Chapter I

Introduction

Ernest Hemingway is acclaimed as the most influential writer of the early twentieth century, for very many reasons that engage readers and researchers to probe the relevance and current aesthetic values of his works through which he gave a direction to society. Hemingway is a conscientious writer, from the beginning of his career. He always writes for a targeted audience with a specific purpose, as he chose writing as a career. This conscientious effort began with his stint in journalism, during the World War I, when he is an ambulance driver. As a journalist he has to state the truth and maintain the attention of the reader through the artistic rendering that made his approach exclusive.

Hemingway’s opinion and firm belief is that the scope of writing should be that which surpasses the writers of the past or his own writings of the past. Hemingway’s choice of subjects are normal down to earth but the way in which he rendered it to his readers made him exclusive which may sometimes, look ordinary and mundane.
The variety and scope of human emotions that he captures as a writer in his novels asserts his aesthetic approach to human behaviour that is rapidly undergoing changes due to the social and political upheaval of his times which he so passionately observed and subtly reflected in his writings.

He is constantly attempting to render the truth, in the most subtle fashion with the use of symbols which made his writings unique, giving scope for the reader to make his own interpretation and opening up new avenues of understanding which lends itself to deconstruction well after decades of reading of his short stories and novels. Hemingway is obviously influenced by the French Symbolists and Yeats, when he embarked on his career as a writer.

Hemingway is enthusiastic about journalism from his school days since 1916, at Oak Park. His evolution and movement from journalism is acknowledged when he remarked to one of his friends Harvey Brett in 1950 that he moved through arithmetic, geometry, algebra and he is now in Callus. He is conscious of the progress he made as a writer from the beginning of his career. Being a very focused on his career as a writer, he is obviously aware of the contemporary movements in
writing. He is in close contact with the centres of action where writers usually met to share their opinions on their career.

Hemingway had many delightful associations with Ezra Pound, Sherwood Anderson and Gertrude Stein. His numerous visits to the centres of action in Europe, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Germany, Greece and France gave him a host of impressions and experiences that shaped his thinking as a writer with creativity. He is influenced to a very great extent by Gertrude Stein who advised him to give up journalism and take to serious writing. Though he gives up journalism very early in his career, his foundations for his native prose, exact detail, authenticity and involvement in the atmosphere he is examining became the guiding principles throughout his career as a writer.

Hemingway’s love for adventure is linked to his particular fascination he had for Africa and Spain. His constant interaction with the Spanish Freedom fighters are in the midst of a tragedy unable to counter the oppressive Fascists who ruined the lives of the common man in Spain the country he loved let its people and its sport.
Hemingway has the exclusive privilege of having an exposure to the realities of life even when in School, as his father is physician who treated all kinds of people including the Negroes who are the most destitute among the American Population at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. His father took him out on adventurous expeditions, hunting, swimming and fishing where he learnt the bliss that nature had shared on mankind. His mother is zealous in teaching him the importance of religion while she gave him lessons in Music. He is more inclined towards adventure and got interested in literature and journalism, which made him aware of the contemporary literary scenario. He acknowledges the influence of Rudyard Kipling’s verse when he began writing poetry. His role model in Journalism is Ring Lardner who is the most eminent columnist and sensational reporter at Oak Park. He is partially equipped to face the world with his knowledge of journalism and began writing for the Kansas City Star as a reporter.

Hemingway’s aesthetics is obvious, but understanding of the symbols he used, make his writings stand apart from the other writers of his age. Hemingway is indebted to a very great extent to
Gertrude Stein, who made him realize that writing a novel is not as easy as Journalism where the immediacy of the event, ended the same day or the next day. It is her influence that shaped his writing to a great extent and he developed his aesthetics by using symbols as Yeats did to make his writings unique. He made himself familiar with writers from Tolstoy to Maupassant. It may be difficult to say that he is directly influenced by the long list of books he held in high esteem are *Anna Karenina* and *War and Peace*.

William Bolitho, the representative of the Manchester Guardian at Lausanne, advised him not to choose journalism as a career. He taught him to think for himself and this played a very vital role in his career as a writer. Hemingway is directly and indirectly influenced by a number of writers, events and thinkers of his age. He chose to face the harsh reality and express his views on the events of his times with a certain amount of accuracy and style that is exclusive and characteristic which speak volumes about the quality of his writings. His grasp of events that manifest itself in his writings, are seen from the first novel *The Sun Also Rises*.

Hemingway has been relevant to this day because of his attitude to writing, his approach to life and his
facile prose style which has been rarely imitated by subsequent generation of writers, that make his works worth reading and revising to understand his intricate yet simple presentation of events and lifestyle that changed at the beginning of the twentieth Century and changed the whole direction of society in the years that followed.

Hemingway is sure that the world is not going to be the same place after writers and theorists like T.S. Eliot and W.B. Yeats. The issues that plagued mankind needed to be made articulate and opened to the whole of society without alarming them as T.S. Eliot did in his “Wasteland” Ever Since Hemingway began writing on the direction society is moving in, using fiction as a vehicle to convey the sordid reality, many writers, philosophers, politicians have written at length to make society aware of the dangers that are imminent and alarming. The reason that Hemingway stands apart is his dedication to art and this aesthetic sense that make him exemplary. Carlos Baker says:

The basis of Hemingway’s continuing power, and the real backbone of his eminence, is in practical aesthetics “Pure” or theoretical aesthetics, of that special bloodless order
which can argue to all hours without a glance
at concentrations, holds little interest for
an artist of so pragmatic and empirical a
cast of mind. One might even doubt that
theatrical aesthetics is of real interest to
any genuine artist unless in his alter ego he
happens also to be a philosophical critic.
If that is true, his artistic life is always
in some danger, as Hemingway’s is not. In
aesthetics as in his personal philosophy, he
has laboured hard to stay free of the wrong
kind of illusion, and out from under the
control of any cut and dried system, always
trying instead to keep his eye trained on the
thing in itself and the effect of the thing
in him. (58)

An eminent critic like Carlos Baker elevates the
art and philosophy of Hemingway to heights that few of
his contemporaries rise to achieve. He kept his prose
clear so as to be understood by the common reader
packing layers of meaning for those in search of his
aesthetics and philosophy. Baker is of the opinion
that Hemingway as a writer did not enter the realm of
politics or propaganda against the war. He expressed
his views on humanity, War and the way women are
treated in Society with utmost restraint, in the most
non formal realistic manner. The approach that

Hemingway chose as a mature artist to camouflage
his views and express them symbols lead to a whole
spate critics who became his detractors. Leo Lamia is
of the opinion that Hemingway did not belong to any of
the recognized modern Literary School, and that in the
age of expressionism he is an impressionist almost
neo-classical in his precise presentation of detail,
his respect for form and discipline, his desire for
perfection, the exact phrase, the right word.

Hemingway is aware of the various schools of
thought that prevailed during his time. He is an avid
traveller, a keen observer of the countries and their
cultures, and the world at large around him, but he is
sure that he wanted to steer clear of all these lofty
theorists who are in search of new theories to explain
the decay that had set in as the Existentialists
proclaimed. He may be identified with the
Existentialists as he shares the same ethos, but he
never claimed to be a part of their school of thought.
Hemingway did not identify himself with the writers of his age is keen on portraying the most tragic circumstances that made life and living unliveable, though he presents most of his characters as easy going and casual. He gives the readers the impression that he is a story-teller narrating events related to entertainment in bars, and discussions on bull fighting, but in fact he is concerned with the way humans had lost their capacity to genuinely fall in love after the First World War. Mark Spilka points out the Extent to which Hemingway is concerned with the damage that society had faced with the War, when humans are unable to be genuine in their relationships and love had become commercial and is moving towards a natural death.

Hemingway is constantly obsessed with the techniques of writings, which he experimented with. He allowed the readers to delve deep into his writings and go into the intricacies to explore the scope of writing that he so casually kept under wraps. His approach is so casual and yet complicated that many of his readers became his detractors. Many of his characters on the surface look very shallow and appear to represent the
essence of the age at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Hemingway chooses violence and death as the two major motifs because that dominated the human psyche of the twentieth century. Hemingway goes on to use these two sequential events that play such a vital and pivotal role in all his short stories and novels. ‘Death’ and ‘Violence’ has been approached rather subtly by Hemingway. He does not subject truth, but he firmly believes that truth is the fundamental on which the writer wrests his skill, and the truth is which makes his approach to death and violence rather different from some contemporary writers who are existentialist, what is tangibly seen by the author, but not generally known by the reader.

Hemingway says in the introduction to Men at War one of his short stories, that a writer should be of as great purity and honestly as a priest of God and is either chaste or not as a woman is either chaste or not:

A writers’ job is to tell the truth. His standard of fidelity to the truth should be so high that his inventions, out of his
experience, should produce a truer account than anything factual can be. For facts can be observed badly; but when a good writer in creating something, he has time and scope to make it of an absolute truth. (26)

Hemingway makes a deliberate choice of Death and Violence as a theme and a symbol to depict the human mind that needs to be explored in its various approaches that are as varied as the characters that we come across in his writings. Hemingway felt that depicting men and women in circumstances other than death and violence will leave out the tragic element that predominate the mind.

Hemingway is an admirer of Tolstoy’s writings like War and Peace which influenced him to a great extent. Hemingway observes in Men at War “Thinking with a capital T and to try to write as truly, as straightly, as objectively and as humbly as possible” (XVIII). This attitude of Hemingway manifests itself in all his writings. When one reads his novels or his short stories, it seems very ordinary and simple on the surface, but only when the reader makes an attempt to look at the writing from the aesthetic point of view is able to understand that there are many layers of
meaning to be explored to understand the essential capacity of Hemingway as a writer.

Hemingway is a product of his age. The beginning of the 20th century witnessed a series of path breaking trends that emerged in every field of art from painting to poetry, in Europe and America. T.S. Eliot had written a series of treatises on poetry which became the guideline for literature. The “objective correlative” that he propounded the writing of poetry applies to Hemingway’s writing. Hemingway uses his talent to bring forth emotions of the age as the impressionist painter did.

Hemingway describes the pictorial detail as seen by his caricatures making the observations of nature and its effects on the sentiment of individuals as natural and holistic. No other author of our time has had such a general and lasting influence on the generation which grew up between the World Wars as Ernest Hemingway.

Europe which is predominantly Christian since the Middle Ages, witnessed a number of changes during the Renaissance and Reformation giving birth to a novel denomination which divided the countries, communities
and peoples on very flimsy grounds. The differences between the Catholics and Protestants became the cause of so many wars, in the 17th and 18th countries. The French monarchy disintegrated after the misrule of Louis XIV, which lead to the French Revolution in 1789.

The publication of the Lyrical Ballads by Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth in 1798 ushered in fresh literary theory which centred on nature and the common man moving away from the King and the Court. Dynamic political, literary and social changes are predominant in the minds of people though Christian ideology is undergoing a sea of changes.

World War I is about humans fighting humans for power who are all Christians, and the view that Christianity is superior, as expressed by Durkheim and others, is shattered by this global conflict. There is no justification for the war. Anyone who attempted to justify the war is neither petty in their approach by trying to say the German Protestants are against the French Catholics. Religion deteriorated into a symbol which had lost its meaning. Though Hemingway does not categorically say so, he hints with great care that the followers of Christ lacked the essence of love and peace that Christ wanted his followers to practice.
The need to have divine approval before going to war is an age old precedent dating back to biblical times. ‘The Divine Right Theory’ that empowered Kings to rule also gave them the right to protest these subjects in the event of an invasion, by a pagan or any outsider.

Hemingway witnessed the war and had a firsthand experience of the mental trauma the soldiers faced in the trenches. The scale of man’s inhumanity to man had a lifelong effect on the whole of humanity. War has become a powerful symbol that means so many things to so many people. The war raised so many questions on the meaning of religion and the validity of Christ’s teachings. Some romanticized the war and its remembrance, giving it a religious connotation. Battle sites and monuments took on a sacred nature and pilgrimages to visit the sites as a way to come to terms with life and move on became common. The war is symbolic of death, disease, disaster, depression, mental trauma and is the cause for the health related disorders that the civilized world faced.

Hemingway’s obsession with the war as a symbol that manifested itself directly affecting the lives of millions alive and is symbolic of death to those who fought in the war to express their patriotism, without
even understanding that they are fodder to commons
which would make their wives and children orphans,
living under the pressure of poverty and bereft of the
care of the male member in the family. Every war
leaves a trail of sorrow and suffering in many forms
which cannot be compensated by any number of gallantry
awards or medals or money. The loss of the breadwinner
and father figure is a permanent, irreplaceable loss
which has forced Hemingway to find such an apt title A
Farewell to Arms. Hemingway is influenced to a certain
extent by John Donne – which made him write For whom
The Bell Tolls. Farewell Forbidding Mourning is a poem
written by Donne, where the lover bids farewell, and
instructs his lady love to be steadfast in their
relationship.

Hemingway’s characters indicate what they feel and
incessantly do not reflect necessarily his point of
view especially when they react in circumstance of
religion, war, violence and women. Hemingway uses
religion as an ornament that people in Europe normally
wear on themselves for an identity rather than being
deeply involved as practicing Christians. Hemingway’s
objectivity to the role of religion in the lives of the
ordinary average people is reflected, in almost all his
works. He does not exempt the protagonist from superstitious beliefs which runs counter to religion and Catholicism.

In *A Farewell to Arms* Henry the priest who is in the battle front does not make much of an impact on the soldiers or on the process of war, because he is a part of the war. Though he does not express his dissatisfaction with the war but he does not express in explicit terms that war is against the tenets of Christianity. Henry is unable to convince Catherine to enter the church.

Catherine’s rejection is a clear indication of her attitude to religion. She is not inclined to put on a show that she is religious though this attitude of Catherine reflects the general attitude of the 20th century to religion and in particular reflects her own attitude where religion does not matter as represented by the church itself for very many reasons.

If religion has any meaning at all it symbolizes a kind of magic of the Talisman something to be used for luck or when one is in trouble. Though Hemingway does not directly state his position on religion he clearly captures the understanding of religion—Catholicism and the way it is practiced by subtle conversations as
in *A Farewell To Arms* between the Priest Lieutenant Henry and the Earl of the novel Catherine:

As Professor E.M. Halide says that he depends largely on the technique of ‘objective epitome’ a symbolist technique. He used to convey the subjective conditions of his characters. Hemingway attempted at producing an emotion through the action which has an effect on the readers at large. In *A Farewell To Arms* Fredrick Henry goes out of the Swiss maternity hospital for breakfast while Catherine Barkley is fighting for life, on the labour table to deliver a baby which she valiantly accepted to deliver in spite of the odds. The behaviour of Fredrick Henry represents the masculine nonchalance of the age while Catherine is symbolic of the true motherhood without any negative thoughts that run counter to nature.

Prof. Carlos Baker speaks at length of Hemingway’s symbolism, which gives various insights into the symbolist aspect as a narrative technique. Hemingway is a product of his age influenced by the 20th century school of thought where poetry became more communicative through the use of symbols. W.B. Yeats used symbols in a certain progressive approach in his poetry to bring
out the essential prominence of art in his popular poems *Sailing to Byzantium – Byzantium*.

Hemingway is aware of the various schools of symbolists, and he knows full well that a much more adaptable form of symbolism should be used in the writing of prose and fiction which will bring out the quality of the age and also be made into popular reading. The most remarkable novel of *A Farewell To Arms* is symbolic in the strictest sense where Hemingway indirectly emphasizes that the culmination of industrial and scientific development and the growth of knowledge of the Victorian age evolved into a human desire for war. The culmination of the most civilized societies and their knowledge development resulted in the world war where human life is made trivial and fed as fodder for the canon.

War had influenced Hemingway to an extent that he wanted every individual to understand that any war is against the very grain of God’s creation of human life. Though his formal education ended with school, he created an impact among the intellectuals of his times with such an intensity, and he is the only representative American author who had never been to a university.
Hemingway is impatient as a young man who wanted to experience the actuality of a war. Hemingway began his literary career by joining the newspaper Kansas City Star. He went to Italy from Kansas to join the war there, and he got severely injured, in the trench warfare which he survived. It is in Italy that he encountered war first hand which influenced him throughout his life and in all his writings. Hemingway shared his thoughts with his friend Sherwood Anderson who shared many things in common especially life and art.

Hemingway’s attempt to represent life and the infinite movements of the human mind that had been building up within individuals at different levels, makes it necessary to revisit his writings to assess his choice of characters. The most common occupations like the soldiers in the War, the nurse Catherine, the Spanish civil war, and the old fisherman Santiago the common average people like Nick Adams, the bull fighters like Romero and his friends, Jake an ex-soldier who is maimed for life are those around when the action of the novels are built. The choice of such heroes and their humble professions is deliberate as they are the symbols of the common man and woman in society who
faced the total impact of the order that changed the
World in physical terms which is extended to the
literary World by Hemingway as a story-teller and
novelist.

Every individual caricatured, and every movement
and object in his writings acquires deeper significance
than their physical existence. These symbols that
Hemingway uses in his novels and short stories acquire
a greater value when it is moulded into his narrative
technique rather subtly. The French symbolists
influenced the writing of poetry in English at the turn
of the twentieth Century and the whole concept of
Chivalry, Nationalism and human life is under greater
scrutiny to understand its meaning. The fact that the
quest of the common man to secure the advancements that
science had offered by better living standards is
demolished with the War that is controlled by a few
powerful political and military leaders of the world.

Hemingway understood that life is a gift meant to
be lived in its entirety. He used the most common
occupations, to symbolize the jeopardy that the human
race faced with the evolution of mankind and the
inventions that led to create a War machine which had
become as irreversibly destructive creation of humans
that is more powerful than the ones who conceived and built it up, to this day. Every object and moment in a novel or short story acquires a symbolic reference, carrying deeper meaning and significance from what appears on the surface.

The purpose of the war in *A Farewell To Arms* or the behaviour of the people during the post war period may appear flat and insignificant, narrative prose, but only these events and people are analyzed, probed and assessed, volumes of meaning emerge as they symbolize the way peoples societies, nationalities, religions, and relationship exist, evolve and emerge, trying to cope with the events that shape their lives though none of these people, projected in the writings of Hemingway are in any way responsible for the decay or degradation they are undergoing due to calamity and destruction imposed on them during the war and after the war.

Symbols in Hemingway’s writings vary from the grandeur to the seemingly miniscule. The shaky relationship between the characters in the novels and the conflicts that put their relationships in trouble is a reflection of the lifestyle and the aimless
movement from place to place, event to event seeking pleasure as seen in *The Sun Also Rises*.

The role of alcohol in the lives of common men that ruin their living is a powerful invention of science. It is used liberally to drown the senses of the common men and women who are engaged in War on the battle field. It is also seen as a symbol of total destruction, as men become addicts after the War and die because of its evil effects. Sport is an intoxication bull fighting, fishing, wild game hunting which engaged the minds and time of the most civilized people in Europe, is symbolic of the decadence that had acquired unimaginable dimensions that is bound to destroy society. Sporting events become full time occupations, and they represent the mindset of the average man, while the event becomes a symbol of destruction and man becomes the symbol of the destroyed.

The World today is still under the irremediable influence of War, and destruction. There has not been a single day when there is a total cease fire or truce for the human race, as war is being fought in some corner. *A Farewell To Arms* has been the first declaration and a clarion call to whole of society to
give up arms and enjoy the peace offered by Mother Earth. It has emerged a powerful symbol and is relevant today because a major part of the human endeavour in terms of man power, capital, and time is invested in seeking peace and brokering peace. The multi-layered levels of meaning in his novels become symbols when read with a purpose.

To the reader who approaches the novel *A Farewell To Arms* superficially, the movement of the troops, the struggle of Frederic and Catherine to survive and their love in the midst of war, the progress of the War and their escape into neutral territory, bidding *A Farewell to Arms* all seems very adventurous, romantic and tragic. It’s on close examination of the dialogue, the narrative technique; the sequential ordering of events that symbolic significance emerges to convey a deeper meaning to the reader who delves deeper to find the relevance of Hemingway in the present context.

The frenzied war cry and the destructive attitude of man has obsessed the thought of Hemingway, which is one of the strong influences that forced him to choose, bull fighting, bars, alcohol and the way men consumed it. The fixing of the bull fights in Spain and the variety of bullfighters and their fans are all symbols
of ruination of one’s energy and human capacity. The charisma of the bullfighter is symbolic of the hero who is almost worshipped for taming a bull in the ring. The evolution of sport perse has become less violent with the passage of time, but the instinct to sport and watch sport has expanded occupying the time and energy of the youth all over the world, through the media.

Hemingway did not predict the evolution of sport, but he is aware that the space occupied by sport bull fighting, in Spain, and the western countries is disproportionate to the needs and wants of the people and did not serve any particular purpose. By narrating these sporting events in *The Sun Also Rises*, he does not hold a brief for the sport, but subtly points out those sporting events like bull fighting are the subtle symbols of the civilization that the human race passed through over the centuries.

The whole universe for Hemingway is a storehouse of images, every event, natural phenomenon and human practice took the dimension of a symbol because it could have layered meaning to the readers who wished to go beyond what he actually meant. It is his symbols signify his style of writing. Bars and restaurants are the symbols of the twentieth century where men like
Jake, Cohn, Mike and their friends hide their emotions and live false lives unable to shed their pseudo images and the reality of frustration they are mostly absolute. Jake is an important war survivor, this survival after the War is of no consequence, as he cannot express his love to Brett. The most basic human instinct of love for a woman is inexpressible by Jake, because he knows very well that he will not be able to fulfil his aspirations.

Santiago is a symbol of old age, without the support of society that he lives in the paradox that though he belongs to a cohesive Cuban society of fishermen, he is a loner, who does not have the support of his society, where he becomes the symbol of the disintegration of traditional societies, Marginalized by his own people, in a traditional occupation of the human race-fishing, he is the symbol of the vulnerable who fight to the end to live a dignified life. The fish becomes the symbol of the nature that cannot be marginalized or subdued whatever be the conquest of man over nature. Man’s conquer of the fish is short lived, as it is consumed by the creatures of the sea before he can reach the shore.
Hemingway concedes that nature can never be conquered and man being a part of nature, he is also a part of the chain that will survive. Hemingway uses symbols and images, events and action without much imagination to express his views on the direction society is taking.

The direct impact of the World War I on Hemingway as a conscious writer resulted in the writing of the novel the *A Farewell to Arms*, which is itself the symbol of non-violence and remains to be a symbol reminding the whole world that life on this planet can be sustained only when mankind bids farewell with the use of mechanized arms.

Hemingway’s caution through the novel *A Farewell to Arms* remains valid to this day because it is symbolic to the extent that when one reads the novel layers of interpretations lend themselves to the readers which triggers a serious inner dialogue on the bitter wars that are fought among mankind. The world is fraught with neighbouring countries at war with each other, societies and communities with war at each other and the escalation of war continues unabated.
Every character in *A Farewell to Arms* becomes symbolic representing the various strata of society. Catherine is a young nurse with a British background and Fredrick a soldier not very convinced about his commitment to the job that he is doing. Nevertheless, Catherine and Fredrick are in a relationship like any other young man and woman which becomes a conjugal relationship. The process of life where love is displayed as the central and most vital emotion that defines their relationship making them man and woman who want to have a normal life in spite of the war, but torn apart because of the war.

Hemingway’s treatment of women has attracted adequate critical analysis with a team of detractors who confidentially state that the feminine characters in Hemingway are used as objects of entertainment and nothing more than that. Leslie Fielder is one of the foremost detractors who say that Hemingway’s heroes take their women to bed and leave them there.

In the novel *A Farewell to Arms* Catherine who is a dedicated nurse serving in the armed forces plays a very remarkable and movable role, true to her love for Fredrick. She is instinctively feminist in her approach, when she gracefully accepted motherhood
against the condition of her services. Hemingway portrayed his heroine Catherine Barkley ahead of her times fully aware that the contemporary society in which she lived would not accept what she did, because it is a given current gender issue of the early 20\(^{th}\) century where gender identity is determined by the surrounding culture predominantly patriarchal. Hemingway’s art and his conceptual views of society are well defined in his mind when he began to write his novels and short stories. He knew very well that society inscribed upon individuals the contemporary cultural and social norms that violate the personal rights of women and also human rights. His views are revolutionary at that point of time but his delineation of his women is rather unappealing which made his detractors take a negative view on the women in his novels. A superficial reading will not reveal the three characteristics of the tenacity that his women possess in circumstances of war. British society and the public at large are only familiar with the drawing room women characters portrayed by Jane Austen. The Victorian Age represented by writers like Thomas Hardy confronted society with the problems of women who are ill treated by their husbands and the patriarchal
society where they had no say in matters of ordinary domestic decisions.

The revolutionary concept of the empowered women to gain their right to franchise in a world dominated by male chauvinism of the nineteenth century is a precursor of the role women are going to play in the future world. It is against this background that Hemingway realized that women should be treated with much more dignity and honour though in reality they are not. Women continued to be subservient to men even during the First World War.

Hemingway superficially presents Catherine as a nurse who dedicated her service to the troops who are injured in war which is a noble service and also lived a normal average women’s life by falling in love with Fredrick and challenging the law in getting pregnant out of wedlock.

Hemingway deliberately chooses his women characters and gives them roles to play, that would appear very mundane and ordinary but in fact they are responsible to society and accountable to the roles that they are assigned to, always displaying honour and dignity in their roles however ordinary they may seen. Hemingway
captured the collective consciousness of society by presenting women characters like Catherine who appeared ordinary but in fact are forerunners of the feminist movement that is to take shape later.

Hemingway consciously presents the female as an ordinary flat character for the superficial reader who does not want to make a true appraisal of the purpose of his female characters. The male is presented as a natural archetype succumbing to his human desires and passions without taking into consideration the way his behaviour will affect the female relationships.

Hemingway is a true representative of his age, in almost every aspect that is possible. The novel which began with Daniel Defoe in the 17th century steadily progressed as a literary genre through the 18th century with Jane Austen and her contemporaries. The 18th century novel is a reflection of the social norms that dominated society within the parlours of the native British households. The themes centred around courtship and marriage without much of a challenge on the intricacies that shaped life then. The Victorian era had a host of thinkers and writers who tried to grapple with the social changes that began redefining society with the advent of the Industrial
Revolution that spurred colonial ambitions among the European powers that vied with each other.

Novelists like Dickens, Hardy, Scott and Blake who are considered as masters of the novel, chose their own favourite subjects to spread their views and impress society at large. The dawn of the 20th century is shocked into a rude reality when the World War I broke out and humans died like flies, the whole of Europe is entrenched in the cruel war, which triggered the thinkers and writers to reexamine their concepts of chivalry and war.

The French Symbolists, Imagists, T.S. Eliot and the whole gamut of literary scholars came out with their theories, trying to guide the human race on the reappraisal of war and human values. It is at this juncture that Hemingway being a young enthusiastic social journalist wanted to witness the war directly. He failed to enrol as a soldier, but succeeded to serve as an ambulance driver on the Spanish front. His love for sport, the bull fight, fishing, big game hunting, forced him to opt for a career in the army where he wanted to witness and be a part of the war in action every moment of his life. His love for these violent sports, which involved the risk of human life and made
it appear so trivial to his readers who scanned the pages of his novels and short stories superficially without going deep into the methods of his writing where he is trying to find the reason for man’s love for violence which ended in death and make it comprehensible to the whole human race through his writings. He represented his age by presenting characters that are different from the rest of the society, and representative of certain symbolic values that are essential to the very purpose of human life.

The choice of fiction as a literary genre to drive home his point of view is deliberate, as the method of his writing is exclusive to this day. He is aware of the scope of poetry and the use of symbols employed in the poems of W.B. Yeats and T.S. Eliot. He is also aware of the novelists who preceded him, and the scope of their writings, which widens his attempt to make his art crisp and comprehensive with the use of symbols. Hemingway’s choice of subjects is rather novel and thought provoking – where every character and object becomes a symbol that makes his writing relevant and contemporary which is the quality and value of true art.
His novel *A Farewell to Arms* is a title which caught the imagination of the whole of society. When the theory of the meaning of war is in state of flux, when poets like Siegfried Sassoon and others are writing on the pity of war and Eliot is in the process of writing “The Wasteland,” Hemingway came out with *A Farewell To Arms* after being an eye witness to the World War. The policies of Government and the creation of international bodies to maintain peace and harmony like the ‘Guild of Nations’ are only thought of after the *A Farewell To Arms* influenced thinkers to break a new path for mankind and desist from war and violence, which is elusive to this day.

The writings of Hemingway are so influential that it shaped public opinion and the whole western world that enjoyed a higher rate of literacy began analyzing the purpose of life, and questioning the validity of the existing theories of Christian Theology around which Kingdoms existed and societies built. The suffering of the common average fisherman like Santiago on the high seas to eke out a living by fishing with his refrain that man can be defeated but not destroyed began to raise an alarm in the midst of scholars and philosophers who descended on excavating the purpose of
life much more seriously, though Camus and Kafka, Andre Malraux and others began this process of questioning around the same time. The advantage that Hemingway had over the others is that he used simple ordinary men and women like Frederic and Catherine – a soldier and a nurse to establish the truth that war meant disaster for everyone in society. The victor and the vanquished faced equal damage and irretrievable loss which society at large faces up to this day. In the event of prevention of war human life on this planet would have evolved in a different way. The crude and dehumanizing conditionality that shaped life in the cities of Spain where the bull fighters and their fans lived empty lives – which he portrays in "The Capital of the World."

Hemingway’s art is inclusive and dedicated that he compared writing to bull fighting when he said that everything done by a person who is dedicated is aesthetic. Warren G .French and Walter E Kid in American Winners of the Nobel Literary Prize, say,

Bull fighting writes Hemingway, is the only art in which the degree of brilliance in the performance is left to the fighter’s honour. Both are lovely crafts which cannot be taught
and demand rare talent long apprenticeship and discipline. Both demand a style based upon standards and integrity. Shave the horns or write poorly and you deprive your life of its meaning. Both are very risky and ruthless. Both culminate in public performance and judgment. The prize of failure is extreme for the matador, destruction of the body, for the writer the soul. (183)

Hemingway compares bull fighting with writing which may seem obscure on the surface and metaphysical in nature but reveals the entire quantum of similarities that define art which is genuine and absolute in terms. Though one is physical and the other relates to the soul where both are in the public domain without a choice for sympathy or human kindness. Hemingway’s detractors are not familiar with his grasp and scope of knowledge that he had about the art of writing. Hemingway in “20th century views Art” observed “as Goethe said in another context, in another time, he is an attempt of an individual to save himself from the destructive of all” (150). Hemingway’s concern for humanity is revealed in his concern for the art that he
practiced as a writer. His selection of themes and events he chose to match those themes are rare and appropriate to bring out the suffering and perennial features that dominated human thought.

Love, death, violence, war, religion and women are the elements that reflect human behaviour which occupies the central position of his short stories and novels. He touches upon the most essential in human existence, to the extent to establish the relevance and meaning of his works, to the present day.

The opinion that Hemingway dealt with limited situations and themes by critics like Sean O’Faolain and Leslie Fiedler may appear true, but in reality it is his skill as an artist to present the panorama of the human predicament on a limited canvass which again is deliberate and symbolic to represent the most different human situations in the most efficient and limited space to bring out the desired effect. Bull fighting is a sport that cannot be widely commented upon with long drawn sentences and clauses but it is a sport that has no time limit and can relate to the audience in the most subtle fashion which in fact will be very difficult for the author to explain.
Hemingway as an Artist did not attempt to explain much of his art and theories except that he is crisp in his comments when he is questioned on the choice of themes. The choice of themes is conditioned by the tragic human predicament whether it be war or love where neither the victor nor the vanquished enjoyed absolute happiness. It is the choice of themes that made the genius in the writer match them with the perennial human factors that mattered to the whole human race irrespective of the status.

The observations of the suffering and inevitable end of human life in death never got portrayed as a negative element in his writing as every character including the old man Santiago have a zest for life. The tinge of sadness is an underlying current in every individual character that Hemingway portrayed where they are so conscious of death, but lived life to its best as in the case of Catherine and Frederic. The war is so predominating in their lives that they could not escape from it, but in spite of the war which made death the natural consequence that is imminent moment after moment, life seemed worth living and Catherine is confident of bringing forth her baby into this world which is the most cruel place to leave her child or to
bring up her child did not deter her from making love to Frederic in the war. Hemingway is reiterating his optimism in the values of the common man and woman who are neither responsible for the war nor responsible for life or death.

Hemingway uses rain as a very powerful symbol in his second novel *A Farewell To Arms* and in *The Old Man and the Sea* apart from his short stories where rain occurs again and again to symbolize the mitigation or the suffering of individuals, due to their surroundings. In the short story *Cat in the Rain* the American Wife in an Italian Hotel empathizes with a cat which shelters itself under a table in the rain, is emotive of the feelings of the wife who watches how the cat fends for itself even in the rain. The symbols used in the novels and short stories will be examined in detail in the subsequent chapters to establish Hemingway’s use of symbolism in his writings from the early 20th century to the last novel he writes.

The progression of Hemingway’s thought process from *A Farewell to Arms* to *The Old Man and the Sea* can be traced with his preoccupation with trying to bring out the purpose of life through his symbolic approach which borders the irony on which life’s meaning rests.
The desire of Catherine to perpetuate life by begetting her baby out of wedlock against the tenets of Christian theory and practice is Hemingway’s concern for the sustenance of society, the survival of society which is the purpose of creation. The baby of Catherine is her treasured dream to see her offspring; she is the symbol of womanhood, ready to sacrifice her life and anything for the delivery of her baby into this world. The baby to be born is the symbol of life and War is the symbol of death that is hounding the purity of Catherine’s love for life.

Hemingway progresses through the complexities of life with the search for the meaning of life, and its various dimensions that he projects through the bull fighters in his short stories and finally the desire of life and search of man for his destiny is seen in Santiago whom Hemingway transforms into the symbol of life fighting against nature to establish the purpose of life. Santiago’s suffering is representative of every man who suffers for his living on this planet.

An appraisal of Hemingway’s writings will help trace the thread of the subtle use of symbols and symbolism to catch the imagination of the collective consciousness of society which is travelling down the
path of degradation and degeneration into the most inhuman acts that could annihilate the human race on this planet.

Hemingway’s concern for humanity is manifest in *A Farewell To Arms* where Catherine is determined by all means to find a most suitable and safe way of delivering her baby while Frederic, society and even nature is stacked against the odds that she faces in this most human act of getting her baby as a token of the love she showed for Fredrick which is unconditional and selfless. On reading the short stories of Hemingway one may not be able to appreciate the narrative from the point of assessing the value of the story for its form, but the message gets through only when the effort to read the story in the context of society, its preoccupations and its entertainment like bull fighting and the purpose of praying to God for the success of a violent sport, where the bull fighter succeeds or kills the bull. The sport of bull fighting like war or hunting that Hemingway has used elaborately in his writings is violence in the most inequitable terms, where the man asserts his superiority through violence to suppress a bull, or a docile neighbouring state or kill an animal in its own habitat. When civilization
had reached a crescendo at the beginning of the twentieth century, the decline had actually started, and Hemingway is one among the very first to warn the human race to give up arms and live in peace with nature and himself on this planet.

Scholars like Carlos Baker and Professor E. M. Halliday have established the relevance and meaning that Hemingway put into his writings with the use of symbols to highlight the quality and grasp the way in which the society is progressing at the beginning of the twentieth century with the World War I and other Wars that he keenly observed. Hemingway’s campaign through his writings with his use of symbols to establish the beauty of life and human relations needs to be explained in detail because he is realist trying his best to lay bare the challenges of the twentieth century which witnessed the World Wars and shattered the lives of the common man. His realism combined with his imagination, his artistic approach to down to earth facts makes his art special and unparalleled to this day.

The researches that have been done on Hemingway have not made a detailed study of Hemingway’s exploitation of symbols. Hence I have in this thesis
made an attempt to examine Hemingway’s use of symbols in his fictional works. It aims at bringing out the scope of the symbols that Hemingway used in his novels to make an interpretation of the writings that represented the age. In this process I have examined the symbolic aspect of novels: The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms, For whom the Bell Tolls and The Old Man And The Sea are taken up for study and analysis.

Further in my thesis I have confined myself to Hemingway’s exploitation of symbols; hence I have not focused n the other poetic devices as well as the figures of speech employed by the novelist.