked the works of friends, which is beautiful as loyalty but can be disasterous as judgment."[315] Pound was willing to help anyone who he felt had talent and needed help, men like T. S. Eliot. Hemingway probably considered Pound's generosity was wrong for two reasons: one reason might be that in helping others, Pound had little time to do his own work, and secondly, Pound made no distinction between the sincere artist and the fake, and thus exposed himself needlessly to too many sham artists. Pound could have no place in Hemingway's idea of esthetics, because not only did he not perform the proper functions of his profession, i.e., artist, through devoting his time to too many other people, but also, as an ideal tragic character, he was almost too virtuous and just, instead of being more discriminating in his aid. In this instance, the element of peripety worked against Pound instead of for him.

Besides Hal, another pseudo-writer that Hemingway called a "con man,"[316] was Ernest Walsh. Walsh was co-editing a small literary magazine called The Dial which was to award one thousand dollars to the most deserving

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[315] Loc. cit.

[316] Ibid., p. 127.

writer of the year, except Walsh was going about Paris offering the prize to almost all the writers, Hemingway, Joyce and probably Pound among them. Walsh violated Hemingway's esthetics and Aristotle's design for an ideal tragic character in every respect through his overriding passion of greed, and his tremendous capacity for fakery and insincerity. Hemingway could not abide Walsh, as was quite natural.

Evan Shipman was a fine poet and a good friend that Hemingway liked very much. Hemingway writes that Shipman cared for poetry, horses, writing and painting.[317] And esthetically, Shipman went a long way toward meeting the Aristotelian concept of a tragic character. He performed his professional duties well, he was sincere about life and there was unity in his actions. Perhaps if there were any flaw in his make-up, it was the same flaw as Pound's; Shipman was too virtuous and just. Shipman was an unambitious writer,[318] and Hemingway respected him because he was genuine about his profession and his relationship to his friends.

Ralph Cheever Dunning was a man whom Pound had befriended who could not bear to live up to the reality of his being without poetical talent. Dunning smoked

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[317] Ibid., p. 135.

[318] Ibid., p. 146.

opium and rarely ate food but Pound liked him because he wrote poetry in terze riruce.[319] Before Pound left Paris for Rapallo, where he still lives, he entrusted a jar of opium to Hemingway for Dunning in case he was ever in desperate need of it. Later there was an incident with Dunning which Hemingway interprets as a need for the opium but when he takes it to Dunning, Dunning becomes violently angry at Hemingway and throws milk bottles at him[320] rather than confess his addiction to drugs. He would not admit reality in his life.

Dunning's downfall in the classic sense was due to vice and baseness, which in his case, was his dependency on opium. In Hemingway's esthetic opinion, good poets, of course, need not be dependent on drugs for inspiration. Dunning was not true to his profession and was thus disqualified from being a tragic character.

In A Moveable Feast the best example of a writer who neither remained true to himself or to his writing nor took writing seriously as a profession and, thus, wasted and dissipated his talent and his life was F. Scott Fitzgerald. The first time Hemingway and Fitzgerald met, Fitzgerald told Hemingway how he wrote good short stories

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[319] Ibid., p. 143.

[320] Ibid., p. 145.

and then put in the changes necessary to make them salable to the Saturday Evening Post.[321] Hemingway writes, "I had been shocked at this and I said I thought it was whoring."[322] Fitzgerald agreed that it was whoring, but that he had to do it to make money, and Hemingway answered, "I said that I did not believe anyone could write anyway except the very best he could write without destroying his talent."[323] Fitzgerald quite naturally does not agree with this view.

This confession on Fitzgerald's part about faking his stories to make them sell must have been Hemingway's first indication that Fitzgerald was not, at the time, a true artist and was, thus, throwing his talent away, a most unforgivable sin where Hemingway was concerned. Hemingway's esthetics did not permit any cheating or faking of any kind, but demanded that the artist make full use of his time everyday, the principle reason for Hemingway's giving up racing.

The burden which Fitzgerald bore was his wife Zelda. Zelda was extremely jealous of Fitzgerald's work,[324] and

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[321] Ibid., p. 155.

[322] Loc. cit.

[323] Ibid., pp. 155-156.

[324] Ibid., p. 180.

when he made up his mind to stop drinking and start working, she would taunt him with such jeers as "killjoy" and "spoilsport"[325] until she could eventually distract him and get him to drinking again. When Fitzgerald would drink wine, Zelda would smile happily at him, and Hemingway writes, "I learned to know that smile very well. It meant she knew Scott would not be able to work."[326]

Fitzgerald disappointed Hemingway when they first met, and Hemingway discovered that Fitzgerald was cheating, and later, when the two returned from Lyon after retrieving Fitzgerald's car, Hemingway was angry and disgusted. He was bent on avoiding Fitzgerald and working until Fitzgerald brought over a new book, The Great Gatsby, for Hemingway to read. Then, Hemingway wrote:

> When I finished the book I knew no matter what Scott did, nor how he behaved, I must know it was like a sickness and be of any help I could to him and try to be a good friend.[327]

Hemingway thought The Great Gatsby a very fine book and knew that Fitzgerald was capable of even better things, but, he adds, "I did not know Zelda yet, and so I did not know the terrible odds that were against him."[328]

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[325] Ibid., p. 179.

[326] Ibid., p. 180.

[327] Ibid., p. 176.

[328] Loc. cit.

Hemingway looked back on Fitzgerald as a tragic man because he had brought upon himself a terrible destruction and an almost complete waste of talent that "was as natural as the pattern that was made by the dust on a butterfly's wings."[329] Fitzgerald shared the blame with Zelda for his dissipation of talent, and Hemingway could never quite forgive the two of them for ruining Fitzgerald. To Hemingway, a writer owed a great debt to himself to do his work and to do it the best way he knew how, not to squander his talent or waste it in any way. His esthetics forbade it in him, and he found it inexcusable in others.

Part of the reason also for Hemingway's inability to excuse Fitzgerald was because Fitzgerald had violated another of Hemingway's esthetic tenets--Fitzgerald would not face reality.

In order to write the first realistic stories he was attempting, Hemingway felt it profoundly necessary to face reality in any form it took, no matter how harsh or cruel it seemed. Then, just as now, one encountered many harsh and cruel aspects of life. The terribly painful problem of reality which Fitzgerald would not let himself face openly was that of his wife's mental instability. By not facing the reality of his wife's mental deterioration,

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[329] Ibid., p. 147.

Fitzgerald was subject to the flaw of not being true to life. Hemingway mentions that Zelda was a beautiful woman,[330] and she was also an accomplished dancer, but as she verged more and more upon insanity, she became more insistent that Fitzgerald stay away from his work and accompany her on all-night drinking parties.[331] Fitzgerald had written a fine novel and Hemingway told him he must not write cheaply but he must write as "straight" as he could. Fitzgerald objected that he had to write stories that would sell, but added that he would try to follow Hemingway's advice.[332] Unfortunately, Fitzgerald could not do so, because Zelda would not let him, and Fitzgerald was fortunate to find any work accomplished at all. Still, Fitzgerald would not admit that Zelda was destroying him along with herself. Instead of leaving her, he remained with her until she was committed to an asylum for what was then called a "nervous breakdown."[333] Hemingway relates that they all knew Zelda was in grave danger when she confided to Hemingway that she thought Al Jolson was greater than Jesus.[334] And Hemingway writes, "Scott did

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[330] Ibid., p. 186.

[331] Ibid., p. 183.

[332] Ibid., pp. 182-183.

[333] Ibid., p. 189.

[334] Ibid., p. 186.

not write any more that was good until after he knew that she was insane."[335] Zelda had exhibited signs of her unnaturalness for a long time before she was committed but Fitzgerald closed his eyes to it. He would not face the reality of her problem until she had almost ruined him in making him compete with her in her drinking.[336] Because of Zelda, Fitzgerald was never consistent in his work; he could only write when Zelda would leave him alone, which was not frequent. As Hemingway implies in his epigram of Fitzgerald, in the beginning his career as a talented writer seemed positively assured in every way, until he married Zelda, and then she wrecked both of them. Fitzgerald had, however, several of the elements of the tragic character: he went from happiness to misery; he was not virtuous and just; and he belonged to a distinguished family, thus making his fall seem greater.

These, then, were the men and women whom Hemingway knew in Paris, and they were the ones who made lasting impressions on him. Hemingway adhered to his esthetic discipline, worked hard, and achieved fame and the rewards that go along with it. In another sense, Hemingway found lasting esthetic enjoyment from all of the beauty that

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[335] Loc. cit.

[336] Ibid., p. 183.

surrounded him in Paris, such as the Cezannes, or the races at Enghien or the good and great friendships that endured. He and Hadley enjoyed living in the Vorarlberg in Austria in the autumn with the forests to walk in and the winters to ski down the steep mountain slopes. All of these things were a source of continuous pleasure to him, and his esthetics gradually expanded to absorb all of the greatness those early years had to offer. Although he and Hadley were poor, financially, they never looked at their poverty that way, and Hemingway says, " . . . we did not ever think of ourselves as poor. We did not accept it. We thought we were superior people . . . . "[337] Rightly so, they were. They ate well and drank well; they loved each other;[338] and the city of Paris gave them her charms and her beauty for nothing.

Unfortunately, Hemingway's marriage to Hadley did not survive, for two classic reasons. In terms of the marriage as a classic plot, it dissolved because it lacked thought, an important element. Hemingway admits that he was preoccupied with his work and was not giving much attention to the domestic situation of having two attractive girls in the house.[339] Hemingway's esthetics fail him

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[337] Ibid., p. 51.

[338] Loc. cit.

[339] Ibid., p. 210.

in terms of his marriage to Hadley, because they make no provision for any human element, i.e., dissatisfaction, lust, and emotional involvement. Hemingway becomes discontented with Hadley, and, thus, in order to free himself of her, he became false to life and inconsistent in his actions. Hemingway's esthetics worked splendidly for him as an artist, but they failed him as a human being.

CHAPTER V

THE ART OF THE IMPOSSIBLE

From out of Hemingway's non-fiction arises a statement of his esthetics which few critics have taken the time to interpret and, then, not in the depth which those esthetics required. Granted, Hemingway enjoyed bullfights, big game hunting and fishing, and outdoor pursuits, but it is ironic that intelligent critics should attribute to Hemingway a sportsman's code and let it go at that. Aware of Aristotle's classic definition of tragic character, he sought to adapt it to his esthetics, both in life and in art. Strangely enough, he realized quite early the demands of a true tragic Aristotelian heroic existence, and yet, thi concept did not deter him. From the very beginning, he struggled valiantly to evade the flaws which are ever present in existence. However, just as John Killinger could not prove conclusively that Hemingway was an existentialist because the heroes of Hemingway's fiction do not remain objectively free from emotional and worldly ties,[340] Hemingway cannot be proved a tragic character, either.

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[340] John Killinger, Hemingway and the Dead Gods, p. 99.

Hemingway found that in life there are flaws of character which must, by necessity, occasionally be broken, often through personal error.

Hemingway's classic esthetic theory functioned well for him in his art, explaining not only his universal appeal, but also the timeliness and immediacy that is found in his fiction, particularly his short stories. One example might be "Today is Friday," a short story illustrating the three different views of the Crucifixion as seen through the eyes of three Roman soldiers who witnessed the event and are drinking wine in a Jewish wine shop. The first soldier views the Crucifixion in a positive sense, "I'll tell you he looked pretty good to be in there today."[341] The second soldier sees it in the light of skepticism, "Any time you show me one that doesn't want to get down off the cross when the time comes . . . I'll climb right up with him."[342] The third soldier, who is sick, is totally indifferent, "He was all right."[343] There is no reason that this short sketch, written in the form of a playlet, should ever lose either its appeal or its contemporaniety through the three universal attitudes which people have held about Christ for over nineteen-

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[341] Ernest Hemingway, The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 359.

[342] Ibid., p. 357.

[343] Loc. cit.

hundred years. "Today is Friday" is but a single illustration of the success of Hemingway's fiction which reveals his classic esthetics.

Basically, in the early 1920's, Hemingway came to realize the intrinsic value of the bullring in relation to the tragic plot of Aristotle. He studied the tragedy of the death of the bull, and it taught him two fundamental lessons. The first was how to describe death, one of the simplest and most fundamental of men's actions.[344] The second was that only through choosing and then adhering to a basic esthetic could he ever hope to write the sort of timeless prose he was at that time attempting.[345]

Along with discovering that a basic esthetic was necessary for a timeless prose, Hemingway also found that a similar esthetics was necessary in day to day living if man were to find in life a meaningful and positive existence. Thus, in Death in the Afternoon, Hemingway elaborated on the qualities or the faults of the matadors in order better to clarify for himself the classic esthetics which he was formulating. These esthetic principles were not a new type of morality. Burhans observes, "Hemingway has not evolved new moral values; rather, he has reaffirmed man's

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[344]Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, p. 2.

[345]Loc. cit.

oldest ones--courage, love, humility, solidarity, and interdependence."[346] In choosing Aristotelian tragedy as the basis for his esthetics, Hemingway realized the formidable task of maintaining them. From Juan Belmonte, Joselito, and Maera, Hemingway learned of the obstacles that a man encounters in the presence of death, and he observed how these men calmly faced the challenge of the bull.

In Aristotelian terms, as Hemingway viewed it, life was the tragic plot in which a man tried to uphold himself in the role of tragic character. A man must perform his function in his chosen profession as honestly and as accurately as he can. But a man has only himself in life, and he can either be true to himself, or he can cheat himself. Success has been earned in both ways upon many occasions, but Hemingway knew that to cheat was to betray himself, and that eventually all a man has in life is his own self-respect and identity. Burhans had the same idea when he wrote that Santiago

> . . . expresses Hemingway's view of the ultimate tragic irony of man's fate: that only through the isolated individualism and the pride which drive him beyond his true place in life does man develop the qualities and the wisdom which teach him the sin of such individualism and pride and which bring him the deepest understanding of himself and of

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[346]Clinton S. Burhans, Jr., "The Old Man and the Sea: Hemingway's Tragic Vision of Man," American Literature, XXXI (January, 1960), 454.

his place in the world.[347]

Burhans is expressing his belief in Hemingway's individual quest for an esthetic that will serve him in life and art, and, again, he came very close to stating this concept when he wrote that, by accepting the world as it is and trying to learn to live in it, "Hemingway has achieved a tragic but ennobling vision of man which is in the tradition of Sophocles, Christ, Melville and Conrad."[348] Burhans is correct. Hemingway had achieved a "tragic but ennobling vision," or esthetic, and he worked at its development in his non-fiction. Through his study of bullfighting, he learned of the virtues and the flaws that a man encounters when trying to follow the requirements of the Aristotelian concept of the heroic man. From the position of observer in Death in the Afternoon, Hemingway moved to a position of participant in The Green Hills of Africa. In the role of hunter, Hemingway had a firsthand opportunity to test his carefully evolved theory of esthetics. But he discovered, as have all men who have tried it, that it is very difficult and often impossible to live by a vision one has inside himself. Although Hemingway could shoot well, and on safari he killed cleanly most of his game,

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[347] Ibid., p. 453.

[348] Loc. cit.

his esthetics eventually became too demanding, and he fell short of being a tragic character. But notwithstanding Hemingway's failure to live up to his esthetics, his standards still gave him a goal in life, a set of principles to live by, and a sense of order.

In his discussion of the position of Pedro Romero, the matador of The Sun Also Rises, Mark Spilka could also be talking about Hemingway. Spilka writes that in

> . . . a world where love and religion are defunct, where proofs of manhood are difficult and scarce . . . every man must learn to define his own moral conditions and then live up to them.[349]

Hemingway tried to live up to the morals inherent in his esthetics in The Green Hills of Africa, but ultimately he failed. His failure must be classified as the result of a tragic flaw of inconsistency. By wounding the sable bull instead of killing it cleanly, Hemingway is not only inconsistent, he has also failed to perform the proper functions of his character, i.e., that of the hunter. If the same tragic flaws were carried into the bullring by a matador, he would have every right to expect to be gored severely or killed.

Although Hemingway personally failed his esthetics in The Green Hills of Africa, he structured the book as

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[349]Mark Spilka, "The Death of Love in The Sun Also Rises," in Twelve Original Essays on Great American Novels, p. 256.

a tragic plot according to his esthetics of art, and it succeeded beautifully. Hemingway carefully arranged to have the animals killed in an ascending order of pleasure and happiness to the hunter, until finally the kudu is killed, and then depicted a moving from happiness to misery as the wounded animal escapes. Hemingway, himself, cannot be the true tragic character because of his envy for his hunting companion, Karl, in addition to the other flaws previously mentioned. This tension between the two men creates suspense, and, in the end of the book, there is a resolving catharsis of the anxiety thus established.

Because Hemingway thought of death as the final tragedy that happens to a man, and he spent much time in studying death in wars, in the bullring, and in hunting, the critics have been quick to infer that Hemingway's subject matter is gruesome and unnatural, dealing with the lower elements of society which bear little relation to actual life. Regarding Hemingway's much discussed preoccupation with the subject of death, the perceptive critic, Spilka, also writes tellingly of the manner in which a man adapts beliefs to fit his private life:

> In a sense, he moves forever on a kind of imaginative frontier, where the opposition is always Nature, in some token form, where the stakes are always manliness and self-respect, and where death invests the scene with tragic implications.[350]

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[350] Ibid., p. 249.

According to Spilka's keen analysis, it is only the men who are willing to explore life to its fullest and to search for its true values, as Hemingway did, who ever actually come close to realizing the simple tragedy that death brings. Those who sit on the sidelines and comment are only deluding themselves as to the pleasures and experiences which life has to offer.

The concept of an esthetic failure in life which Hemingway depicted in The Green Hills of Africa was balanced by his representation of the esthetic success in art found not only in The Green Hills of Africa but also in A Moveable Feast. Although Hemingway could not control the every twist and quirk of fate that awaits a man seeking to lead a life of classic character by adhering to a classic esthetic, he could control, as he did so excellently, the art that was formed under his hands. The rigeur of his esthetics dictated that his writing be free of flaw, and Hemingway saw to it that these dictates were followed. Andrew Turnbull, an eminent American author and critic, writes:

> Hemingway's initial strength lay in his dedication. He scorned cheap publicity. He wouldn't debase his stuff to make it sell and got furious at exaggerations of his exploits in puffs and press releases.[351]

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[351]Andrew Turnbull, "Perkins's Three Generals," The New York Times Book Review, (July 16, 1967), p. 25.

A Moveable Feast carefully documents the people Hemingway was acquainted with in Paris at the outset of his career as a writer, and in looking back upon them over a span of forty years, Hemingway could see where his esthetics separated him from those who lived and worked without a similar esthetic theory. There were many very talented people in Paris at the time, but talent is not always the important measurement for deciding who will succeed and who will fail. Rather it is what is inside a man, his amount of "dedication," that which keeps him going, refusing to surrender his honor when there are many easy ways to give in and only one difficult way to hold out.

Beginning with his first short story, "Up in Michigan," written in 1921, the prose that Hemingway wrote was what he liked to call "straight" prose, by which he meant several things, although mainly that he wrote only what he knew about from personal experience; he did not cheat by trying to evoke fake emotions; and he wrote of reality as he knew it. These were the basic tenets of his esthetic art, and he did not sacrifice them when life became difficult.

In 1935, Hemingway stated his firm conviction that if a writer is serious enough and has luck, there is a fourth and a fifth dimension which can be achieved.[352]

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[352]Ernest Hemingway, The Green Hills of Africa, p. 27.

Upon being questioned about this remark, Hemingway listed the elements which must combine to reach these dimensions in prose. Hemingway wrote:

> First there must be much talent . . . such as Kipling. Then there must be . . . the discipline of Flaubert . . . there must be . . . an absolute conscience . . . to prevent faking. Then the writer must be intelligent and disinterested and above all he must survive. The hardest thing . . . is for him to survive and get his work done.[353]

This is Hemingway revealing the key to his esthetics, the art of surviving and getting his work done, without which there is nothing. These were the necessities, bluntly stated, along with his Aristotelian esthetics, that Hemingway was counting on to help him reach lofty dimensions in prose, if ever he could, and it is, now, for the critics to decide if he did.

Previously, Hemingway had made his clearest statement about the American writers and their place in literature, saying that the New England school of writers, such as Emerson, Hawthorne and Whittier did not realize that the classics they were trying to write need not bear any resemblance to any classics that had ever been written.[354] Hemingway wrote that a classic can steal from anything it is superior to, and that all writers of classics do it.[355]

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[353] Loc. cit.

[354] Loc. cit.

[355] Loc. cit.

He contended, "Some writers are only born to help another writer to write one sentence. But it cannot derive from or resemble a previous classic."[356] In this same context, he reiterates that "Writers should work alone. They should see each other only after their work is done, and not too often then."[357] By saying that a classic may borrow from anything that it is superior to, Hemingway means it may borrow from any other work of prose. Aristotle laid down the rules for the proper concept of plot and character that has never been improved upon. Hemingway, of course, was influenced by many writers, Kipling and Ring Lardner being two of the earliest to whom he gives such credit.[358] These two writers were the ones Hemingway had imitated as a high school student.[359]

Without a stable esthetic, Hemingway felt that a writer in America could be easily destroyed.[360] They make money; then they increase their standard of living, and then they have to write hurriedly or sloppily to keep up

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[356] Loc. cit.

[357] Ibid., p. 21.

[358] Charles A. Fenton, The Apprenticeship of Ernest Hemingway, p. 26.

[359] Ibid., p. 29.

[360] Ernest Hemingway, The Green Hills of Africa, p. 23.

their expensive standards.[361] Finally, the American writers become ambitious, and once they betray themselves, they write more inferior prose to justify themselves.[362] If they read the critics, they may lose their confidence, and then they may be unable to write at all.[363] This view may serve as a partial explanation of Hemingway's always avoiding living and writing in America when he could help it. Another explanation may be found in his illustration of the writers in New York whom he compared with angleworms in a bottle that feed off each other, never leaving the confines of the big city because of their fear of being alone.[364]

Hemingway felt no compulsion to live in America. He found subject matter all over the world in any of the numerous pursuits in which he was always engaged. As a man, he experienced inevitable circumstances and conditions which were able to sidetrack him from his desire to live an heroic existence. But from his early training, he was skillfully able to avoid the traps and pitfalls that await the serious writer. Throughout his life, Hemingway

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[361] Loc. cit.

[362] Loc. cit.

[363] Loc. cit.

[364] Ibid., pp. 21-22.

felt that his most important goal in life was to write and get his work done. Of course, there was a sound esthetic theory that lay solidly behind all that Hemingway ever attempted. He tried to live up to his "rockribbed and ancient" esthetic, and it defeated him in life, where the odds were always against a man who strives to lead a life guided by a pure and unbending ideal. Nevertheless, Hemingway was much more concerned with his effort to see that the esthetic be maintained without flaw in his art, and this goal he achieved. This esthetic that guided both the man and his art was a stern one, but Hemingway selected it as the only means whereby he could combine both art and life in a single sphere. In this sphere, only his art succeeded, and he would have approved of this achievement, for he firmly believed that, in death, a man achieves his own private tragedy.

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