Chapter IV

The Metaphysical Influence of Symbolism in
For Whom The Bell Tolls

Hemingway is charmed with Spain and its people, their culture and its sports. His first novel, The sun also Rises and some short stories have their location in Spain. He is closely watching the development in Spain after the First World War. The political events lead to the civil war between the Republicans or loyalists on the one hand and the fascists on the other in 1936. Hemingway visited Spain in 1937 for a second time and observed then again in 1938 while the clash continued between these groups.

It is in 1940 that he comes out with the novel For whom the Bell Tolls. He uses the novel as a platform to voice his opinion on the political developments in Spain. He does not blatantly use his skill as a novelist to indulge in political propaganda, but he blends the Civil War with the story to voice his opinion on the direction society is taking. The major powers in the world are involved with the Spanish Civil War. The Conflict between the two groups is based on their ideologies. They wanted to establish their
democracy as the monarchy under king Alfonso failed to give them a fair rule. The novel deals with the deep emotions of the people of Spain.

Hemingway keenly observed the evolution of the political process in Spain, as he knew the way the people are progressing after the World War I in Europe. The restlessness of the people manifested itself in the Civil War which forced the Spanish people to align themselves with either of the groups. The Catholic Church played a vital role in this movement which made social observers like Hemingway critical of the role that religion and religious leaders should play in the lives of the common man. He does not endorse the way Fascists tore Spain apart with the help of the clerics. He writes the novel after the war, and it had no political motives of propaganda. He considered the war as a tragedy that ruined the beautiful country he always loved to visit and spend his time with his friends in Spain.

Hemingway’s novels The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms and For whom the Bell Tolls deal with wars those are manmade. His Passionate love for life and the disruption to normal life caused by war
due to the ideological commitments of leaders and heads of government is his concern.

As an artist and a person who loved nature and the beauty of human life, Hemingway preferred to have freedom and democracy to Fascism. He is apprehensive of the struggles engineered as wars by the civil and military leaders of the world because he felt that man’s freedom of expression is curbed. The first and biggest casualty is art and the world of peace that artists needed to survive and make the place a better world. According to Carlos Baker:

It is a study of the betrayal of the Spanish people - both by what lay within them and what had been thrust upon them - and it is presented with that special combination of sympathetic involvement and hard-headed detachment which is the mark of the genuine artist... its partisanship in the case of democracy. (For whom the Bell Tolls 231)

The novel is based on actions that Span over three days. Jordan the protagonist of the novel acts and establishes himself within this time frame. Hemingway renders his rich experiences in Spain the people of
Spain who are emotional and aggressive who are the most affected by the civil uprising. Hemingway gives glimpses of the past of his characters in the novel and their present role which makes this novel different from the rest of the other two war novels written earlier.

Hemingway is on the side of the people. He believes in liberty, equality and fraternity. Jordan, the hero of the novel speaks for Spain. He believed in the Republic and that it is the best form of government. He believes that if the Republic of Spain is taken over by the Fascists that Spanish life would be destroyed and it would become impossible to live for the common man.

Jordan is helping the Spanish people in their fight against Fascists. Though the Spanish Civil War is a long drawn war, Hemingway chooses a short period of three days of intensive action to bring out intensity with which everyone in Spain is involved. The transformation of the events of the Civil War into a work of art aims at sending a message to society at large. The message that anarchy will be destructive of society and it will affect human beings for generations to come. Strikes and labour unrest became common day to
day events. Political murders began to take place every day, on both sides. The rumour spread that the government is unable to control the disturbances and assassinations; the right-wing papers are suspended and the Courts (Spanish Parliament) prorogued.

The War is an excuse for everyone to be busy. The war gives the officers a status that will be lost when the war is over, so most of the officers who may appear tired of the war may not want the war to end because they would lose their status, excitement and uncertainty that gives them a thrill.

Hemingway narrates with utmost exactness the way the officers behaved during the civil war in Spain in Chapter 40. The Civil War gives an occasion for those who are self-declared, self-styled warriors officers, fighting the cause of liberation on behalf of the common man to compare themselves with the formally trained, uniformed officers who are defending the constitution right or the king against the so called Fascists and Liberals. He has followed this company commander to battalion headquarters where the battalion commander, who had been a barber before the movement, is filled with enthusiasm on hearing the account of his mission. This commander, who is named Gomez cursed the
Company Commander for his stupidity, patted Andre’s on the bark, gave him a drink of bad brandy and told him that he himself, the ex-barber, had always wanted to be a guerrilla.

No you read A.B.C. Gomez said 'The army is still rotten with such as thee. With professionals such as thee. But it will not always be. We are caught between the ignorant and the cynical. But we will educate the one and eliminate the other.”

"Purge" is the word you want, the officer said, still not looking up. (98)

Hemingway casually comments on the attitude of the rebels who are enthusiastic about their mission to secure a sound future for their country as they claim to be true patriots. The establishment, the king and the Church and the Government is dubbed at anti-people. The army is the Chief sustainers of peace in ordinary times. It is also the most pressurized organ of the government in times of war and civil unrest. Hemingway comments on the attitude of Lieutenant Colonel Miranda

'He had only one ambition, to finish the war with the same rank. He had defeated the
Sierra well and he wanted to be left alone there to defend it whenever it is attacked. He felt much healthier in the war, probably due to the forced curtailment of the number of meat courses, he had an enormous stock of sodium–bicarbonate, he had his whiskey in the evening, and his twenty-three old mistress is harming a baby. (416)

The snugness and comfort zone that the officer lives in and the best of life with whiskey and a young mistress who has a baby that he enjoys, is something that he will not be able to have once the war is over. He will be stripped of all this power and all these perquisites that he enjoys. Though the risk of life is there, when the battles take place, it is exciting even then, that they care little about survival, as they always have greater chances of survival as the war throws up so many surprises.

Hemingway deals with the undercurrent of humanity however complex the war may be. The constant repetition of after the war is an indicator of the coming of peace. The war itself which may be gruesome and violent involving a number of tragic deaths is justified by either party who are in search of a
solution to establish permanent peace. These lines become very essential for the analysis of this text as war and religion are referred to with the objectivity of the author. Hemingway talks about ‘Civic Penance’ which is rather novel and thought provoking at the time of the Spanish Civil War. Penance itself is the Catholic sacrament which absolves one of his sins committed against any of the Ten Commandments. Killing is a sin against the seventh commandment “Thou Shalt not Kill.” Hemingway speaks about ‘Civic Penance’ after the war, which points out to the fact that normalcy will be restored by a competent civil government and justice will prevail without the interference of the church or religion.

The conflict between the church and the state is existent from the times of King Henry VIII in England. The church is the symbol of moral authority over the state which is only the executive authority in all countries in Europe. The reformation and the birth of Protestantism in England are simultaneously followed up by Martin Luther against the authority of the Catholic Church. The church assumed the symbolic right to coronate the king in any state as per the divine right theory that prevailed as a political system. The Pope
who is the Head of the Catholic Church ruled Supreme from Rome through his Hierarchy - the Bishops and Archbishops. The Pope or his representatives invoked the blessings of God at the coronation ceremonies to crown a prince and make him a king. It is this symbolic moral authority that is gradually eroded by the countries in Europe who began to question this authority.

The indoctrination by the church and the state made most of the countries theoretically uniform. The countries professing the catholic faith are made to believe that all their sufferings are God given. Suffering becomes a symbol of every citizen and there is no reprieve or escape. The reward of suffering on earth is to be reaped in the next life in Heaven. The Spaniards are ardent devotees of catholic faith and believed it to a certain extent that their suffering is God sent. The rationalistic and probing mind of the average common man began to question the symbols of faith coupled with the misrule that existed at that point of time and questioned the authority of the State and the Church.

The French Revolution, The American War of Independence and the Spanish Civil War have many
features in common. It is the struggle of man against the establishment which is being dispensed by the rulers who are the representatives of God. The rule of man on Earth in the name of God is at the centre of these revolutions. The constant struggle of man with the forces of evil to establish the cherished Kingdom of God on Earth has engaged man’s attention for centuries. The urge of man to enhance his status on earth and make it a paradise as God wants him to live in peace, harmony and enjoy happiness is the principal symbol for man’s struggles within and without. Robert Jordan the protagonist stumbles into war and embraces the spirit of adventure. He is in the war because he believes that the battle for human freedom needs to be won on behalf of the Spanish people. He strongly believes that he is fighting for the right cause. He is the symbolic saviour in his mind. He is willing to sacrifice everything for the ideology that he is fighting for.

The violent scene of the killing of the fascists is a tour de force on which the interpretation of the entire novel rests as much as the future of mankind rested, as Jordan thinks, on the blowing of the bridge. The first important symbol in For whom the Bell Tolls
is the bridge which is the centre of all attention in the novel. The word bridge is repeated in different context two hundred and ninety four times in the novel. Robert Jordan tells himself in Chapter I:

And that is not the way to think... and there is not you, and there are no people that things must not happen to. Neither You nor this Old man is anything. You are instruments to do your duty. There are necessary orders that no fault of yours and there is a bridge and that bridge can be the point on which the future of the human race can turn, as it can turn on everything that happens in the war. We have only one thing to do, you must do it. (46)

Pilar reciprocates and reflects Jordan’s attitude when he says, “I am for the Republic... and the Republic is the bridge” (56). This bridge is symbolic of victory which is due to the Republican cause and the defeat of fascism at the same time. The destruction of the bridge symbolizes the destruction of fascism.

The Fascists could be dislocated, demoralized and dissolved into nothing. It is the vital link that
symbolizes the freedom of man in Toto. It is the only hope of the future of the human race itself which become significant and vital for survival. Although we are aware of the significances of the bridge, right from the beginning of the novel, the first description of the bridge is given in chapter three of the book,

They came down the last two hundred yards, moving carefully from tree to tree, in the shadows and now, through the last pines of the steep hillside, the bridge is only fifty yards away. The late afternoon sun, that still came over the brown shoulder of the mountain showed the bridge, dark against the steep emptiness of the gauge. It is a steel bridge of a single span and there is a sentry box at each end. It is wide enough for two motor cars to pass, and it spanned, in solid flung metal grace, a deep gauge at the bottom of which far below, a brook leaped in white water through rocks and boulders, down to the main stream of the pass. (38)

Robert Jordan and his men inspect the bridge from as close a distance as they could do so in the given situation, for it is the Fascist who control and guard
it in order to be able to keep the Madrid – Valencia road open for the desired movement of their troops and mechanized weapons. It is customary in every war over the centuries especially when there is a civil uprising, that some symbolic geographical location is captured to declare victory and pronounce defeat to those who are vanquished.

The fall of the Bastille is symbolic of the declaration and victory of the French Revolution. The Fascist of the contemporary world follows this principle of capturing a town of geographical significance that can destabilize and paralyze the movement of the government of the day.

All characters in this novel are consciously obsessed with bridge, either in blowing it up or in saving the bridge. Republicans are determined to blow it up while the Fascists are bound to protect it, as a strategy to save their movement. Robert Jordan is entrusted with a job of blowing up the bridge, and he seeks the support of Pablo and the people around him to complete the job that is entrusted to him. Jordan is sure of the support of Pablo, Anselmo, Fernando, Primitivo, Eladio, Agustin, Andres, Pilar and Maria.
He is rather apprehensive about Rafael’s attitude and sometimes suspects Pablo.

Hemingway carefully chooses this situation to strengthen these relationships which are very essential for the movement that they are in.

Robert Jordan thought. We should have no difficulties. We are of accord. I am glad you have come. The cigarette glowed brightly.

‘Pay no attention to arguments’, he said. You are very welcome here. (54)

Robert Jordan is the centre of all action in the novel, because he is portrayed as a teacher of Spanish and a lover of Spain. Patriotism is instilled in his psyche that he plans to write a book on Spain when he is free. He looks at Fascism as the destructive element of art and the artist. Every Fascist movement in the world has been adverse to the spirit of freedom that the artist enjoys. It is the collective consciousness of the Spanish people when Hemingway is so close to and felt obliged to support the cause of the Spaniards, who are basically freedom loving people. Carlos Baker the most authentic critic on Hemingway says:
Working efficiently as a dynamiter with the Republican guerillas, loving Spain, hating Fascism, sympathizing with the people who have been are being betrayed, Jordan still manages to be temperate without being at all tepid. His brain is neither dominated nor deceived by the propagandistic. He remains the free man, the man not taken in, and the man doing the necessary job but also making the necessary mental reservations. (41)

Baker has precisely defined the status of Robert Jordan as the dynamiter with the Republican guerillas. Dynamite is used for destructive purposes in wars especially after the World War I. It has become a symbol of destruction, even when used by the Republicans who are at war with the Fascists.

Hemingway subtly points out that the war for a right cause could be relative and no war can be defined in absolute terms that the intentions of the factions are perfect. The aspect of using violence to establish a legitimate government has come to stay, with the progress of civilization.

The Spanish Civil War has become the symbolic liberation of the people from the rule of the Fascists.
The struggle for Spain to be a free country resulted in the Civil War. While the characters involved in the Civil War are essentially natives of Spain. Robert Jordan is an American who is teaching Spanish at the University of Montana. Robert Jordan loves Spain and he has lived in Spain for more than ten years before the Civil war began. Jordan tells Pilar “There are no other countries like Spain” (65).

Hemingway takes the Civil War of Spain out of its boundaries by bringing Jordan from America into the Spanish Civil War. His expertise along with his involvement is the two factors that make him the symbolic liberator of Spain from the Fascist. He is clear about his mission and his capacity to execute his mission. His involvement in the Spanish Civil War is the trend of the youth who got attracted by such wars and felt a moral responsibility to participate in the war.

Hemingway is keen on joining the Army during the First World War. He failed to succeed in enrolling himself as a soldier but succeeded in becoming an ambulance driver and took a close look at the events that unfurled in the war rather objectively succeeded in creating character like Robert Jordan, Fredric Henry
in *Farewell to Arms*, and Jakes in *The Sun Also Rises*.

Robert Jordan Clarifies his position to Pablo:

> I come only for my duty... I come under orders from those who are conducting the war. If I ask you to help me, you can refuse and I will find others who will help me. I have not even asked you for help yet. I have to do what I am ordered to do and I can promise you of its importance. That I am a foreigner is not my fault. I would rather have been born here. (18)

Robert Jordan very clearly states that his nationality is not his identity. He identifies himself with the job he is assigned. He knows and reiterates the importance of the job assigned to him. His commitment to his job and his nationality do not oppose each other.

In fact one complements the other which has a remarkable significant effect which is symbolic of a rare combination. Robert Jordan does not succumb to defeatism. He is determined the blow of the bridge to achieve his ideological desire against the Fascist. Jordan is not a communist, but he is volunteered himself to work under the communist leadership.
Analyzing Robert Jordan as an extraordinary symbol of the Spanish Civil War will reveal the ramifications of the deliberate choices made by Hemingway establish the purpose of the Republicans under an organized leadership and the role of the Fascists who could not sustain themselves.

Jordan is clear in his mind that only discipline and a disciplined force would succeed in establishing the rule of law. The Fascists are a bunch of indiscipline insurgents who practiced anarchy which would surely ruin the country. Organized Countries and established Government resort to war when they are unable to settle their grievances with their enemies normally in their neighborhood, where the Geneva Convention is invoked. An internal war or civil war within a country has no rules laid out till date. The lack of a code to engage in a civil war resulted in ‘Guerrilla’ warfare which is coined during the Spanish Civil War. The internal wars by ethnic groups are termed as insurgencies, and international agencies like the United Nation Organizations have been unable to impress the countries and their governments to refrain from human violations and grant the aspirations of the people who are involved in the civil uprising. In the
case of the Spanish Civil War, the Republicans are fighting for their rights against the Fascists who are taking the country down the wrong path of human rights violation.

Hemingway’s narration is generally more in favor of the discussions held by Robert Jordan and his group of friends who are up in arms against the Fascists. Hemingway’s concern for a stable Government in Spain is in the background that makes him ignore the efforts of the Fascists to take hold of Spain. This struggle is the symbol of man’s eternal struggle to have a peaceful life in his natural surroundings.

Hemingway keeps the symbol of the struggle alive throughout the novel. All the characters are involved in this struggle. The friends of Jordan who meet stealthily in the caves of the mountains in Spain outside the city in the countryside contribute their human skill with plans to blow up the controversial bridge. The bridge is a steel cage symbolic of the advancement of technology and the mountains and natural surroundings where Jordan is found with his friends is the symbol of nature which is in a constant struggle with the advancement of science and technology.
Anselmo belongs to Barcode Avila and is sixty-eight years of age by temperament is against all human killings. He believes in the Christian commandment of God – “Thou Shall not Kill.” He believes firmly that human life is a creation of God and no man has the right to take another man’s life. He assures Jordan that he would carry out his duties in the blowing up of the bridge perfectly. Anselmo is aware that in a war human lives are trivialized. The Spaniards though not directly involved in the First World War had a thorough knowledge of the human lives lost in the trenches of the World War I. It is his firm conviction that every life on earth had a definite mission. He knew his mission well and is ready to give his life for the welfare of Spain and the freedom of the Spaniards.

Hemingway creates a certain admiration for the character of Anselmo when he dies in the process of blowing up the bridge.

Augustin, Fernando, Eladio, Primitivo and Andre are compatriots in the cause of the republic. They are ready to die for their country. They are a band of young men who are committed to the cause of Spain. They are the symbols of youthful lively patriots who join together to pursue their conviction of the
republic that they dream of Spain. The young man is a stock symbol in Hemingway’s fiction.

Fredric Henry is a young man with aspiration of love and life in A Farewell to Arms and the characters who are portrayed in The Sun Also Rises are all young men except the old bull fighter who is engaged in a youthful occupation. Manolin is an apprentice to Santiago in The Old Man and The Sea. He also dreams along with Santiago. All these young men in the novels of Hemingway are symbols of youthful aspirations ready to take on struggles unmindful of the outcome.

It is not the young men alone who live with the aspirations, but also the young women Brett Ashley, Catherine Barkley and Maria in For whom the Bell Tolls. All these young women are apparently in love with the young men who are chasing their aspirations trying to find the meaning of their lives.

The First World War had devastated life to such an extent that their aspirations are killed. There is no chance of reviving these aspiration as depicted in The Sun Also Rises where Brett is in search of a youth who would be able to live up to her aspirations. Jakes is wounded in the war. He is impotent and is aware of it.
He is apprehensive of the role we will be able to play as a stable life partner for Brett. The doubt of his compatibility with Brett makes him nonchalant towards her flirtatious behavior to the other men. She is all admiration for the bull fighter Romero. There is in *For whom the Bell Tolls* a love story between Robert Jordan and Maria.

The Hero falls in love with Maria an appealing little girl who has been captured and raped by the Fascists; she has never loved before and she wants him to teach her love. She adores him, lives only to serve him, longs for nothing but to learn his desires so that she can do for him what he wants. She merges her identity and lives in the shadow of Jordan. She is also equally committed to the cause of the Civil War. She has such a deep conviction as a republican and is a strong anti-Fascist because she saw her father who is the Mayor of his village being shot dead by the Fascists. She is tortured by the Fascists and they shaved her hair in the Valladolid prison. She is always called as ‘little cropped head’. The cutting of Maria’s hair is a symbol of a loss of a normal womanhood or girlhood just as it is growing out indicates her gradual return to balance and health.
Hemingway understood war and the nature of those who partook in the war is to be found in one of his descriptions in *To Have and Have Not* where Richard Gordon visits a bar at which veterans and sailors congregate. Besides having a good understanding as to the nature of war and its participants, he had an uncommonly good insight into the real causes of war. Writing in Esquire before the beginning of the Second World War he said:

Not this August, nor this September; you have this year to do in what you like. Not next August, nor next September; that is still too soon; they are still too prosperous from the way things pick up when armament factories start at near capacity; they never fight as long as money can be made without ... But the year after that or the year after that they fight. Then what happens?

If there is a general European War we will be brought in if propaganda ..., greed, and the desire to increase the impaired health of the state can swing us in. (77)
The first panacea for a mismanaged nation is inflation of the currency; the second is war. Both bring a temporary prosperity; both bring a permanent ruin. But both are refuge of political and economic opportunists.

A man has ambitions, a man rules until he gets into economic trouble; he tries to get out of this trouble by war. A country never wants war until a man through the power of propaganda convinces it. Propaganda is stronger now than it has ever been before. Its agencies have been mechanized, multiplied and controlled until in a state ruled by any one man truth can never be presented.

War is no longer made by simply analyzed economic forces if it ever is. War is made or planned now by individual men, demagogues and dictators who play on the patriotism of their people to mislead them into a belief in the great fallacy of war when all their vaunted reforms have failed to satisfy the people they misrule.

It is evident that Hemingway placed the ultimate blame for war upon the shoulders of unscrupulous politicians. His feeling towards such politicians is
evidenced in a number of places in his writings. It is significant, and in the light of religion even contradictory, that while Hemingway thoroughly understood the nature of war, the nature of organized violence, that war is the antithesis of everything Christian. But he nowhere declared that war, as he portrayed it, is thoroughly unchristian, nor did he state that Christians should refuse to take part in such wars.

Hemingway did not probe the moral aspects of war or its relationship to Christianity. The Spaniards are devoting Christians who loved their country equally and upheld all moral standards to maintain their individual identity as an exclusive European race. They drank liquor, and indulged in violent bullfights. Their favourite pastime and sport is bull fighting that lead to gambling, which is equally harmful to the youth of Spain during the post world war period. The unrest and conflict that arose between the fascists on one side and those who wanted a republic on the other side is due to this clash of ideologies and contradiction in beliefs which fuelled the Civil War. They wrote in the old days that it is sweet and fitting to die for one’s country. But in modern war there is nothing neither
sweet nor fitting in your dying. You will die like a
dog for no good reason.

Hemingway does not reject the idea of dying like a
dog for a good reason, nor did he say that one should
utterly refuse to kill for no good reason. He did not
invoke the Christian concept of killing in any of his
writings. Hemingway seems to border on an ambivalent
attitude towards the question of War and Violence. In
one sense he saw its utter futility, but in another
sense he seemed to hope that under certain
circumstances war might not be absolutely futile and
that some good might eventually happen.

The Republicans are sure that the outcome of the
Spanish Civil War could be in their favour. Hemingway
consistently saw some hope in war because he aided the
cause of the Loyalists against the Fascists during the
Spanish Civil War.

Hemingway’s ambivalent attitude towards war is the
reason that he is trying to convince his doubting mind
that anything at all can be achieved through it. The
fact that he claimed to hate war, he hated war only
under certain circumstances. That is why he never
opposed it. He says in “Notes on the Next War”: 
If a war is fought by those who marked to fight it and knew what they are doing and liked it, or even understood it, then it would be defensible. But those who want to go to the war, the elite, are killed off in the first months and the rest of the war is fought by men who are enslaved into the bearing of arms and are taught to be more afraid of sure death from their officers if they run than possible death if they stay in the line or attack. (156)

Hemingway understood the true nature of war and its far reaching effects that could affect people, generations to come economically, psychologically and politically. The war debts incurred by advanced countries like Great Britain are still being debated and serviced through the taxes collected from the people. The fact that most of the countries developed and developing spend more than twenty percent of their revenue on maintaining their defence forces.

The Spanish Civil War devastated the economy of Spain and ruined the personal lives of people who loved their country more than anything else. Their willingness to suffer for the sake of their country
makes them the symbols of martyrdom. The identity of
the Spanish with the free republic that they lived in
is the best identity that they took pride in flaunting
in Europe. The bull-fight which is a national symbol
of Spanish Sport stands for earthiness, the manliness
and the primitive heroism of the Spanish people.

For whom The Bell Tolls has a number of other
images and symbols like the term Nada and the odour
image. The odours of different herbs, the odour of
fine needles, the smell of the mob, the smell of the
spilled wine and vomit, the smell of the roots and the
everth, the odours of the cave, the odour of death, the
smell of the leggings and the shirts, the smell of the
horses and the other animals are recurrent images which
Hemingway portrays with such accuracy and skill that
one is able to feel the smell of these odours which
becomes a symbol communicating a sensational appeal to
his readers.

Pilar tells Robert Jordan about the three blended
odours of the smell of death:

In this sack will be contained the essence of
it all, both the dead earth and the dead
stalks of the flowers and their rotted blooms
and the smell that is both the death and
birth of man. (246)

Death is the dominating symbol and the discussions
on death occupy the minds of the central characters in
all the novels of Hemingway. Though Robert Jordan does
not believe in superstition or the supernatural, but
he is sure that death is certain.

Hemingway portrays the traditional Spanish
community as a community that believes in ogres,
soothsayers and supernatural things. They are symbolic
of traditionalism where as Robert Jordan does not
believe in such superstitious symbols. Jordan thinks
that it is a fear and imagination that makes one
believe in superstition. He further says that
imagination comes by divination. Hemingway here points
out the conflict between the traditional and the non-
traditional.

Robert Jordan is not only an American by
nationality but also does not believe in the
superstitions of the Spaniards. The role of myth and
legend in any society, community or religion plays a
very vital role in the sub-conscious of that community.
The Christian legend of divination and the Christian
symbol of the ultimate, sacrifice of Christ are all powerful symbols of faith for the whole Christian community in Spain.

Most of the European countries at the beginning of the twentieth century are monotheistic and theocratic. The monarchies that rule these countries owed allegiance to The Holy See at Rome. Many symbols are Christological in nature. The cycle of birth and death its continuous implication in the process of life is the basic Christian belief that God has a purpose for every creation on this earth.

The way in which Hemingway explains death in For whom the Bell Tolls makes it obvious that death has its own smell like birth. “Yet he, who is no gypsy, smelled death on Joselito when he fought at Talavera. Although I do not see how he could smell it above the smell of mamzanilla” (262).

The fact that the Spanish people are able to smell death, gives death a new symbolic dimension in this novel. In the other novels of Hemingway this dimension of the smell of death is not found. The smell of death is a common indication that a man will die soon. Though Robert Jordan does not subscribe to this belief
the Christian belief does not have any specific objection towards this belief.

Hemingway stresses that the Spanish are very devote followers of Christianity in everything they did, but convey the duality of Christian beliefs that border superstition. The belief in the smell of death is not essentially anti-Christian, but it borders superstition. Death cannot be smelt on the person who is going to die on the battle front. The dynamics and logistics of a war do not give such space to smell death land be certain that someone is going to die. There is no calculated or planned killing in a war.

Death is imminent in war and anyone who escapes death is lucky. The element of luck in surviving death in a war like the Spanish Civil War is related to providence of God. Death is a sacrifice in war, it is honoured and people are given medals and awards for laying down their lives for the country. Every country has a huge war memorial for those who died in war. The death of soldiers and civilians in the context of the post World War I is the concern of Hemingway.

A Greenville Hicks said: “All of Hemingway’s compulsions stem from his feeling about death, with
which he has been concerned in a way that few authors have since John Donne posed for a sculptor, wrapped in his winding sheet” (524).

Hemingway’s attitude to death is pragmatic and irreligious. He does not attach any importance to the Christian Commandment, or the theory of sacrifice, of Jesus Christ for mankind. He raises a number of questions indirectly and subtly by making the characters in the novel discuss the various aspects of death. Though these discussions on the odour of death in For Whom the Bell Tolls may appear irrelevant to the purpose of the novel or the Spanish Civil War, he raises the fundamental question whether death is the only way to achieve peace and prosperity. In this endeavour as a responsible author he tries to enlighten the contemporary and future generation of readers, that accepting to fight for a particular cause like Robert Jordan, the dynamiter and laying down one’s life is a meaningless sacrifice for very many reasons. The person who is selfless like Robert Jordan, being an American national committed to the cause of the Republican movement in Spain is willing to embrace death as an ultimate sacrifice for the well being of Spain. He may be morally correct, but Hemingway subtly ignites the
rationality that is missing in such sentimental commitments to ideologies that may exist or may not exist in the future.

Hemingway emphasizes that death is inevitable, but putting oneself in the bull-ring or battle field and taking chances with death is irrational. The mental states of those in the battle front is confused and realize their failure to understand life and the misery that death will stalk them at any moment and their only alternative is to surrender to fate.

The Christian belief that one must prepare for death during his life time, to attain the bliss of Heaven and eternal happiness. The average European is Christian at heart and imbibed the teachings of The Bible with all piety and faith. Saint John Chapter II, verses 25 and 26 say, “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live: And every one that liveth and believeth in me shall not die for ever” (32). This is the fundamental teaching of Jesus Christ that death will result in resurrection into Heaven for those, who are righteous, and for those who followed the tenets and commandments of God and practiced the teachings of Christ. Hemingway does not directly comment on this
aspect but he subtly hints at the failure of Christianity and the message of Christ in the twentieth century.

Hemingway’s attitude to death is more existentialist echoing Albert Camus who is also obsessed with death as a human predicament, that rarely finds a solution within the realms of the existing theories of faith and religion.

The universe which Camus has described is limited by death and man’s estrangement from the world, and Camus calls for a refusal of the world which is not a renouncement and which means having the conscious certainty of death without hope.

Hemingway evolved his own philosophy after witnessing the bull fights in Spain. Killing a bull in the fight became a symbolic expression. The bull fighter is seen as a sacrificial priest in the bull ring.

Hemingway’s *Death in the Afternoon* deals with death at length subtly conveying that he is trying to conquer death, which runs against the Christian theory of the purpose of creation and life, is to return to the creator God. His attitude towards death is pagan
and far from the reality that exists. The escape from death through the pleasure of killing is pure delusion. Every individual knows that death is certain and no one can escape from the reality of death. Selecting an escape route through orgies or any other method of killing and deriving a vicarious pleasure will not help in conquering death. The conflict on the beliefs surrounding death is elaborately discussed by those on the side of Robert Jordan from the unreal superstitions to the Christian reality of preparing for death. Jordan is a typical product of his age, he doesn’t contemplate much on the certainty of death, and he indulges in the conversation giving his opinion in a detached manner, but carefully grasping what the others think of death.

Death becomes a very significant symbol in *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, because all those fighting to establish their rights on both sides are sure of death. They know the consequence of death, but are happy to move towards death because they are fighting for a noble cause, which is Spain. The outcome being certain, Jordan’s friends are sure that they will have the grace of God and reach His heavenly abode, when they embrace death for the cause they are fighting for.
They are sure of unity with God. The killing or dying of human beings in war is the symbolic design of the creator, which is another interpretation that Christian theologies give for the ills in the world, especially the violent killings in wars and Civil Wars.

The loss of virginity of Maria, symbolizes the loss of one’s dignity. Maria’s virginity is taken from her by force. She has been raped brutally by the Fascists who killed her father. The use of male violence in violation of a female’s modesty is repugnant and devastating for any woman. Every woman has a right to preserve her sexual modesty. She has the right to have sex only with the man of her choice in a marital relationship, or even otherwise. The time and place she chooses to have her sexual invasion is her personal choice, and prerogative. Though every civilized society has its own laws for the preservation and protection of women and their rights, the failure of the law and consequent punitive action against the males have been exceptional with the breakup of tradition and the ancient value system. The repeated raping of Maria, as reported by her, in the most horrible circumstances by the Fascists is symbolic. The Fascists use rape of the republicans demonstrates
the overpowering of the female. The overpowering and repeated rape and the shaving of Maria’s head is to send a grain message to all those opposing the Fascists, especially the women that this will be the fate that they will face. Rape and torture and the use of violence or potent, symbols that dominate the minds of the timid women in any social upheaval.

The rape of Maria is deliberate and targeted to be made a tool of propaganda by the Fascists. The intention of Rape is not to merely violate the sexual modesty of Maria, but to send out a clear and clarion message to the women who are on the side of the republicans in the Civil War, that they will also meet the fate in the future. There is an undercurrent when such rape takes place that create a fear and apprehension in the minds of men and children that their mothers and wife’s will be raped. The way a guerrilla war is fought had its beginning with the Spanish Civil War which assumed unimaginable dimensions over the years and remain a great threat to contemporary society.

The demolishing of a woman’s modesty is not the only intention of rape in a war; it is the psychological defeat that creates a terror in the minds of the
community at large. The aftermath of rape sets in with a certain amount of insecurity that all women feel. The psychological impact created on the mind of the rape victim is immense, and Maria is a victim to it. She joins the group against the Fascists and vows to achieve her best in the Civil War. The psychological impact of rape does not end with the victim alone; it spreads to all women who develop an aversion for normal sex with their legitimate partners. This psychological illness can have a long lasting effect on the demographic future of the country and society.

The atmosphere of disorder where ever one goes during the Spanish Civil War is a vital symbol of the deterioration of social and political institutions. There is no order in anyone’s life, because of the lack of values. The traditional value system of acknowledging the moral value systems that the office of the King and the Catholic Church stood for is challenged by the Republicans.

These challenges force the Fascists to become immoral in their approach and indulge in disruptive violence, rape and murder which are heinous sins against the social structure. The damage of the social structure will remain a blot on the Spanish Society for
ever and will have a long standing effect on the mindset of generations to come. There is a definite decline in the political atmosphere of Spain. People have lost faith and lack confidence in the system. *For whom the Bell Tolls* is a political novel, which symbolizes the emotional upheaval of a people against the state, under a novel banner to challenge the existing order or establishment. Every piece of scientific invention which is invented for the betterment of man’s life becomes ominous symbols of disaster and destruction.

‘What about all those staff cars?’ The soldier on the bunk asked. ‘I did not like the look of all those staff cars.’ ‘Nor I’ the Corporal said. ‘All such things are of evil omen.’ ‘And aviation’ the soldier who is cooking said. ‘Aviation is another bad sign.’ (204)

Hemingway’s treatment of scientific advancement is what the common man thinks of cars and airplanes. The adaptability of the average to scientific development is rarely acceptable especially when those scientifically designed gadgets are used as vital machinery in a war that destroys human lives. These cars and aircraft and
'bad signs' and they bring an 'evil omen', and become symbols of disaster and destruction.

Hemingway’s treatment of the sensory perceptions of smell, sight and taste is aesthetic. He has an exclusive taste for these perceptions. He often comments about the taste of the drink that Jordan had and the crude food that is made available to them on the mountains. Though Jordan does not have any specific taste he comments about the quality of the brandy he sips when he is with his friends. Taste is a recurrent thematic symbol in the novels of Hemingway.

Every character in the novel For whom the Bell Tolls is aware of the exotic tastes, swells and sights they see. The smell of the mountains and the series of questions Hemingway put across to identify the smells that would be nostalgic. The smells reminded him of the death and Pilar. Every object that raises a smell brings the old memories. The smell that is related with death, love, anger etc. is the ‘objective correlative’ that T.S. Eliot propounded as a theory in his essay “Tradition and the Individual Talent”.

Hemingway ropes in a series of smells and questions the senses it arouses and connects it with death of
Pilar. Roberto is an anxious lover of Maria, waiting to meet her while he is on duty. She turns up and they express their long felt desires of love for each other.

Hemingway’s descriptions of smells seems irrelevant, it is the narrative technique that creates a curiosity and reminds the reader that every smell is connected with some event and it lingers for years in the mind of the person who is able to recall with ‘Nostalgia’ the special connection or reference the smell has.

Robert Jordan and Maria are expressing their love they are in bed and like all lovers in the world do not want this moment to fade away.

‘Let us Sleep’, he said, and he felt the long light body, warm against him, comforting against him, abolishing loneliness against him, magically, by a simple touching of flanks of shoulders and of feet, making an alliance against death with him, and he said, ‘sleep well little long rabbit.’

But in the might he woke and held her tight as though she are all of life and it is being taken from him. (273)
Robert Jordan and Maria feel very happy, they enjoy and bliss, that they never experienced earlier. They want this movement to be perpetual and everlasting. The happiest moments in one’s life always summons the thought of death and this is true of Jordan and Maria as seen in the passage quoted. The constant reminder that death is imminent and the thought of death pops up, especially when one is enjoying a moment of deep love with his or her partner is a paradox of sorts that Hemingway conveys to the readers who enjoy the descriptive narrative of Jordan and Maria making love, even in the most unromantic place where they are. The location that Hemingway chooses to contextualize their love is natural and specific. The mere rendering of their love making and their single word dialogues does not end there. The reminder of death at this blissful movement makes Hemingway’s narrative symbolic, as he never loses the thematic thrust that an author should put into the novel at the most appropriate juncture which is natural and effective.

Society and the human race could have progressed with the wars and the most sophisticated weaponry, but the basic instinct of love and death remain starkly the same. The moment when the lover meets his lady love in
exclusive solitude at night, though it be in the cave or outside the cave. The moments and exchanges between Maria and Jordan remind one of the balcony scenes in Romeo and Juliet of Shakespeare. The drama of life is inclusive of the strongest human element of love which intensifies in the case of every man and women who is in love. The moment one falls in love, the aspirations change his dreams or her dreams are wild, as in the case of Frederic and Catherine in A Farwell To Arms but the reality that all good things must end in death is a constant reminder that Hemingway successfully employs as a symbol that does not spare anyone born on earth.

Robert Jordan and Anselmo leave the camp to scout out the bridge. Pablo publicly announces that neither he nor his guerrillas will help blow up the bridge. There is suspicion and treachery that may sabotage their plan. Raphael urges Robert Jordan to kill Pablo, but Pilar insists that Pablo is not dangerous.

Hemingway deals with the real aspects that occur in the uprising when the ideals for which each one has dedicated himself or she makes them suspicious of the other. The Civil War throws up a number of challenges and tests the real tenacity of those who are fighting for the cause. The Republicans or for that matter
anyone engaged in Civil War must be sure that death will come at any time. Sordo is wounded and is unable to climb the hill. He thinks of a joke in Spanish but does not say. The joke is “You will have to take death as an aspirin” (318). Hemingway delves deep into the aspects of death, because of its overwhelming influence on the minds of the people engaged in the Civil War on both sides.

Hemingway strike at the very root of one’s being when he says ‘But I hate it.’ The cause of death may be very noble. The ideology that fuels one’s thoughts towards patriotism and abstract love for one’s country makes one emotional but when it comes to laying down one’s life the real tragic element is revealed. Hemingway deals at length with the symbol of death that makes the basis of life purposeful. He does not declare his love for life as a philosophy or belittle the sacrifices made by the ideologists meaningless. He points out the futility that lies behind these obsessions and makes his readers realize that the beauty of life is far more attractive that the ideology that forces one to die in a battle. Berrendo is introspective even in his somewhat half-hearted remorse in ordering the beheading of El Sordo and his men. In
this light, the battle on El Sordo’s hilltop is a struggle not between impersonal opposing armies but between sympathetic human beings like lieutenant Berrendo and El Sordo.

Hemingway’s description of the battle calls into question the reasons the war is fought in the first place and poignantly renders the deaths of the men useless.

The humanistic aspects that war and death is a destruction of human life and the values that life offers, is when the readers are inclined to sympathize with Lieutenant Berrendo when they hear his monologues, which are reminiscent of Robert Jordan’s. Berrendo questions his motivations and interpretations of the difficult decisions that he must make. Robert Jordan faces the same crisis; he is perplexed with the decisions he has to take. Lieutenant Berrendo says “What a bad thing war is” (69). Hemingway’s presentation of war may sum complicating as the conflict between two sides not necessarily balanced, but filled with emotion and sympathy which is destroyed by the stuck of violence that prompts war. The belief by the human race, that their differences and ideologies can be sorted out by violence, war and
destruction prevails to this day which makes the study of Hemingway’s novels relevant.

Joaquin and Anselmo return to religion at crucial moments of terror and solitude reveal the spiritual emptiness of the Republican side. The Republican government made religion illegal when it assumed power six years before the action portrayed in For whom the Bell Tolls. Hemingway points out the failure of the Republican leaders’ failure to provide the Spanish people with any spiritual solace to fill the void left by the banning religion.

Hemingway brings out the contradiction of sorts with the individuals when Joaquin faces the Fascists’ attack he repeats communist slogans, but turns to the prayers of his childhood when the bombing begins because he realizes that the slogans are empty words. Anselmo turns to prayer for solace when he discovers El Sordo’s men beheaded. Hemingway relates the reality, and brings out the conflict in the mind of the Republicans who are repeating their party slogans and also resorting to prayer which reveals the fact that their belief in their ideology is reflected in their slogans and their belief in their religion is reflected in their prayers, while both remain superficial without
any deep conviction. The last moments in their life is despair and lack of conviction, it also borders regret. The spirit of the age is caught in these movements through the symbolic worship of prayer in times of despair and bravado in times of crisis when they start shouting their slogans. The spirit is that neither has any meaning as violence and death are the strong motivating symbols that prevail at the end.

Like prayers and slogans, the role of liquor as a symbol unity and courage is also portrayed by Hemingway in this novel. Anselmo who is an old farmer, who has joined the Republican movement has synchronized with every aspect of the movement and has taken to the habit of consuming liquor whenever he is engaged in a serious discussion regarding the action to be launched or counter to be launched. The dependence on alcohol is symbolic and signifies that human spirit is affected by the consumption of liquor.

Hemingway’s observations are so casual and subtle that they merge with the conversation so naturally and can be overlooked or glossed over as another piece of commentary. These observations and commentaries on the consumption of liquor, the human behaviour and reaction first on seeing the liquor and then on consuming it is
deliberate and directed towards the way western society had turned to these self destructive modes of living. He says it is as good a think for his spirit as a saline injection is for a man who has suffered a great haemorrhage.

The use of language is carefully chosen to convey the exact sense that he aims at. He does not say it is a good thing for his spirit, he says it is as good a thing. His remarks indicate the progress medical science had made, in the treatment of 'haemorrhage', and compares the liquor to a bottle of saline in the treatment of 'haemorrhage.' The charge placed by the detractors of Hemingway that he portrays life as it is which is meant only for a reading, and does not convey a message, lacks credence. Hemingway is a conscious artist who understood the pulse of the common man and the wrong directions society is taking under the influence of liquor. The imbalanced, decisions of influential groups that engineered wars or Civil Wars like Robert Jordan, and his opponents the Fascists had all lost their societal concern and are emotionally charged under the influence of alcohol. Their commitment to their religion is superficial, their ideology is instinctive. The actual progress that
society especially the enlightened Western Society should have made is lacking.

The human predicament had not changed in any way as violence and war remained the most influential symbols that dominated the human mind. The progress made by science and discovery is destroyed in The World War I and its consequent influences on countries like Spain which landed itself in a Civil. The moral decline is obvious.

The World War I had the gravest consequences. The Western European country where the war is fought is undergoing a moral paralysis and social crisis. The thirst for war and violence did not die out as the people launched their Civil War in Spain. The greatest and most entertaining Sport is the Spanish bull-fight that enthralled crowds that converged towards the bull rings in Spain. This constant glorification of war is voiced throughout the novel For whom the Bell Tolls. The admiration for war and the myth that the war is necessary to solve the current distrust that society has on the values that have failed to sustain peace is sun in Robert Jordan’s rumination of the past.
Robert Jordan’s extended memories of his father and grandfather show how the characters in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* must work actively to overcome their pasts. Robert Jordan is saddened that he never knew his grandfather, who is an admired hero in *The American Civil War*, and is embarrassed by the weakness of his father, who committed suicide. Robert Jordan calls his father a coward despite the fact that doing so is unpleasant. Maria’s vengeance against her rapists is manifested in her sexual engagement with Jordan. She tries to absolve herself of her guilt in her present circumstances as her virginity is snatched away by the Fascists. Although it may seem odd to contemporary readers to read about characters who suppress memories as a way of coping with them, this ability to leave the past in the past and live fully in the present is one of Hemingway’s use the symbolism of time. The element of time gains a significant role in the novel as the action is packed moment by moment with the narration that makes the reader conscious of time. The pleasant memories of the past are suppressed by the characters in the novels of Hemingway.

Hemingway frequently describes Maria with natural, earthy imagery, showing that she represents the pull of
nature in Robert Jordan’s life. Throughout the novel, Hemingway paints Maria in earth tones, with hair “the golden brown of a grain field,” “breasts like small hills,” and a belly button like a “well on a plain” (145). These images demonstrate Maria’s strong, organic connection on the earth. Indeed, it is during his sexual experience with Maria that the earth moves for Robert Jordan. He is in communion with Maria and with the country he loves – Spain. Robert Jordan becomes a symbol of love and Maria a symbol of fertility. His union with Maria is symbolic of his union with Spain, which is guided by instinct rather than reason. The symbol of Jordan as the face of the Republican movement in Spain undergoes a transformation and progresses from isolation at the beginning of the novel towards a full union at the end of the novel. The Spanish movement symbolizes a journey.

Pablo symbolizes the betrayal of Judas Iscariot in the last moments of Jesus Christ. But here Hemingway changes the role, as Pablo returns to the guerrilla camp. His desertion and return is symbolic of the instability that the Republicans suffer from. In the chapter set at the Hotel Gaylord, Hemingway criticizes the Republican leadership, whose apathy, incompetence
and factionalism bears a large part of the blame for the republicans’ eventual defeat. The lacuna in their leadership is a symbolic prediction of defeat of their cause. The leaders who are responsible are unable to take the right decision which leaves the movement rudderless at some points that paves the way for failure.

Hemingway portrays the Republicans as ideologically strong but indecisive and lacking in implementing their strategy. They are uncaring, gossipy, self-indulgent and stupid. The setting in a fancy hotel contrasts starkly with the cave where Robert Jordan and the guerrilleros sleep implying that Republican leaders are far removed from the reality of the masses. This gap is symbolic of the space between ideology and reality.

Hemingway deals with the aspect of ideals versus reality as the trend that forms the basis for wars and movements that ruin society and take human history from one state of repression to another state, ruining the lives of the common man. The Hotel Gaylord is the symbol of power where all the decisions are taken amidst luxury and the cave is the symbol of stark reality where the surrounding is hostile and there is no real provision
for any human want, or comfort. The basic necessities like food, water and light are not available. The tolerance of the cave and its inhospitable surrounding symbolizes the minds of those fighting for the Republican cause. The top leaders who are in the hotel in the lap of luxury are incapable of taking the right decisions which shows signs of the weakening of the movement.

Jordan and his friends in the cave are involved in the planning of their mission. Their approach is informal and down to earth, which symbolizes their cause to save Spain from the Fascists. The involvement of Robert Jordan with Maria, mentally and physically reveal the essence of the way movements progress in spite of the demands that individuals face. Jordan is saving all his energy and concentrating on the event of blowing up the bridge. The reality in the cave is that he is with Maria and they are so close to each other that they are physically aroused and under a certain amount of stress.

Hemingway’s choice of circumstances and his choice of words to describe those circumstances are so appropriately chosen to symbolize in the manner that will make the reader understand the situation irrespective of the period in which the novel is read. He is able
to invoke the most relevant thoughts that go into the making of an uprising.

Hemingway is conscious when he portrays the uprising, which has no gender bar, from participating in the movement. It is the conviction that matters and Maria is in the core band with Jordan because she understands the movements as other males do. When the movement is planning to take Madrid from the Fascists, which is the symbol of power of the country of Spain, the need for everyone male and female needs to be represented. The natural surrender to the human physical need is unavoidable though his mind says that he needs to conserve his physical energy for the event of blowing up the bridge. The natural drift from the ideal to the real in the dark with a woman who is apparently hero worshipping Jordan is a reiteration that whatever be the ideals of a war, the natural human behaviour and the purpose of creation and procreation will continue even in the most desolate circumstance.

The love making between Jordan and Maria is not erotic; it is natural and an outcome of the circumstances in the cave. Hemingway witnessed the World War I, where there is no chance of a man-woman relationship in an organized war. Frederic’s falling in
Love with Catherine, is accidental and again conditioned by the circumstances, because Frederic is wounded, he is in hospital in Italy. He is an American soldier and Catherine is British nurse they speak the same language and get attracted to each other. There is a difference in the provision of circumstances made by Hemingway.

*A Farewell to Arms* throws up circumstances that are totally novel because of the scale of war in the battle fields of Italy, Belgium and France. The only female presence in the front is the nurses serving the wounded and sick soldiers. *For whom the Bell Tolls* has an entirely different setting as it is war of the Spanish people among themselves, where Jordan is a foreigner-American fighting for the cause of the Republicans. Though the circumstances of the two novels differ, in spite of being wars, the basic human desire of a man-woman relationship symbolizes the urge of man to carry on the purpose of creation.

Hemingway’s presentation of these moments of intimate sexual involvement may seem superficial and irrelevant in the midst of a war, but it is the natural state of human behaviour that cannot be overcome by the ideals of war is the message he drives home. He may
appear to be a pessimist, but his characters always believe in the hope for tomorrow. There is a longing for the good days of the past where no wars disrupted normal life. But all is good before. She said pleadingly. That is the promise that all will be good again.

The robust confidence that the war will end and everything will return to normal is what every character in the novel longs for. Though Hemingway may have his own view of life which may not be portrayed in his novels, he portrays the wishes and thoughts of the common man - which represents the collective consciousness of society. The wishful thinking of Maria that all will be good again and that no one will able to ravage her modesty again is the image that symbolizes the courage and confidence in the lives of women who are raped and destroyed physically but do not give up mentally. The coming of good times is her wish, which immediately flashes the nationality of Jordan which worries her or raises an apprehension in her mind. Maria’s doubt that some wealthy woman more beautiful than her, will purpose to marry Jordan and she can be forgotten. This leads her to getting an assurance of marriage from Jordan. The fact that they
are fighting against the oppression of the State and the church which is in power make a marriage as per the catholic norms irrelevant.

The Republican movement is against the oppression of the State and all the established institutions of the church including marriage. It is the revolutionary fundamentals that are up against the establishment. The longing desire for peace and normalcy is evident, when Jordan says that he will marry Maria, if she wishes, which is statement that has a number of meanings. The fact that Maria has been raped by the Fascists is known to all including Jordan. Her relationship with Jordan is open to all. The declaration that he will marry her if she likes, is an inclination that he has to regularize his relationship through the established institution of marriage. He gives her the option, because she is a victim of circumstances. Everyone firmly believes that the Civil War will end soon. This belief forces than to make plans for a normal life after the war. The most normal thing to do will be to settle into a marital relationship and raise a family. Jordan is so certain that they will succeed and the government will be overthrown. The unstable minds of the Republicans who are
in war with the state are a confused lot as they want
the church to go, and then in after thought want to be
married in the church.

The attitude to religion is Hemingway’s concern,
when the revolutionaries who want to defeat the
establishment, have no other alternative, but fall
back on their past.

Jordan speaks of returning to normalcy and
marriage, he has faith in the established institutions
like marriage which are traditional and have their
values that will serve man for centuries to come. He
does not have faith in the Fascists who have ruined
these institutions and made Spain a treacherous
country. Jordan wants to restore the glory and honour
that living in Spain always offered to the common man.
It is the establishment that ruined the country.

Towards the end of the novel in the chapters
thirty four to thirty nine, Hemingway portrays Jordan
as a competent leader in difficult circumstances. He
becomes the symbol of endurance what Hemingway himself
called “grace under pressure”. Nowhere more than here
does Robert Jordan display this virtue of the code
hero, with Pablo gone and the explosives stolen, Robert
Jordan manages to control his anger and apply him to solving the new, more difficult problem of destroying the bridge with less manpower and fever explosives. Robert Jordan is a symbolic leader who displays exemplary leadership qualities. He neither dwells in the past nor fears the future but concentrates on the present situation. His focus on the present allows him to savour fully the physical pleasures that fate grants him – the smell of pine trees, the taste of absinthe, and sex with Maria. It also enables him to fear death, which is the code hero’s true antagonist. Ultimately, Robert Jordan’s level-headedness is the only force that holds the guerilleros together in the face of daunting odds.

Jordan’s consciousness when he is with Maria on the morning of the attack, point to his appreciation of life in the present and the wholeness of their communion with each other. The present ‘now’ is the only time that he has with Maria, for they barely have a past, and the future is uncertain. Robert Jordan frequently thinks that he is living his whole, full life in the seventy hours portrayed in For whom the Bell Tolls.
When focusing on the present, Robert Jordan sees the ‘now’ as representing now and before and always. He is the symbolic hero who never perishes because he lives on with the action of story whenever the novel is read. He stops thinking about the future and the probability of his death – in a sense, he transcends death and becomes temporarily immortal. This immortality becomes possible through Maria’s idea that Robert Jordan and she is one person. Robert Jordan who is so steeped in current scientific thought gradually moves toward accepting and embracing Pilar’s brand of mysticism and supernatural wisdom. As the world and especially Europe is passing through the phase of scientific advancement, there is a conflict between the past filled with supernaturalism and the present surging ahead with scientific development. The conflict is symbolic of the old order versus the new order, which will manifest itself in every aspect of life.

Hemingway’s description of Andre’s baiting the bull emphasizes the connection between death and sex in the novel. The high that Andre’s experience after bull-baiting explains the value system that he practices. Andre’s knows how to recognize the urge to kill and consequently how to control it. But Pablo’s first
experience with killing is the massacre of the Fascists in his town. Hemingway links bloodlust to sexual lust in a peculiar manner throughout the novel. Hemingway’s obsession with violence, sex and war is a basic human obsession and desire. Human nature encourages violence, rape and killing even to this day. The nature and tenor of wars have changed but the basic human instincts have remained unchanged. The gruesome killings continue to this day, reminding us that human instinct to kill other humans hasn’t changed with the lessons learnt after the World Wars and the Cold War.

Hemingway continues to criticize the Republican Leadership, now turning his focus towards the inefficiency of their bureaucracy. He implies, in the chapters at the end that chronicle Andre’s mission, that the eventual Republican defeat is certain because of their poor organizational capacity. Andre’s is delayed by apathy, suspicion and personal vendetta – all of which are made possible by the inefficiency and corruption of the Republican military. The failures of Andre’s and commitment of Lieutenant Colonel Miranda exposes the lacuna in the system that the Republicans are unfit at the initial stage of defeating the Fascists.
The lacuna of the inefficiency of their bureaucracy implies their lack of administrative capacity that is symbolic of anarchy. Hemingway grasped the reality of the moment; he presents the Republicans dream to establish a Spain that is free of the Fascists at the beginning of the novel and throughout the novel. Robert Jordan and his associates are idealists, who evolve strategies to symbolically demolish the Fascists, but are failures in reality at the end. The gap between the ideal and reality is a trait that defines the Republicans symbolically. Their discretionary skills may be acceptable but they lack the execution to achieve their ideals which make them failures.

Hemingway is aware of the political reality that prevailed in Spain and in the whole of Western Europe. He is familiar with the social dynamics and the role that religion - Catholicism played in the lives of the common man. The sum total influences of the Catholic Church, the superficial religiosity and practices failed to stabiles a society that is ravaged by the World War I. His constant concern of war and its influences which has been pointed out extensively in this chapter proves the various inadequacies that the
leaders who are efficient in a war fail to succeed at times of peace.

Hemingway, did not purpose his social understanding of human dynamics, and as a theory, but is aware of the direction in which society is moving. Santiago’s refrain that man can be destroyed but not defeated in the crux of his understanding, that the human race though sure of destruction will not be defeated, because the urge to live is a basic instinct of every creature and living being. The fish wants to survive and Santiago also wants to survive.

The war may end, the causes of the failure that haunts the Republicans may lead to an analysis by all nations and peoples who are aspiring for liberation from their oppressive governments and establishments but the behaviour of humans is Hemingway’s concern. The impersonal bureaucracy menaces Andre’s mission, it also menaces the simple, organic world of the guerilleros. As the war time bureaucratic structures take control of towns and cities, the local population is either swept up in the changes or left behind. Some alter their lives, while others, like much of the gypsy population move in circles outside mainstream society. In either case, life close to nature becomes
impossible, and the development of military bureaucracy heralds the end of an era. Like the Fascist planes, the military bureaucracy menaces both the Republic and the lifestyle of its citizens. The bureaucracy and the military are symbols of power and the gypsy Pilar is the symbol of the marginalized. The organized war machine versus the unorganized nomadic tramps and marginalized is posed as symbols opposed to each other. The oppressor and the oppressed gain relevance in the fiction of Hemingway, operates through symbols to convey his message. The under log is the symbol that has persistently failed to succeed in his fiction. The happiness of the marginalized that are with the Republicans is short lived.

The climax of the novel unfolds in the last chapter; Robert Jordan watches the dawn, observes a squirrel and smells the pine trees. He recognizes one of the sentries on the bridge from surveying the site earlier. The bombing the cue for blowing up the bridge begins. Robert Jordan and Anselmo shoot the two sentries on the bridge and affix the dynamite to the rear end of the bridge. As soon as Robert Jordan goes to attach the dynamite to the far end, Pilar returns with her group. Eladio has been shot through the head and Fernando
mortal wounded. At Fernando’s request, Primitivo and Rafael leave Fernando with a rifle near the bridge.

Anselmo feels ‘one with’ the world as he waits for Robert Jordan to finish the setup on the other side of the bridge. The dynamite just as a truck prepares to cross the bridge. Anselmo is killed by a flying block of Steel. In the aftermath of the explosion, Robert Jordan feels angry, especially at Anselmo’s death. Meanwhile, Maria watches the horses. The animals sense her nervousness and become nervous themselves. Maria prays for Robert Jordan’s safe return and is relieved when she hears Pilar shout that he is safe. Robert Jordan checks in with Augustin who has been manning the machine gun. Pablo returns alone and says that the other men are dead. Augustin accuses Pablo of shooting the other men for their horses, and Pablo does not deny it. The men return to Maria and the horses. Robert Jordan embraces her, realizing that, for the first time in his life, he has been able to hold onto his feelings for a woman during battle. They mount the horses and Pablo prepares to lead them to the Credos Mountains. Robert Jordan mounts the horse of the cavalryman he killed the previous day. He rides last in the caravan, directly behind Maria.
As they cross the main road, a Fascist bullet hits Robert Jordan’s horse, which tramples on Robert Jordan’s left leg breaking it. Realizing that Pablo will stay behind, Robert Jordan talks to and tells him to use his head. Then Robert Jordan speaks to Maria, and tells her that although he must stay behind, when she leaves he will be with her. Augustin offers to shoot him out of mercy, but Robert Jordan refuses and asks him to take care of Maria. He waits for the Fascists to come. He is sorry that he must die but, grateful for the knowledge he has acquired in the last three days. His leg begins to hurt, and he briefly contemplates suicide. He convinces himself to hold on until he can shoot some Fascists to gain time for the guerrilleros to leave the place.

Robert Jordan is nearing his end, he sees the Fascist patrol approaching. The party is lead by Lieutenant Berrendo, the man who ordered the beheading of El Sordo’s men. Feeling completely integrated into his world – the road, the sky, the pine needles – Robert Jordan takes aim, waits for Berrendo to ride closer, and feels his heart beat against the forest floor.
Hemingway projects Robert Jordan as the symbol of reason, while Pilar is the symbol of mystery and superstition. Jordan accepts at the end that the world is more mysterious than his cold reasoning. Jordan is also the symbol of duty which is pitted against emotion. He is more concerned with his mission to blow up the bridge. Maria and Pilar are associated, with intuitive feeling. Robert Jordan symbolically represents the male domain where men depend more on the head than the heart. They are the symbols of intelligence and women symbolize emotion, feeling and have intuitions which dominate their behavior. At the end of the novel Robert Jordan is presented as a completely ‘integrated person’. Harry Levin in his essay ‘Observations on the style of Ernest Hemingway’ comments on the novel For Whom The Bell Tolls, he says:

His talents come out most fully in the texture of his work, whereas the structure tends to be episodic and uncontrived to the point of formlessness. For whom the Bell Tolls the only one of his six novels that has been carefully constructed is in some respects an over-expanded short story. Editors rejected his earliest stories on the
grounds that they are noting but sketches and anecdotes, thereby paying incidental tribute to his sense of reality. Fragments of truth, after all, are the best that a writer can offer; and as Hemingway has said, ‘Any part you make will represent the whole if it’s made truly.’ (85)

Hemingway’s style, his use of language is unique. He used short sentences to convey the exact meaning, which set the trend in the writing of fiction at the beginning of the twentieth century. He uses this technique of verbal economy in all his works. P.G. Rama Rao comments in his critical study “Ernest Hemingway: A study in Narrative Technique”:

Hemingway’s economy of expression enables him to keep out all feelings and thoughts which may come in the way of the true emotion a given situation generates. To this end he whittles down language to the barest minimum until it takes the form of significant understatement. (66)

In the last chapter of For whom the Bell Tolls, after Robert Jordan is wounded he speaks about luck.
He is not shot by the Fascists, but his horse is shot and it pushed him down and wounded his leg.

That’s when the bone pinches something else. You see? He said. You see what luck is? You didn’t need the giant Killer at all.

They’re gone. They are away. Now if the attack is only a success. What do you want? Everything. I want everything and I will take everything whatever I get. (487)

The images, the narrative and the style are symbolic of the age. The beginning of the twentieth century is the beginning of a consciousness that emerged to establish the status of lingual and national identity. The rapid growth of science and technology is directed towards the research of weapons. The urge of the nations to claim supremacy over the colonies they had established. The internal strife to stake power as in Spain resulted in the Civil War. The Spanish Civil War could have taken its inspiration from the American War of Independence, because Robert Jordan is an American leading the Republicans in the war against the Fascists.

The symbolic assertion of the rights of the people had set in motion a set of challenges that writers like
Hemingway absorbed and created literary works of fiction. Though there is no stated intention of Hemingway to create fiction for the future generations to be taken as a direction for better living, he has a concern to make society reflect by using the platform of fiction effectively. The flexibility fiction offers to symbolize the minds and thoughts in the establishment of the rights of the people, whether they are in Spain or anywhere else in the world does not gain importance. The Spanish Civil War has been re-enacted to this day in many countries that are boiling cauldrons, trying to establish peaceful governance with the help of the international agencies. Hemingway captures the mood of the age in a microcosmic canvas but the message is for the whole world.

A sense of stagnation and indifference is the mood surrounding the characters in the novel. The stagnation is a reflection of the boredom that has set into the atmosphere in spite of the short length of the action that is three days to blow up the bridge. Pilar says:

Let us blow all the bridges there are here and get out. I am sick of this place. Here is too much, concentration of people. No good can come out of it. Here is a
... stagnation that is repugnant... Youngman, I am very contented that you have come. (31)

This passage reflects the disgust and pain in which they are living. The stagnation referred to here is symbolic of the stagnation that had set in after the World War I. Hemingway’s use of the word “stagnation” is symbolic that everything all activity is futile and everyone irrespective of their convictions in life hit a dead end. The end of the bull fighter, the end of the soldier, the end of the fisherman Santiago, the end of Catherine are all symbols of human failure which gives no chance of hope for happiness in life. The failure of religion is obvious, and the roles of the religious who are to keep the flock together become numb in moments of human suffering inflicted by the war. The collapse of society is seen all around.

The struggle for man’s survival against nature is the real struggle, but the struggle of man against man is his concern in For Whom the Bell Tolls of Hemingway. The Spanish are emotional, regionally bound and fun loving people. They are shattered when their society is divided on the basis of their ideology.