Chapter II

Symbolism as a Technique in
The Sun Also Rises

The first novel of Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises (1926) portrays events that took place after the First World War in the year 1925. The post war society in Europe is a confused lot, gradually returning to normalcy on all fronts, with a visible economic progress.

The socio-economic progress extended into the lives of the average common man who began to enjoy a certain amount of stability. The world leaders at large embarked on executing treatises, exchanging diplomats to maintain peace and stability. The cooperation among nations for a better future, with disarmament at the core of their discussions gave a ray of hope for the betterment of mankind to live in harmony and enjoy happiness free from the threat of War and its consequences. The world order had given way to America to emerge as the leader, with great industrial progress and economic growth which led to political authority.
The socio-economic scenario appeared progressive and peaceful on the surface. The people, who are affected in some way by the War, felt an uneasiness that prevailed. The climate of a certain disenchantment and boredom set in, which created an atmosphere of morbidity and depression. The attitude of the common man had lost its charm for life.

Hemingway captured the atmosphere as it is, and presented it in *The Sun Also Rises*, which became an instant success, as the common man could identify the characters in the novel which reflected their own mindsets and sentiments. Hemingway subtly brings out the tragic crisis that dominated the minds and hearts of the young people who are physically injured and mentally devastated in the aftermath of the war. The crisis persisted in every aspect of life and manifested itself in the most unexpected quarters that became symbols of modern living in the early twentieth century.

Man’s hope of enjoying the fruits of scientific development are shattered by the mindless direction that scientists and governments pursued to establish their hegemony of hatred for their own fellow brethren that led to the war and it’s unbelievable consequences.
It is and to this day, it is difficult for soldiers and those who served in various capacities in the war to adjust with the realities of normal life. The post war period of reconciliation and adjustment to the present scenario is harsh, as the war time survivors found it hard to cope with life at ordinary times.

The grace and economy of language which Hemingway employs in his novels through the use of symbols is extraordinary and transports the reader into an infinite interpretation of those moments which keep generation after generation engaged in the narrative that is exclusive and marked a separate identity of the style which never existed earlier.

Jake Barnes, (or Jacob) in *The Sun Also Rises* is the hero of the novel. He has been rendered impotent on account of the injuries that he had in the war. Though he tries to reconcile himself as far as possible to his present condition in life, he feels disillusionment and depression because the symbol of dejection and suffering which is reflected throughout the novel where he will truly his best to be normal but some incident or other will remind him of his incapacity or his inability to be normal. Barnes moves around with Georgette who is a prostitute, whom he
accidently befriends. As a part of the normal conversation he enquires after her well being. She says,

'What’s the matter? You Sick?'

'Yes'

Everybody’s sick. I’m sick too.

(The Sun Also Rises 14)

She is sick, because the whole atmosphere is sick. Sickness acquires symbolic overtones as it is visible due to the physical condition of many individuals who are maimed, disfigured but survived the war. There are many who are dead and left their loved ones as orphans and widows. There are mothers who had lost their husbands and even their sons. The pathos and tragedy is unprecedented and felt deeply by every individual. This mood of disillusionment that prevailed made the common man disoriented. The struggle of the common man and woman is to cope with the existing crisis within their minds and they began questioning the purpose of life which is later on described as existentialism.

The seeds of existentialism are sown by Hemingway when he is able to gauge the behaviour of the average who becomes the underdog. For that matter the whole of
the post-war society is in turmoil unable to find out why the young and the old are groping in the dark to understand the meaning of their lives.

James T Farrell in his "Hemingway’s The Sun Also Rises" says “A re-examination of the Character of disillusionment portrayed in The Sun Also Rises suggests that this mood had become a way of feeling and acting; in fact, a social habit” (21). The mood that Farrell explains is one inner grief. The average middle class attempt to abandon their middle-class attitude of respectability, by indulging in new sensational engagements like bull-fighting, fishing and drinking and sexual exploits are obvious from their behaviour. These engagements are explained again and again to reiterate that the civilized world which had its epicentre in Europe is losing its direction.

Hemingway’s constant description, though brief of the generation he belonged to which Gertrude Stein called ‘A lost generation’ provides the detractors of Hemingway to misinterpret his understanding and the caution he tries to give to humanity as a whole. The concern with which Hemingway approached the crisis may not be pedagogical or his writings may not be didactical, but he is reflecting the sense of the age. The whole
human race is in a hurry where man had no time to stand and stare. His writings had to reflect the age and suit the haste in which his readers found themselves engaged.

Hemingway deliberately introduces the character of the artist and count Mippipopolous, to the main characters in the novel in a bar. The bar becomes a powerful symbol of convergence. All strata of society meet and discuss everything that superficially seems important but cannot be taken seriously. The choice of words, Hemingway’s detailed description in the most appropriate language reflects his style which synchronizes with the symbolic use of language. “Count Mippipopolous who wore an elk’s tooth on his watch chain” (24).

The minute detail of an elk’s tooth on his watch chain is symbolic of his status. Hemingway makes it obvious that people who hold a pseudo social standing, have to necessarily mix with the common folk at the bar and also establish their identity through such symbols of wearing an elk’s tooth on a watch chain. These minute details and the economy of language coupled with Hemingway’s narrative technique brings out the journalist’s skill in the art of writing that he meticulously followed from the beginning of his career
to the end. The sequence of events changing from one place to another with characters introduced may appear like a modern day serial story which has no definite structure.

The *Sun Also Rises* reflects the attitude of a journalist, as the readers examine the narrative and its intention they realize the impact that his writings have had on society till today. The intention of changing scenes and introduction of characters may appear aimless and random, but it is essentially meaningful and relevant when analysed from the crises faced by society even after society has seen progress over eight decades after this novel is published.

The movement of the characters from one bar to another, from one event to another, the prime importance of violent sports like bull fighting in the capital of Spain is the way in which people spent their time. The loss of faith in the established institutions of religion that dominated the thinking of the Western Countries of Europe is so blatant that people took refuge in excessive consumption of alcohol which became social status to spend time and money in pubs and bars aimlessly as seen the lives of Jakes, Brett and others in the novel. The role that alcohol plays in the lives
of the people in general represents their idleness and relationship with one another. Alcohol becomes a very vital symbol uniting people keeping them engaged in idle vain talk thought the novel. The paradoxical lifestyle and tedium that everyone in society experiences is the necessity to engage themselves in some way, but the only available options are alcohol and violent sport which reflects the tragic dilemma of the twentieth century man.

It is for this reason Hemingway deliberately chose the style of writing in the first person. All characters speak for themselves and speak what they feel.

Hemingway comprises so much of detail in the conversation of his characters. He captures the mood of the people right away as the location is a bar. Lady Brett is obviously having a drink at a bar in Paris. She is introduced to a Greek portrait-painter, whose name is Zizi. His enquiries are whether Brett is enjoying her stay at Paris. It is common place to come to Paris and enjoy the liquor and night clubs of Paris. People who had lost their direction in life and are drifting not knowing what is in store for them in the future came to Paris and made it their permanent home in order to continue to live the life that they wanted
without any challenges. This feeling of emptiness dominates the themes of *The Sun Also Rises*. The challenge of an empty life which haunts every character in the novel is an undercurrent surfacing often to remind the reader that life is in fact moving without a specific direction.

In *The Sun Also Rises* Bill Gorton is learning Bovyonne for Paris on a railway train, while Jake is looking at the empty tracks which reveal a specific significance of emptiness.

He went in through the gate to the train.
The porter went ahead with the bags. I watched the train. The porter went ahead with the bags I watched the train pull out.
Bill is at one of the windows the window passed, the rest of the train passed, and the tracks are empty. (177)

The train becomes a symbol of time and movement merged in one which is the mode of modern transport, leading one to the sense of alienation, departure and loss. The journey of life as a symbol looms large throughout the novel and journeys by train becomes symbolically potent as the train moves from place to
place permitting the occupants to enjoy the fast changing landscape, emerging images and scenes that keep conjuring up ideas and thoughts that enliven the mind of the travellers.

The symbol of the train with Hemingway’s narrative technique of journeys transports the reader strongly believe that every individual is a traveller on this planet and the journey of life does not end but continues till one reaches the unknown end or the destination which is metaphysical and cannot be pre-empted by any individual.

The symbolic dimension and the overtones that journeys assume are very intricate when we try to analyze the ways in which these dimensions begin operating on the minds of the readers who get influenced and accept the reality that the never ending journey of life by every individual is a part of the human journey on this planet. The subtle movement from the micro to macro levels of journey is an exceptional achievement of Hemingway as he has exploited the concept of journeying making every individual reader feel the impact at the macro cosmic level when one begins to move towards the creator or rather return to the place where he belongs. Every individual is a
prisoner of time and circumstances. The movements of individual characters assume symbolic significance at every instance. The town of Pamplona in Spain is being prepared to host the Fiesta, the most popular sport in Spain – the bull – fight. The event takes place and then the bull-ring is empty, there is no one around, it is a scene of emptiness. This movement from festivities to emptiness is a constant reminder that life has no meaning while every event however colourful or activity oriented is only a pale reminder that the end is symbolic with nothingness and emptiness that looms large. “The fiesta is finished I woke about nine o’ clock, had a bath, dressed, and went downstairs. The square is empty and there are no people on the streets” (174).

The scene of emptiness repeatedly reminds the reader that there is a definitive move towards the unknown which is empty. The stands are empty, the square is empty, and the rail tracks are empty, suggesting the futility of human life which ultimately will become empty when life comes to an end for the individual at the micro level and for the world at the macro level. The images of emptiness are symbolic of loss, decay and desperation which are seen among the
individual characters in the novel. Robert Cohn is a Jew who tries to merge with the society in Spain though he is from New York.

Hemingway makes Cohn a counter character to distinguish him through his manners and mannerisms from the other major characters in the novel. He is apparently in love with Brett Ashley. Hemingway portrays, Cohn as a Pseudo Sportsman always carrying his suitcase with the football things in it, his polo shirt and boxing kit. Mark Spilka in his essay entitled, “The Death of Love in *The Sun Also Rises*” is comparable to the fantasies by the Czech genius Franz Kafka in which trunks and youthful clothes are symbols of arrested development. Robert Cohn represents a hero who tries to project romantic love which in fact does not exist in the context in which the post war period is in. Though he is projected as a hero in the novel, Hemingway presents Pedro Romero who stands for virility with a record as a consistent Bull fighter.

*The Sun Also Rises* presents a number of positive images of happiness and growth, with a spirit of freedom, which is symbolized in engagements like fishing and bull fighting. The image of natural phenomena like rain symbolizes life, fertility vegetation and growth
and sometimes transforms into gloom and bad weather which can spell disaster for the common man.

*The Sun Also Rises* is a novel which presents multi-dimensional symbols. The rain is a source of life and symbol of life. It can also cause disaster and damage to human life, similarly the victory in the bull ring, for the bull fighter is one dimension which symbolizes the capability and quality of the bull fighter. The other dimension is the defeat of the bull. Fishing is a popular sport and pastime for human beings whereas fishing symbolizes the catching of fish from the natural habitat and the struggle that the fish undergoes when it is caught also evokes a sense of sympathy. There are images of the game of poker dice where the victory of the game depends upon the luck that favours the winner.

The symbolical significance of the title *The Sun Also Rises* is taken from Ecclesiastes of The Old Testament from The Bible;

The Word of the preacher, the son of David King in Jerusalem. Vanity of Vanities, saith the Preacher, Vanity of Vanities; all is vanity. What profit at the man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun?
One generation passeth away and another generation cometh; but the earth abided forever. The Sun also arises and the sun also goeth down, and haste to its place where he arose. (125)

This passage represents the anxiety of the people and the passage of time with the rise and set of the scene every day. The common man has his life tuned to the cycle of nature totally ignorant of the future. Hemingway has chosen this title as a symbol from the book of Ecclesiastes to reiterate the futility of life and the common man’s myopic vision of what the future holds in store for them. Hemingway continuously portrays the life of the common man which is dominated by the frivolous behaviour like drinking and meaningless holidaying. The sharp contrast where the sun is the symbol of light that dispels darkness both in the physical and spiritual sense. But whether the light will bring light into the life of the common man is a question that borders on darkness.

*The Sun Also Rises* becomes a central novel of the modern literary period exhibiting a unique style which most readers of the time are unfamiliar. Linda Wagner – Martin points out that *The Sun Also Rises* is not the
novel readers expected it to be. Its style is so unusual has to be plain troublesome. The style what modernist such as Ezra pound are calling for – it is “New” (58). Kevin Alexander Boon in his book “Ernest Hemingway: The Sun Also Rises and Other works” make a valid statement where Hemingway breaks away from the traditional trend that existed in the writing of fiction.

Hemingway is forced to break away from the traditional themes of fiction and create a new pathway to represent the lost generation as depicted by Gertrude Stein. This trend that Hemingway captured in this novel The Sun Also Rises launched him as a major modern novelist. Wagner Martin observes: “Most writers’ first novel do not turn out to be the most important work” (12).

In Hemingway’s case, The Sun Also Rises has gradually come to have just that reputation. Hemingway wrote his novel with a sense of surety, a knowledge of craft, and a belief that literature could create morality, He produced a document of the chaotic post war 1920’s and a testament to the writers ability to create characters, mood, situation and happening that are as real as life.
The subject matter he chose is unusual for the time and a breakaway from the tradition. The blending of crisp physical detail with a real life situations and his imagination successfully reveals the emptiness that dominated the minds of the post war generation.

His characters become symbols and their action becomes symbolic, like Jakes in The Sun Also Rises. Jakes is an American expatriate living in Europe moving around the cities of Spain, Italy and France unable to maintain a long lasting relationship with women he loves Brett Ashley. He is fond of a sport of fishing and bull knighting. He is found mostly in the pubs of Spain and Paris and he is the symbol of an aimless young man psychologically battered, physically declared impotent because of a wound in the war which makes him the symbol of the post war youth who have lost their physicality, bordering psychological diseases like depression and mental pain. He tries his best to find meaning in a world rendered absurd by war, but his search for meaning is futile as the war has rendered society collectively impotent to take positive decisions and retrieve the lost generation from the tragedy of war and its aftermath.
Every character in the novel *The Sun Also Rises* represents specific strata of society relevant to the central theme of futility that Hemingway tries to establish through his portrayal. Robert Cohn is a thirty four year old Jewish American expatriate who lives in Paris. Hemingway portrays Cohn as a typical Jewish American expatriate conscious of his background from Princeton University and his other credibility's which Jakes admires. He finally becomes the contender seeking the hand of Brett whom he is deeply in love with. Cohn knows full well that Jake is in love with Brett but still makes deliberate attempts to expose his love for Brett, flaunting his money which attracts Brett to certain extent which is again the typical behaviour of a modern young woman of the post war period in the early twentieth century.

Brett is the centre of attraction among the women character in the novel. She appears to be a liberated woman from British background. A liberalism manifest itself a behaviour, as she drinks, smokes and engages herself easily with men. In the 1920’s this behaviour is considered as a break away from the tradition to symbolize the woman who wanted to be noticed by her behaviour. The other dimensions that Hemingway portrays
in Lady Brett Ashley are that she is a strong woman who dominates the men she meets. She represents the post war liberated average woman of Europe who achieves what she wants but is directionless.

Hemingway keenly observes the post war society in which he lives in Europe where men and women move in a liberated society but do not have any specific views or goals to pursue. Brett marries Lord Ashley but is deeply in love with Jake. She gets divorced from Lord Ashley and engaged to Mike Campbell but is in love with Jake. She knows full well that Mike Campbell is a bankrupt drunkard. But she is deliberately engaged to him because he is expecting a large inheritance from his ancestors whom she expects to enjoy and also be independent indulging in what she desires. She is a true representative of the liberated women of Europe and America in 1920’s. She also struggles to find the meaning of life and place in the disillusioned world that she is living in. The futility of life haunts her. She is the symbolic representative of the age she lives in. She reflects the shattered mind set, that majority of the women in Europe face. She tries to find an escape by indulging in disorderly relationship
which ends in futility. Hemingway uses Brett to bring out the symbolic decadence of social values.

Jake realizes the truth that religion has become ornamental and pseudo belief when he realizes that he is unable to pray even though he is kneeling with his forehead on the pew thinking he is praying. He says;

I am a little ashamed, and regretted that I is such a rotten catholic, but realized there is nothing I could do about it, at least for a while, and may be never, but that anyway it is a grand religion, and I only wished I felt religious and maybe I would the next time: and then I is out in the hot sun on the steps of the cathedral... (85).

This is the real mindset of the average men and women in European society who failed to understand the meaning of religion and lost their faith after the war. The cathedral no longer symbolized the place of worship, as men like Jake are unable to bring their minds together in faith and pray to God. These observations made by Hemingway are casual and matter of fact, where he neither gives importance to the traditional belief in religion nor comments on the
attitude of the character towards religion. The behaviour of men and women who had almost become religious where their faith had diminished to such an extent that worship had become mechanical without creating change of mind or reflecting the essence of religion and the traditional sway that religion had on human beings.

Hemingway has constantly tried to use religion as a symbol which is gradually becoming meaningless among people. The transformation from religious to a religious is the transition that is experienced throughout Europe after the First World War. A similar occurrence is found in A Farewell to Arms where Catherine tries to pray in a church but unable to pray. The degradation of human values had impacted the deterioration of religion to such an extent that places of worship like the churches and cathedrals built during renaissance had become movements and reminders that the European culture who is only outwardly ornamental but lacked the essence of inducing spirituality in the common man.

Hemingway does not probe the causes for this deterioration but blatantly records with authenticity the behaviour of the common man who has lost faith in
religion. The very fact that the movement in the novel *The Sun Also Rises* shift from one place to the other and centre around entertainment with a free flow of alcohol and wine. There is no sense of loss felt among the characters of the novel, which is significant, and the transformation at the individual level is towards a less cohesive society almost aimless and groping in the dark which makes the title of the novel relevant.

Hemingway constantly describes the beauty of the countryside in Spain and the attitude of the Basques who are light hearted and gregarious which impressed Jake and Cohn.

Listen, Jake,’ he said, ‘Are you really a Catholic?’

‘Technically’

‘What does that mean?’

‘I don’t know’.

‘All right, I’ll go to sleep now’, he said.

‘Don’t keep me awake by talking so much.’ (21)

Jake’s reply on his religion cannot be accepted as convincing because he means that he is a catholic by name and on record. Then he is further queried, “what
does it mean?” he says, “I don’t know”, and then goes
to sleep, which clearly shows his nonchalance to
religion which Hemingway presents to the reader but
does not make his comment available to influence the
reader on these aspects of values. Catherine in
A farewell to Arms reflects the same attitude:

We walked along together, along the side walk
past the wine shops, then across the Market
square and up the street and through the
archway to the Cathedral Square. There are
street car tracks and beyond them is the
cathedral. It is white and wet in the mist.
We crossed the tram tracks. On our left are
the shops. Their windows lighted, and the
entrance to the galleria. There is a fog in
the square, and when we came close to the
front of the cathedral it is very big and the
stone is wet.

‘Would you like to go in?’

‘No, Catherine said’. (321)

The categorical refusal of Catherine to step into the
church which in the pre war period would have been
voluntary is now rejected even after Frederic requests
her to make her choice to go into the cathedral, demonstrates the drift of society from the voluntary submission to religion. Catherine could have been religious in her mind, but the externality that normally manifests itself in matters of religion and a pseudo commitment by visiting churches at every turn of the street. Catherine’s renunciation, Jake’s attitude, Santiago’s resignation to fate though he is sure of victory, the certainty of death haunts him in his loneliness on the high seas after the catch of the huge fish.

The attitude of Hemingway’s heroes in such circumstances borders existentialism which set in as an attitude towards life at the beginning of the twentieth century. There is a certain restlessness seen in the behaviour of the characters portrayed by Hemingway in his novels. On close examination of these behavioural attitudes of human beings is a reflection of the futility of life that is exposed during the First World War or the Great War. There is a report which says to capture a one and half kilometre of territory about 20,000 lives are lost in the First World War.

The mines and tunnels are filled with the blood of soldiers and their horses at various points in Europe
especially around Germany and Belgium. The mass graves of the unknown soldiers identified by numbers displayed on tablets that are erected in the graveyards which are the battlefields of the First World War. These graves speak volumes of misery which is experienced by Hemingway as an ambulance driver. He could render services to those who are alive and needed medical care because those who died in the battle field in large numbers are buried there. The misery of the surviving members of the family of the soldiers had to reinvent their lives after the death of the breadwinner who left them orphans. The tragic atmosphere that prevailed in the post World War I period is no intense that the people wanted to escape into some kind of entertainment at that point of time. The only available form of entertainment that is popular among the masses is bull-fighting is a mix of violence, sport, entertainment and a wonderful way to pass time by the average common man. After the war many young men and women are dislocated physically and mentally which made them restless and in search of some form of entertainment, as they wanted desperately to get rid of the tragic events of the war from their mind.
The Great War as it is known made a global impact on the mind of every individual, the social conscience and consciousness is warped and mangled, and felt incapacitated at the mercy of the war machine which made human life miserable. The failure of Christianity prevent the growing feeling of restlessness is obvious among those who sought relief from religion and those who are not concerned about religion or its effects.

The movement of societies from region to region across the World over the centuries, due to wars, religious suppression and political hegemony, has revealed the vulnerability of man, who always sought recourse to his faith in God. The Israelites become refugees in Egypt and the thirst for liberation from slavery is a recurring theme that haunts writers who are committed to the welfare of the people at large. The movement of people in the days of Old Testament and the forced journeys that they undertake reveals the mental turmoil that the human race faces on earth. It is after the First World War the thinking of humanity changed in significant ways. These far reaching changes influenced not only politics but religion as well. These changes are keenly observed by Hemingway and record them in the use of symbols which begins
subtly in *The Sun Also Rises* and gradually evolves into the conflict of man with nature as seen in *The Old man and the sea*.

Religious ideas are present, all over the place in the whole of Europe that is predominantly Christian at the time of the war. A revival of religious ideas, incorporating many traditional concepts, are witnessed new manifestations of spiritualism which are explored with renewed interest in saints, and the importance of relics during the period up to and during the war. The ideas that prevailed among the soldiers, the uncertainty that life could end at any time in a battle, and the arrangement of a Chaplin in every camp to take care of the spiritual needs of the soldiers, make it imperative to indicate the evolution spiritualism in the midst of the war.

Scholars who have researched on ‘Religious Belief and World War I’, by examining diaries of soldiers, and journals, opine that religious thinking evolved is important. Religion impacts to a certain extent the political and historical thought of the people.

When World War I began, the western World is still recovering from the after effects of the Enlightenment
and even the French Revolution. Both historical events had distinctive and long-range affects on religion, both institutionally and within the academy. As proposed by Gertrude Himmelfarb in her book *The Roads to modernity*, the Enlightenment had distinctively different effects on France, Britain, and the United States, and the religious connotations varied widely within each of these major players in the war. France, as the birth place of Enlightenment thinking, took on a distinctive anti-religious aspect, ensuring a long battle against anti-clericalism, lasting up to the start of the war. Religion on the personal level is very much on the decline in France by the time of the Great War. While the French version of the war is largely anti-religious, the Enlightenment as it played out in Britain and the United States had a distinctively religious overtone.

The social thinker Emile Durkheim is of the opinion that man by nature as an individual is religious. There is evidence that individuals had their own opinions on religion. They had to necessarily fall in line with their political masters who engineered the war. The war caused mankind the most
unprecedented large scale death and destruction of human lives and property.

Hemingway’s concern brings out the sordid behaviour of human beings who feel they are caught in a web of despair woven around them by the political leaders and governments that decide their fates. The war and its disastrous effect on men and women force them to seek pleasures in alcohol and bull-fighting. The breakdown of human values is obvious when all the three male characters in the novel—Jake, Mike and Cohn are trying to woo Brett, but none of the three can convince her. She is attracted more to the macho bull-fighter—Romero.

Cohn, though endowed with better skills and values loses his temper first with Jake for having introduced Brett to Romero the Bull fighter whom she is crazy about and apparently in love with him. Later Cohn behaves in a very unchivalrous manner by beating up Romero. Cohn being a trained boxer is able to beat others with ease, thinking that it would impress Brett. On the last day of the fiesta, is symbolic and indicative of the novel winding down to an end. The developments begin to take unexpected turns as Cohn
leaves the Spanish town and Brett feels relieved. She tries to pray in the Church, but is unable to.

Hemingway uses Brett as the representative symbol of the young woman who has been living the way she wanted with the number of men who are aiming to make her their life partners but she did not believe in such permanent relationships and has also lost the capacity to pray in a church, because she did not know what to pray for.

The wartime atmosphere in the World is symbolically represented in the minds of individuals who could not turn to God for solace, in spite of their Christian background. Jake left Madrid the day after the fiesta, he travels to Bayonne, he plans to go to San Sebastian for the next week, but his plans are upset because he receives a telegram from Brett, asking him to meet her at the Hotel Montana in Madrid. He dutifully obliges her and learns from her that she plans to leave Romero and return to Mike.

The conversation with Jake is based on her failed relationship with Romero, whom she tries to avoid while talking, but is perturbed mentally, that she hoverers around the same topic, trying to justify why she had to
break her relationship with Romero. She says his incompatibility is due to the difference in his age and hers. She is thirty-four and he is nineteen, he lacks experience in ordinary matters of relationship. His experience with women is limited, which she finds as a disqualification and ground to reject his relationship. Brett here is a typically liberated woman of the early twentieth century who is able to declare the reasons for her rejection of Romero, which is genuine and justifiable in her own terms. She is the symbol of the average young woman who travels, a lot, visiting bars, enjoying the company of the men she feels comfortable with and especially the bull-fight entertainment and sport which occupies the minds and the lives of so many people in Europe, almost every strata of society. Hemingway’s choice of characters in his first novel is well thought out and deliberates to expose the path that culture and tradition had taken, reflecting the degradation of society.

Hemingway’s delineation of the subjects of God, religion, culture and tradition are closely woven into the theme of the novel so subtly that it takes time for the readers to assimilate his approach which falls into a pattern when every character terms into a symbol and
all of these characters are aware of the empty lives they are living.

'You know it makes one feel rather good deciding not to be a b....h' (Brett said)

'Yes' (Jake said)

'It's sort of what we have instead of God.'

'Some people love God.' I (Jake) said 'Quite a lot'

'He never worked very well with me.' (245)

The moral aspects of life and living and the approach to God and Religion in the lives of the men and women are transformed after the World War I.

All religious teachings and moral education that western education had tried to impose on the minds of the people are ineffective because everyone is in some state of suffering, as their perception of God is, that of a saviour, the Christian theory of God, as the Creator and Saviour of the humans He had created had lost its credibility as Brett says "He never worked very well with me" (247). In this one statement, Hemingway reflects the attitude of the common average woman on God. Brett’s approach to God as the symbol of
the young woman of the post World War era, is obvious.
She does not elaborate or go into the details of the
causes that God never worked well with her. Here Brett
a symbol of a modern young woman, who has a number of
aspirations, but unfocused on what she really wants,
blames God for all her failures.

Hemingway packs a whole lot of meaning when his
characters make such statement which appear casual but
in fact are very deep and need to be explored in
detail. Such statements on God lead us to examine the
technique of writing which is compared to an iceberg.
The visibility of the iceberg is only its tip, but the
mass is hidden below the water.

Hemingway is a contentious writer, gauging the
irrational behaviour of the whole of the western
society from England, Spain, France and Italy. He
comments on the way authors need to take their
profession rather cautiously to make their writing
meaningful and relevant to society when he explains the
iceberg technique of writing in Death in the Afternoon.
Hemingway says:

If a writer of prose knows enough about what
he is writing about he may omit things that
he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough will have a feeling of those things as strongly as though the writer had stated them. The dignity of movement of an iceberg is due only one eighth of it being above water. (192)

The iceberg theory is based on the volume of information that is conveyed to the reader without actually saying everything he wanted to say. Hemingway leaves it to his readers to perceive the other seven eighths of the unspoken portion. The emotional content of the novel is revealed in the last line of the novel when Brett says that they “could have had such a damned good time together,” (89) to which Jake responds by saying “Isn’t it pretty to think so?” (18) Brett casually amuses herself with each of her lovers. The actual experience of Brett and the perception of her experience is what Hemingway tries to highlight leaving it to the readers to visualize the emotional content that dominates the thinking of the young people in the novel who have lost their focus on life, because of the war. The last line in the novel leaves the reader with an understanding of the gap that exists between the
actual experience and the thought of the experience that is perceived in one’s mind.

Here the experience of Brett becomes a symbol that dominates her thinking, from the beginning of the novel. Jake earlier in the novel says,

I thought I had paid for everything. Not like the woman pays and pays and pays. No idea of retribution or punishment. Just exchange of values. You gave up something and got something else. Or you worked for something. You paid some way for everything that is any good. I paid my way into enough things that I liked, so that I had a good time. Either you paid by learning about them, or by experience, or by taking chances, or by money. Enjoying living is learning to get your money’s worth and knowing when you had it …. It seemed like a fine philosophy. In five years, I thought, it will seem just as silly as all the other fine philosophies I have had. (148)

Jake in this passage becomes very philosophic, of his times, he is the symbol of the hero who is wounded
in war and feels unfit to live in a civil society out of war. His contrastive statement that the woman pays and pays and pays is symbolic of the unending commitment to society where she is still looked at as an object of contempt. This statement reveals the concern Hemingway had for women, which is genuine as a writer who is documenting the truths that society refused to be acknowledged by the established civilized society. Brett’s behaviour and her frivolous attitude are superficial and she appears frivolous, because she is in search of a better life which she is unable to secure for herself. She has her choice and her own justification for rejecting Robert Cohn and Romero. She tries to float her own reasons for her frivolous behaviour. Hemingway suggests that it is the atmosphere of frustration that prevailed after the First World War in Europe that forced the youth to behave in such a manner.

Hemingway claimed The Sun Also Rises to be a moral book. He clearly states in one of his discussions with his contemporary critic Archibald MacLeish in “Hemingway”:

He told Archibald MacLeish in 1943 that he had successfully embodied in the novel the
theme that promiscuity is no solution. The novel is about a generation of men and women who returned from the war emotionally, physically and spiritually wounded, men and women who are disillusioned by the political unrest that followed and who had lost faith in tradition, a generation that Gertrude Stein is credited with labelling "The Lost Generation". This generation, detached from its history, drank too much, partied, engaged in sexual escapades, and appeared to conventional eyes, to be purposeless. (90)

The period that Hemingway portrays is a transition period, where the older generation who are used to a conservative morality guided by Christian thought is shocked and dismayed at the behaviour of the younger generation.

The present younger generation of the 1920’s closely observed by Hemingway in the novel, suggests the failure of the conservative previous generation to stall the war that eroded the faith of the present younger generation in the institutions of religion and social cohesion. The contemporary generation of young men and women who are taught the principles of
Nationalism and patriotism are made promises of heroic dimensions that lured them into the war and maimed them for life. The disillusionment that they suffered in the war is manifest in their lives after the war and they are in search of a new morality, while they are also aware that another war may seem without their knowledge and engulf their lives, which is cause for their wayward behaviour and promiscuity. Neither religion (Christianity) nor their political system could assure them of their future.

The failed relationship between the characters in the novel is another failure of humans and the values they nurture for a stable society. Every character in the novel has a grouse against his close friend, because of the degradation of values that is forced on them after the war. The breakdown of the value system is symbolized in the way men deceive women or their male friends deceive themselves by drinking alcohol in excess and ruining themselves and their relationships. E.M. Halliday is of the opinion that Jake is the symbol of impotence became of the wound he sufferers in the war. He symbolizes the totality of the human race, who survived the war, but because useless and frustrated. They lived lives that are meaningless and a great void
existed wherever they went and every action is non-production.

Jake is the symbol of the impotent young man, with all other good qualities, but unable to make meaning in his life and relationships because he is sure that he would be exposed of his inability to consummate his relationship in case any young woman agreed to be his life partner.

The order of the pre-twentieth Century could never be invoked to restore psychological normalcy in society. Jake’s condition may be known to Brett who makes her frustrated, frivolous and wanton. The situation that prevailed after the war is in explainable and inescapable.

Hemingway’s depiction is an appraisal of the failures that society faced because of the World War and the fragility on which human life existed. The danger of the world being engulfed in another war is imminent and it did happen in Hemingway’s life which he witnessed to his dismay and surprise, which created a permanent depression that lasted till the end of his life.
There is no talk more serious than the bull fight in which Brett and Romero are engaged. Mike observes and belittles their talk in a very colloquial manner which reflects the order of the day. Hemingway brings out the way life unfolds in the most civilized cities of Europe.

Mike is on his feet proposing a toast. ‘Let’s all drink to – he began Pedro Romero’, I said. Everybody stood up. Romero took it very seriously, and we touched glasses and drank it down, I rushing it a little because mike is trying to make it clear that is not at all what he is going to drink to. But it went off all right, and Pedro Romero shook hands with everyone and he and the critic went out together” (154).

Brett is all appreciation for Romero. Cohn is snubbed because he is a Jew. Jake asks Cohn “Do you think you belong among us?” (154) A clear discrimination, Hemingway brings out the aversion that the European race is against the Jewish race. “Why don’t you see when you are not wanted, Cohn? Go away; Go away, for God’s sake. Take that sad Jewish face away. Don’t you think I’m right?” (211).
Hemingway’s observation of the racial prejudice that existed over the centuries against the Jews is blatantly brought out. The under currents of racial hatred, nationalistic spirit and the hegemonic attitude of one geographical region over the other and such petty prejudices played a very potent role in the behaviour of humans who pursued the same professions lived almost similar lives, but felt divided because of their ethnicity that created havoc at all levels.

The fiesta, which is a ritualistic bull-fight that all sections of society enjoy as their entertainment. The fact that there is a certain amount of tragic despair in the minds of the people, there is also a built-in mechanism that assures adversities that make life tragic will pass over:

The fiesta is really started. It kept up day and night for seven days. The dancing kept up, the drinking kept, and the noise went on. The things that happened could only have happened during a fiesta. Everything became quite unreal finally and it seemed as though nothing could have any consequences. It seemed out of place to think of consequences during the fiesta. All during the fiesta you
had the feeling, even though, even when it is quiet that you had to show any remark to make it heard. It is the same feeling about any action. It is a fiesta and it went on for seven days. (118)

The fiesta is an occasion when all sections of society are happy. The happiness is short lived. It’s a kind of frenzy that everyone is voluntarily involved in. They all know it is short lived, momentary and unreal and inconsequential.

Hemingway says “It seemed out of place to think of consequences during the fiesta” (28). The fiesta is the symbol of life that needs to be lived with all energy and hope. The participation of the bull fighter, the bull, the onlookers are all symbols that represent the truth and reality that life is a combination of entertainment that is short lived along with its tragic undercurrents. The death of the bull fighters and the bulls and the natives of Spain undergo the tragedy of death while it is entertainment for those who come as tourists from Italy and other countries in Europe. Bull fighting in Spain is a very tricky sport.
Hemingway knew every nuance of the game, and he is thrilled at every event he attended. His care to go into minute details is remarkable and that makes his writing on bull fighting absorbing, and when analyzed in detail reveals the undercurrent of the tragic ethos that people suffer from while enjoying the tragedy of the bull or the fighter who finally dies in the game. His love for details enhances his narration when they are given in short sentences, easy for the reader to absorb and visualize in chapter 18 of *The Sun Also Rises*.

Hemingway’s master stroke in narration is when he uses single verb sentences to save time and optimize the attention of the reader as it’s more of a visual experience than a verbal commentary. “They are all alone” is a paradoxical sentence that comes in between to describe the loneliness of the matadors, who are in the huge stadium.

Amidst the noisy crowd, humans all around but the matadors as a class remain alone. They cannot interact with anyone or among themselves as their concentration is on the bull that they are going to take on. The narration continues in the same vein as Hemingway casually says “The Music started.” After the applause,
after the President entered and took his place on the centre stage. The sequencing of events and his keen concern for details remains marvellous as it conjures up a picturesque image in the mind of the reader leaving it to their imagination which can have an effect bordering drama and theatre. The bull ring is a theatre and the enactment is so powerfully and graphically, presented that one is transported mentally to the bull ring amidst the crowds on the stands. The rest of the world away from Spain and Europe, when the cinema is still silent, reading a novel with such effects is the only way they could visualize a bull fight.

The narrative employed is fresh, novel and exclusive as the masters of the novel who preceded Hemingway, indulged in descriptive narration. As the readers of novels and fiction are eager to entertain themselves by reading adventure and action at the turn of the twentieth century, Hemingway understood the pulse of the people and wrote this novel which included the after effects of the War and the action packed bull fight that is the most popular form of sport for a majority of Europe. Many of his detractors are of the opinion that his novels have no depth; he is interested
in bull fighting and sport like fishing or hunting in Africa. His detractors will be proved wrong, because he is also seriously concerned with tragic element that engages the attention of men and women all over the world. The need for entertainment is the reality of the tragic circumstances that prevailed in the minds of every individual at that point of time.

Every character in the novel has his or her own frustration and tragedy looms large in their minds, the bull fight is a way to entertain them and get away from the boredom of tragedy that occupies their mind. Hemingway goes into the detail of economic aspect that also plays a very vital part in such sports where the spectators are large crowds. The whole of society gets involved in the event mentally. It is like a modern day cricket match or football match. The sport that attracts the maximum crowd irrespective of the effects is created by such events.

Hemingway subtly points out the tragedy that people are eagerly awaiting, the death of Belmonte, the veteran bull fighter who has become a legend who risks his life in every fight by going close to the bull. People are eager to call him a legend give him a status of the veteran but anticipate the tragedy at any
time. The bull fighter rides on death and takes it casually as he survives, the whole audience become edgy and enjoys a sense of purgation when the bull is killed. The basic human instinct of catharsis unfolds.

_The Sun also Rises_ is symbolic of the society that existed in Europe after the First World War. Things are gradually returning to normalcy and the number of peace keeping efforts and conferences on progress and cooperation emerged as symbols of peace. There is a confidence that is being spread among the people to regain peace and happiness without the threat of War. The gradual shift in reviving economies around the world is another symbol of hope which is short lived and became a disaster with the great depression of 1933. Reading the novel in its context will reveal that it is also directed towards assuring the enlightened readers that there is a symbol of hope as the title of the novel suggests.

Examining the novel in the right perspective and putting it in the context of the post war scenario will make it representative of the complex behavioural attitude that existed at that time. The realities of society, the lurking fear of war and the psychological crisis forced people into the way they lived and
thought. Every character in this novel represents the vast spectrum of a changing society. The events that are narrated in the novel, the hope and the fears, the challenges and the trials are all symbols of the generation which Gertrude Stein called the lost generation. The appraisal of the events and the characters presented in the novel in the present context gives a number of leads to the complexities that plague contemporary society at the global level.

The first novel that Hemingway gives to his readers is symbolic of the crisis that is to persist to the present day when wars have become multi dimensionally complex. The novel gains greater scope among its readers today as it is relevant in the given set of circumstances. The conflict between the major religions and the super power in spite of the efforts to introduce international bodies for better relationships among nations on one hand and the failure to create a peaceful world devoid of War has become a dream for every individual in every nation.

Hemingway’s concern for the common man to enjoy peace and tranquillity in the traditional sports is existed from time immemorial. Hemingway symbolically pointed out that after the First World War there is a
great interest shown in bull fighting in Spain. The whole of Europe is represented in Madrid. The bull fighters are symbolic of the sporting event that entertained the people at their own risk. There is a shift in the experiencing of tragedy from society to the individual in the bull-fight.

There is message in the symbols used by Hemingway to convey the spirit of the age that is frantically searching for alternatives to reassure societies and nations that war is not a solution to whatever be the problems that are at hand.