

## CHAPTER ONE

## PLOTS

## I

In this Chapter, I intend to present comments on the plots of war-novels by Stephen Crane and Ernest Hemingway,<sup>1</sup> with a view to establishing the similarities of conception and treatment of plot in the works of these two writers. In this pursuit, one has to follow a cautious line of critical inquiry. Mere accidental similarities of events, episodes or the turn of action do not make valid grounds for comparison.<sup>2</sup> However, when there is a perceptible recurrence of such similarities, one has reason to build a tentative hypothesis of influence, reception and therefore, possible comparison. With this caution in mind, I will offer as a convenient starting point of the argument of my thesis, the outlines of plots of the works to be subjected to analysis in subsequent chapters. In presenting these outlines, I will emphasize the element of war which in my view, is the very essence of the fiction of Crane and Hemingway. I will also bring to bear upon our argument the more striking similarities in what constitutes their plots.

However, I will reserve these comments for the concluding pages of this chapter. Thus, the present chapter is

devoted to narrating plot-outlines, this narration being tendentious, the theme of war being at the centre of my narrative. It can be argued that plot is nothing but characters in action and interaction.<sup>3</sup> However, I will avoid offering analysis of characters at this stage, since that exercise will be undertaken exhaustively in the next chapter.

It is not intended to claim that every war-novel employs plot which is a plot-type in itself. It shares narrative features with other forms of fiction and includes elements which, when used exclusively, distinguish as varied a range of fiction-forms as the picaresque, the epistolary, science fiction, detective fiction and the novel of sentiment. The narrative strategy which predominates war-fiction does not stand out by its peculiarity but by its eclecticism. (In other words, the plots of war-fiction share plot-features with all and any other forms of fiction. Yet and understandably, they display epic grandeur imbued with a sense of waste which typifies Tragedy.<sup>4</sup> In both these forms - Epic and Tragedy - the hero occupies the centre-stage. Hence, war-fiction seems to give high importance to heroic characters. Therefore the unity of plot in war-fiction is conditioned and controlled by the central characters. Inevitably, therefore, the plot of a war-novel is always the narration of turmoil in the life of the central character or

characters. This character is beset with profound existential anxiety and moral dilemmas which represent a personal and social crisis in the form of war. As such the protagonist in war-fiction lives a double life - of interior conflicts activated by the personal and social crisis generated by war. Because of this double life of the protagonist and because the protagonist conditions and controls the plot-line, war-fiction generally speaking has a complex plot. At one level, this plot unfolds the story of a war, at another and anterior level, it presents the hero at war with himself. My attempt here will be to articulate the double-bind of plots in Stephen Crane and Ernest Hemingway.

Since the primary concern of this thesis is the war-novels of Stephen Crane and Ernest Hemingway, I will mainly discuss their war-novels and make passing reference to some other outstanding, relevant works by them.

## II

### Plots : Crane :

Stephen Crane's first major creative work, Maggie : A Girl of the Streets<sup>5</sup> was written in 1893, it is claimed, under Dean Howells' influence.<sup>6</sup> When Crane was at Claverack, Howells had published his naturalistic novel, A Hazard of New Fortunes, dealing with the lives of the destitutes and

their miseries. Crane was considerably influenced by this novel and decided to acquaint himself with the conditions of the slum-life and write about them from first-hand experience. While in New York, Crane came in contact with large number of immigrants and saw their life closely. Howells' Novel, A Hazard of New Fortunes inspired him to re-work his story about a girl of the streets which he had begun at Syracuse<sup>7</sup> which finally appeared as Maggie : A Girls of the Streets.

Maggie is built round a poor, slum girl whose environment plays a crucial role in shaping her destiny. Crane's plot depicts the conditions surrounding her and her family. Crane also introduces the scenes of fighting among her family members. To escape such fate, Maggie moves closer to a bartender who exploits her situation and seduces her. Her poverty and deprivation wear her down and drive her to suicide. This is obviously a Naturalistic milieu.<sup>8</sup> The emphasis on the relentless power of the environment and its destructive capacity receives close attention in Maggie : A Girl of the Streets.

Crane's The Red Badge of Courage<sup>9</sup> which is a classic of its genre according to the critical consensus<sup>10</sup> was inspired by the experience of American Civil War and the literary responses to it . When Crane was going through the reminiscences of the Civil War,<sup>11</sup> he was struck by the fact that most of them were indifferent to the feelings experienced

by the participants. He is said to have told his friend,  
Linson :

I wonder that some of those fellows don't tell how  
they felt in those scraps ! They spout eternally of  
what they did but they are emotionless as rocks.<sup>12</sup>

It is a highly significant fact that Crane had not witnessed  
any war or battlefield before he wrote The Red Badge of  
Courage. It is purely a work of his imagination. It is  
paradoxical that The Red Badge, a pure product of imagina-  
tion is universally recognised as a greater work of art than  
'The Open Boat'<sup>13</sup> based on the author's actual experiences of  
having been adrift on the tossing waves of sea in connection  
with his participation in the Cuban War.

The plot of The Red Badge of Courage revolves mainly  
round the fear-inspired actions and deeply agitated mind of  
Henry Fleming, the protagonist of the novel. Henry Fleming,  
the hero of the novel, impulsively entists himself for war  
in defiance of his mothers' advice to the contrary.

But his mother had discouraged him. She had affected  
to look with some contempt upon the quality of his  
war ardor and patriotism. She could calmly seat  
herself and with no apparent difficulty give him  
many hundreds of reasons why he was of vastly more  
importance on the farm than on the field of battle.<sup>14</sup>

After enlistment, he has to cope with the actual problem of  
fighting and the self-search. The novel opens with the scene  
of the army resting on the hills waiting for the outbreak of

fighting. The novel devotes considerable space to the depiction of conflicting thoughts, fears and apprehensions lurking in the mind of Henry Fleming. Actually, the more agonizing and painful battle is being fought in the battlefield of his mind. Then, the emphatic announcement by the tall soldier that their unit will be ordered to move shortly for fighting accentuates the fears and apprehensions hidden in Fleming's mind. His greatest emotional problem at this point of time is that he might run away when exposed to fighting. He finds it so shameful that he can't communicate it to his friends.

Henry Fleming is desperate to know the possible reactions of his friends to the imminence of fighting. He employs indirect methods to fathom their minds and finds to his dismay that such fears are farther from their consciousness. Thus, we find Henry Fleming facing a highly complicated emotional situation. When the fighting breaks out, Fleming tries to assert his will-power and fights for a while. But when a soldier in his vicinity throws away his rifle and runs with a howl, Fleming readily follows his example and runs.

He too, threw down his gun and fled. There was no shame in his face. He ran like a rabbit.<sup>15</sup>

Pursued by the fear of death, he runs with the speed of a sprinter. While running blindly here and there he comes across scenes of fighting pursued by frenzied soldiers. Guns

and batteries thunder loudly and officers galloping hurriedly scold and exhort the soldiers alternatively. The hectic fighting carried on by his friends and comrades presents a contrast to his own cowardly flight from the battlefield.

At this stage, the novel takes up the examination of Fleming's agitated mind. His mind is busy with justifying his behaviour in terms of the principle of self-preservation. He also congratulates himself for his superior mental qualities. Crane writes :

He, the enlightened man who looks afar in the dark had fled because of his superior perceptions and knowledge.<sup>16</sup>

When the news of the successful resistance on the part of his comrades reaches his ears, he experiences a riot of emotions : anger toward his friends, sense of betrayal and self-pity. Unable to bear the presence of the conflicting thoughts in his mind and the maddening shots without, he seeks refuge in the woods. Nature puts on rather deceptive expression, but Fleming interprets its motions and sounds subjectively.

The creepers, catching against his legs cried out harshly as their sprays were torn from the barks of trees. The swishing saplings tried to make known his presence to the world. He could not conciliate the forest. As he made his way, it was always calling out protestations.<sup>17</sup>

His mind responds to Nature incoherently. At one moment, he dreads it intensely and the next moment it seems to console him-like the squirrel who runs away the moment he throws a pine cone at it, thus, seeming to confirm to his anxious mind, the rationality of his flight.

Soon, however, Nature administers a rude jolt to his consciousness. His encounter with the dead body dressed in blue uniform with gray and yellow colour dominating it fills him with fright and explodes his transitory faith in the beneficence of Nature.

Then, he begins to run towards the battlefield. His path to the battlefield is littered with corpses. The atmosphere at the battlefield is characterized by clouds of smoke, painful cries and absurd gestures. In his meanderings, he comes across many wounded soldiers. Some of them abuse the officers for their mismanagement of war.

This is followed by the episode of his encounter with the 'tattered soldier. The tattered soldier, wounded in the head and arm, walks beside Fleming and tries to befriend him sincerely. He narrates the tales of heroic fighting on the part of his comrades and portrays their heroic deeds in glowing terms, which, unknown to the tattered soldier, highlights Fleming's shameful conduct and worsens his mental condition. Quite innocently, he asks Fleming about his wounds.



Unable to bear the encounter any further, Fleming leaves him abruptly.

Fleming now becomes intensely apprehensive of the discovery of his cowardly flight by his friends and comrades. He deeply envies the wounded ones for their wounds and wishes that he, too, had a wound - the red badge of courage. Here, we see a psychological transformation in the personality of Fleming.

Fleming's backward journey to the battlefield from the sanctuary of Nature is full of deeply moving encounters. One of these is with Jim Conklin, the tall soldier, who was the first to communicate the news of imminent fighting to Fleming and others. Realizing that the spectral soldier around him was Jim Conklin, wounded and death-like, Fleming gives out a cry mingled with sorrow and terror. Jim Conklin solicits his help in crossing the road to avoid rash vehicles. Then, he runs to a clump of bushes to die there in the manner of a solemn rite.

His backward journey to the battlefield is nothing short of revelation. It is a journey which acquaints him fully with the horrors of war. He comes across a procession of the wounded and the dying. Gradually, some change comes over Fleming's mind. He starts valuing the wounds suffered by his friends and comrades and deeply resents his cowardly act. He is conditioned by the atmosphere of war.

His encounter with one panick-stricken soldier marks a turning point in his life and career. While wandering about the battlefield, he comes across a scene of retreat. Everyone was running here and there. He catches hold of one frightened soldier to know what was happening. The panic-stricken, soldier is in no mood to be detained. He bangs a rifle on Fleming's head and runs on. Fleming, earns his red badge of courage quite ironically.

This wound involuntarily inflicted on his head saves him from the possible sneers and derision of his friends. When he joins his friends with his head bleeding, he receives a hero's welcome. Wilson, the loud soldier, bestows all the brotherly care and tenderness on him and brings him back to life. This dubiously earned wound relieves him from mental torture and embarrassment. Fighting continues intermittently followed by periods of lull. It fills the battlefield with corpses, bleeding bodies and exhausted soldiers.

After his baptism of fire and his exposure to the wounded and the dead, Fleming undergoes a radical change. Crane writes :

There was a little flower of confidence growing within him. He was now a man of experience. He had been out among the drogons, he said, and he assured himself that they were not so hideous as he had imagined them.<sup>18</sup>

Now on, he irradiates hope and faith, quite contrary to his earlier conduct. Now, he thinks and acts like a war-devil. The relentless vigour and ardour shown by the enemy fill him with inordinate fury. He sees himself as a pursued animal. This realization unleashes terrible destructive energy and hatred within Fleming. In the next encounter, he fights like a devil, blinded by his intense hatred of the enemy. Crane writes :

Once he, in his intent hate, was almost alone and was firing, when all those near him had ceased. He was so engrossed in his occupation that he was not aware of a lull.<sup>19</sup>

His friends begin to regard him as a war-devil. Fleming, too, exhibits intense joy and pride as a result of his heroic performance. He looks upon himself with pride.

In the final round of the fighting, Fleming and his friend, Wilson, infuriated by the epithets of 'mule-drivers' and 'mud-diggers' used by the higher officers, summon all their energies and put up the best heroic effort as a fitting answer to the affront hurled at them by the officers. Fleming and Wilson fight like maniacs, both of them are desperate to move forward and wrench the enemy-flag from its bearer.

The youth had centred the gaze of his soul upon that other flag. Its possession would be high pride. It would express bloody minglings, near blows. He had a

gigantic hatred for those who made great difficulties and complications.<sup>20</sup>

In the midst of the maddening sounds of guns and shells, agonised cries and moans, Fleming and Wilson move closer to the bearer of the enemy-flag when he is wounded. Wilson, like a panther, jumps at the enemy-Flag and seizes it. Both the officers as well as the comrades applaud their heroic feats in glowing terms. Fleming has the consummation of his cherished desire. He feels at last that he is a man.

The ending of the novel comes as an anti-climax to the narrative of strife. After a series of fierce fighting costing so much human blood, the regiment is ordered to retrace its way. Fleming, is called upon to adjust mentally to the changed atmosphere. Scenes of his past-life begin to float through his consciousness. His desertion of the tattered soldier is a painful memory to him. On the whole, he feels proud of his past. The last scene of the novel shows Fleming making an abrupt transition from the battleful ways to peaceful thoughts. He leaves behind his immediate past, its, heat and exhaustion and turns to the future for peace and happiness. The novel reads :

He turned now with a lover's thirst to images of tranquil skies, fresh meadows, cool brooks - an existence of soft and eternal peace.<sup>21</sup>

The novel ends with a reference to a golden sun-ray coming through 'hosts of leaden rain-clouds.'<sup>22</sup>

Crane's 'The Open Boat',<sup>23</sup> though not a story concerning war or fighting is superbly conceived and executed. The plot consists of the desperate effort by the crew of a tiny boat to reach the shore against enormous odds - the tossing waves of water, howling winds and the lurking dangers of the sea.

The crew of the boat - the captain, the cook, the oiler and the correspondent are caught up in an unmanageable crisis. Actually, the dominant action of the story proceeds from the breath-taking operations of the natural forces like the towering waves, the surf and the winds. Nature assumes a grave expression and sets in motion its destructive forces to frustrate the intense longing of the crew to reach the shore. Focussing on the tumult of the sea, Crane writes :

As the boat bounced from the top of each wave the wind tore through the hair of the hatless men and as the craft plopped her stern down again the spray slashed past them. The crest of each of these waves was a hill, from the top of which the men surveyed for a moment a broad tumultuous expanse, shining and wind-riven.<sup>24</sup>

Threatened by these forces, the oiler and the correspondent keep rowing the boat alternately. The task exercises great strain on their exhausted bodies. Lack of adequate sleep disturbs them. The possibility of getting drowned impinges on their consciousness all the while. In their thoughts, they register their protest against the injustice of god.

Among the crew, the correspondent and the oiler row the boat most of the time and struggle hard to take the boat to the shore. They keep changing or shifting the direction of the boat as the situation calls for.

The vehemence, the violence and the extraordinary energy exhibited by the forces of Nature strike terror in their minds and their uppermost fear finds reflection in their staccato speeches, obscenities and disorganized thoughts.

Through skilful handling of the boat, they survive. However, there is no end to the fury of the waves and winds which have no rational constraints.

Tumult follows tumult. And finally one mighty feat of anger and fury displayed by the waves of water swamps the boat and compels the crew-members to jump out of the boat and swim as best as they can. Passing through hurdles, all except the oiler, manage to reach the shore. The oiler, the worthy one, dies in the end.

The Little Regiment (1896)<sup>25</sup> is a collection of short war-stories or sketches of volunteers fighting or waiting to fight. The focus here is on the individual character. The war-stories strike as variations upon The Red Budge of Courage and it is considered to be a companion volume to it.<sup>26</sup>

The collection has stories like 'The Veteran', 'Three Miraculous Soldiers' and 'A Mystery of Heroism'. Of the six

stories, 'A Mystery of Heroism' deserves a special attention. It has almost all the major ingredients typical of Crane's war-fiction - the recurrent columns of smoke, officers on horseback galloping and shouting, the privates firing feverishly; the fatally wounded and grotesque-human and animal bodies scattered around. The plot of the story centres round two basic human emotions-fear and pride. Fred collins, a private, badly needs water and expresses his wish that someone would fetch him water from the well beyond the meadow. The meadow in question is the main target of shells and guns. Any movement towards the meadow is fraught with danger. Some soldier lightly suggests that Collins himself should go over the meadow to the well if he is hopelessly thirsty. This half serious suggestion compels him to the desperate action of risking his life by going to the source of water himself.

After consulting his captain who warns him against the risk involved, Collins picks up a few canteens and strides on, oblivious of himself or his surroundings. Provoked by his friend's insinuating remarks 'concerning his courage, Collins decides to defy all risks and accomplish something very difficult. Collins feels that people who shed their fears become heroes.

Collins suddenly felt that two demon fingers were pressed into his ears. He could see nothing but flying arrows, flaming red. He lurched from the shock of this explosion, but he made a mad rush

for the house, which he viewed as a man sub-merged  
to the neck in a boiling serf might view the shore.<sup>27</sup>

The shells and guns roar continuously but Collins' heart and mind are riveted to the well. When he reaches the well, he throws himself about it and then throws the canteen with a cord tied to it. It takes a long time to fill and he begins to curse. He finds a bucket and a chain and fills it with water. Then, he hurries back to his line. On his way back, he comes across an artillery officer, groaning as a result of deep pain, who vainly pleads for some water.

On reaching his destination, he finds an officer collapsing and Collins offers him the bucket of water but he is dying. His shaking hands splash the water on the dying officer. Then, the bucket passes into the hands of two lieutenants. One is drinking, while the other is teasing him, thus causing him to spill the water. After a few moments, the bucket drops, lying empty on the ground.

In 'The Upturned Face,'<sup>28</sup> two officers - Timothy Lean and his Adjutant - feel agitated over the problem of burying a dead comrade whose body was lying close to their toes. They feel morally bound to do their last duty to the dead comrade. All around, bullets are singing and guns booming. The situation calls for an urgent action.

Right from the beginning, we are conscious of the mounting tension underlying the situation. On the one hand,



they feel strong moral commitment to their friend, on the other hand, showers of bullets make it difficult to carry out their obligation to the dead. And their agonised consciousness finds expression in the shouts and insults they direct involuntarily to each other and the privates.

Lean angrily orders two privates to dig at a place pointed out by him. Then, before dumping the dead body into the grave, one of them goes through his pockets, and finds a few trivial things of daily use. He has a sensation of shudder while touching the blood-stained buttons of his tunic. While lifting the dead body, both the officers are careful not to touch the corpse. Then, they offer a prayer - bits of prayer invoking divine mercy which in the bullet-dominated context, sounds absurd. Then, Lean begins to empty the shovels of dust into the grave, first over the feet and then, the body and when it comes to the face, Lean stutters to the Adjutant :

"Why didn't you turn him somehow when you put him in ? This". And then Lean swung back the shovel.<sup>29</sup>

Crane's 'An Episode of War',<sup>30</sup> a war-story, is certainly an impressive one in many ways - its panoramic view of a battlefield, its treatment of a wounded soldier, and his feelings and the contrast it presents in the responses of the participants to the wounded Lieutenant and the responses of the relatives to this situation. A lieutenant, who was busy

distributing essential commodities among different corporals suddenly gets hurt and blood appears on his sleeve. \_\_\_\_

The story depicts the movements of the wounded lieutenant amidst the different chaotic and dangerous scenes of the battlefield. He comes across variegated types. Some offer help to him sympathetically and others ignore him completely. Crane's vivid pictures of frantic generals and captains galloping upon their equally furious horses and alternately shouting and cursing the soldiers are suggestive of the deep emotional agitation and general madness prevailing at a battlefield.

Constantly moving, the wounded lieutenant comes across stragglers who seem to know every thing about the war. Then he comes across a brigade, making coffee and talking loudly. On seeing his wound, one officer treats him in a very crude manner. Then, he reaches a hospital where there is a good deal of commotion. The wheels of the two ambulances have stuck into mud and the two drivers are quarreling between them, each blaming the other, while the wounded groaned inside the ambulances.

At the hospital, the soldier happens to meet a busy doctor who treats him with contempt as if he were a criminal. He exhibits sheer insensitivity in his dealing with the wounded lieutenant. The wounded lieutenant reacts angrily and leaves the hospital.

Back at home, his dear ones respond emotionally to his loss of arm and mourn it deeply. This serves as a sharp contrast to the behaviour on the battlefield.

Crane's next war-novel, Active Service<sup>31</sup> was published in 1899 as a result of his experiences as a war-correspondent in the Greco-Turkish war. It serves as a background to this novel and offers Crane an opportunity to employ the material he had collected as a war-correspondent.

The plot of the novel revolves round Prof. Wainwright, his daughter Marjory and her lover, Rufus. Prof. Wainwright takes a strong objection to certain draw-backs in the character of Rufus, especially, his habit of excessive drinking and he calls him many ugly names like 'a gambler, a sporter of fine clothes, an expert on champagne, a polite loafer, a witless knave who edits the Sunday edition of a great outrage upon our sensibilities'.<sup>32</sup>

Prompted by his keen desire to extricate his daughter from the covetous glances of Rufus, the newspaper hero of the novel, the father takes her to Greece accompanied by some archaeology students of his college. In between, Crane introduces beautiful scenes of Greece and Greek life. The Wainwright family gets into difficulties as a result of the Greco-Turkish war and the news that the Wainwright party has been lost spreads to the United States.

This situation provides a good opportunity to Rufus. He undertakes a rescue-mission which combines both his love for Marjory and material for his newspaper. Rufus comes to Greece in search of the Wainwright party, especially Marjory whom he loves. So romance is an important component of the novel. Fortune favours him at this juncture and he succeeds in finding them somewhere between the Turkish and the Greek lines. But they are in rather uncomfortable situation. Rufus displays courage and a sense of adventure and wins admiration from everyone including Marjory's father, Prof. Wainwright, who was opposed to him in the beginning.

At this stage, the plot takes an unpleasant turn. Suddenly, a former acquaintance of Rufus, Nora Black, an actress, appears on the scene and deliberately complicates Rufus' prospects and endangers his hard-won love for Marjory. Nora Black pursues him and the party all the way from New York to the frontier of Epirus and lays her claim on Rufus. The situation becomes embarrassing for all but again luck is on his side and he triumphs over Nora's tricks. The novel comes to an end on a happy note. Active Service set in Greece against the background of the Greco-Turkish war, recaptures, in parts, the mood and atmosphere of war.

## III

Plots : Hemingway :

Before I take up his war-novels, I would like to touch upon his collection of short stories. In Our Time (1925). In Our Time<sup>33</sup> as a whole is an important achievement on Hemingway's part and it contains stories many of which are later developed by him into full-length novels. Quite a few stories in the collection are devoted to the gradual development of the hero, Nick Adams, tracing his childhood and adulthood. The more interesting from our point of view are 'The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife', 'The End of Something', 'The Three-Day-Blow' and the last story 'Big Two-Hearted River'. These stories are about violence, war, fishing and bull-fighting and sports.

Of these, 'Indian Camp' is highly significant. The plot of the story consists of a caesarean operation by the doctor, Nick's father, without the use of anesthesia, to deliver an Indian woman of a baby and the violent reaction of her husband to her prolonged pain. The story deals with different forms of violence and with Nick's exposure to the world of violence. 'The Battler' shows Nick being thrown off a freight train, his encounter with ex-prize fighter who treats Nick in a cruel manner. 'Big-Two-Hearted River' is about a soldier who is wounded in war and embarks on a fishing trip.

He suffers from 'a shell shock' and struggles to preserve the balance of his mind.

Hemingway published his first novel, The Torrents of Spring<sup>34</sup> in 1926. It is generally agreed among the critics that it is a parody of Sherwood Anderson's works,<sup>35</sup> more precisely his Dark Laughter.<sup>36</sup> Since it is considered to be a minor work and since it has no relevance to Hemingway's war-fiction, I have not included it in the present study.

The Sun Also Rises,<sup>37</sup> a war-novel, was published in 1926. It deals with the wretched lives of the casualties of war. The principal characters of the novel-Jake Barnes, Brett, Bill Gorton and Cohn make rounds of pubs and cafes and live on drinks and talk glibly about their tastes. Most of the time, they talk about women, affairs, writers and their literary works. They keep repeating the same exercises. This monotonous routine constitutes the major part of the novel.

Jake Barnes, the hero of the novel, is emasculated as a result of the wound suffered by him in the war. This event complicates the plot of the novel as it conditions his relationship with Brett Ashley, the heroine of the novel. Both love each other but they also realize the futility of their relationship. Brett launches upon the course of amorous escapades, changing one lover after the other. There are quite a few quarrels resulting from her behaviour. Jake feels

agonized to see his beloved fall into the arms of other men.

The second half of the plot is concerned with the game of bull-fighting and Pedro Romero, the bull-fighter. Brett develops a fancy for Romero for some time. But later, she suffers from moral qualms and decides not to be a 'bitch and ruin a young boy'.<sup>38</sup> After that she returns to her favourite, Jake Barnes. Pedro exemplifies devotion, courage and graceful style and serves as a contrast to other characters in the novel. Juxtaposed with the dull, drab human drama is the celebration of Nature and earth in The Sun Also Rises, specifically the celebration of Burguete and its natural beauty. The novel is built round the contrast between two modes of living-one dull and uninspiring, the other heroic and graceful.)

(Hemingway's next important war-novel, A Farewell to Arms<sup>39</sup> was published in 1929. The novel develops out of the short story 'A Very Short Story'<sup>40</sup> which deals with a war-time affair between a soldier and a Red Cross nurse.

A Farewell to Arms opens with references to soldiers, a river, the march of troops raising clouds of dust which make everything dusty. The military movements referred to, promote a sense of foreboding reinforced by ominous rain and cholera which cost seven thousand lives.

Descriptions alternate with dialogues in A Farewell to Arms. Frederic Henry, the protagonist and his friends like Rinaldi, the priest and other officers frequently take recourse to the discussion of the subjects of immediate concern like sex, prostitutes, wine and war. Quite often, they indulge in the priest-baiting and mock at the moral and religious values.

Along with the accounts of devastating effects of fighting on the Italian front, Hemingway devises romantic scenes involving Frederic and Catherine Barkley. In the beginning, Frederic visits Catherine for utilitarian purposes, but gradually his involvement with her deepens and along with the mounting pressures of war, he moves closer to Catherine and begins to look upon her as the Sanctuary of his love and happiness. With the passage of time, she completely occupies his mind and thoughts.

A Farewell to Arms abounds in scenes of abrupt fighting costing many valuable lives like that of Passini, a pacifist who, a few moments before his death, had argued against wars. In one such an explosive scene, Frederic, the ambulance driver of the unit, is wounded and feels sliding into death and after sometime, back into life.

On the front fighting gathers momentum and on the emotional front, love asserts itself and both begin to merge with each other. When Frederic is wounded, Catherine as



his beloved nurse, bestows all the care and attention on him and restores him to health.

The novel devotes considerable space to the treatment of a retreat at Caporetto. This account of the retreat at Caporetto highlights the phenomena of vast confusion, dislocation and disorder characteristic of any military retreat. It is a representative scene and it embodies the sad plight of the soldiers trying to get out of this impasse. Summary punishment meted out to one sergeant who was anxious to run away is also given significance.

Later, Frederic completely disillusioned with war, its madness and illogic, jumps into Tagliamento river in a bid to escape and makes 'a separate peace'.<sup>41</sup> This gesture on Frederic's part marks his rejection of war and acceptance of love in the form of Catherine, the last bulwork of his hopes and life.

When he gets the news that his arrest is imminent due to his desertion, he undertakes a hazardous mission to row through the sea during the night battling against the elements of Nature and to reach the Swiss border. After a strenuous, heroic effort, he escapes into the Swiss border, leaving behind the shadows of war.

After a short idyllic life in a Swiss town, Catherine develops pangs of child-birth. She is shifted to a hospital where she develops complications. Catherine goes through a

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long, painful ordeal in which she vacillates between hope and despair, life and death. Ultimately she dies a protracted death, leaving behind Frederic in a bewildered state.)

(Hemingway too, like Frederic, retired into loneliness with nothing positive to write about. Since his 'separate' peace', he published two novels, Death in the Afternoon<sup>42</sup> (1932) and Green Hills of Africa<sup>43</sup> (1935). Both the novels deal with comparatively less significant themes of virile games and bull fighting. (After his rejection of the abstract values and virtues through Frederic in A Farewell to Arms, Hemingway drew apart from society and kept drifting into the remote areas of the world. His loss of faith in positive values and dissociation from human society account, to a great extent, for the comparative inferiority of these two novels. But this crisis did not last long. With the publication of To Have and Have Not,<sup>44</sup> (1937) he comes back to the depiction of human society and social causes.)

(To Have and Have Not (1937) deals with social and economic phenomena. The plot of the novel revolves round mainly Harry Morgan and his counterpart, Gordon. The novel depicts the conflict between the Haves and Have-Nots of the society. Harry Morgan, an honest, law-abiding citizen in the beginning, turns into a criminal as a result of his being cheated by the wealthy. The novel is replete with scenes of violence and the plot is designed to bring out the contrast

between two modes of living - one practised by the have-nots and the other by the haves of the novel. However, this work cannot be included in Hemingway's war-fiction.

For Whom the Bell Tolls<sup>45</sup> (1940) ostensibly deals with the Spanish Civil War fought between Franco's fascists and the loyalists. The novel dramatizes the bitter and agonizing conflict between two mutually opposed political factions. Robert Jordan, an American volunteer, undertakes the mission to blow up the strategic bridge to halt the fascist reinforcement. He comes to join a guerrilla band in the mountains near Segovia in the pursuit of his objective.

Robert Jordan spends three days and nights in the guerrillas' cave and wins the confidence of Pilar, the wife of the guerrilla leader. He moves closer to Maria, the heroine of the novel.

In his conversations with Pilar and other characters, Jordan comes to know about the magnitude of atrocities committed by one rival group on the other. The novel abounds in lengthy episodes illustrating man's inhumanity to man on a massive scale. The story of Maria and her parents narrated in the novel represents the horrors of the Spanish civil war. First, her parents were summarily shot dead by the fascists only because her father professed his faith in the republican values and then, she was held forcibly, her head shaved clean and then raped by the fascists.)

(Of course, the novel devotes considerable space to the depiction of the brutalities committed by the loyalists, too. Pablo's cruel treatment of the local fascists is one grim example. He inflicts insults and humiliations on them as if they were evil, not human beings.

The love story of Robert Jordan and Maria takes a considerable space of the novel. During the three days Jordan spends at the caves, he comes close to Maria and wins her heart and mind. The love-relationship in this novel is highly romantic.

Another striking episode in For Whom the Bell Tolls relates to El Sordo, the brave hill leader on the loyalist side. The novel shows El Sordo and his men as surrounded by the fascist soldiers on all sides. They are left with a small quantity of ammunition and inferior weapons. They know that they are fated to die. But they fight as heroes. Then, the fascist planes begin to bomb the hill and reduce them to ashes. Dead, their heads are cut off by the fascist soldiers for identification. The scene represents the absurdity of war and its destructiveness. Towards the end of the novel, the ground is littered with many corpses - the entire band of El Sordo is wiped out. Robert Jordan, fatally wounded, lies on the ground waiting for death. Thus, the plot shows death, destruction and violence.

(Hemingway's next war novel, Across the River and Into the Trees<sup>46</sup> was published in 1950 a decade after For Whom the Bell Tolls. Colonel Cantwell, the hero of the novel, is on a visit to Italy and as he passes through different places and cities, he gives his considered opinions on the battles fought at these places in the past and also his opinions on the military persons associated with these places. As he passes through the Italian terrain, he remembers his comrades and friends who fought along with him there and died or suffered wounds.

Col. Cantwell is a veteran of many wars and he accommodates in him the experiences of Frederic Henry and Robert Jordan in A Farewell to Arms and For Whom the Bell Tolls respectively. He visits the place where he was wounded while participating in the first world war and builds a monument in a ritual - like manner and then relieves himself there where he had shed his blood. Then he digs up at the place and inserts a brown ten thousand lira note in the hole and completes it.

While visiting the scenes of his past military life, he pronounces on the events and soldiers and officers of the past wars. The colonel is bitterly critical of the corrupt practices of the generals and the politicians. He has a series of conversations with Jackson, his driver and Renata, his young sweetheart. The novel presents a contrast between

Jackson, whose mind operates on a lower key and col. Cantwell, who exhibits a wider awareness and a capacity to relate things and make connections.<sup>47</sup>

The novel contains long descriptive passages which deal with the bridges, canals, waters of Venice and the countryside which contrast with the ruins caused by war. These ruins caused by war naturally fill him with indignation and compels him to condemn all corrupt practices in army as well as politics. The colonel's opinions and judgments on diverse subjects constitute a major structural part of the novel.

Like A Farewell to Arms and the For Whom the Bell Tolls, this novel, too, incorporates a romantic love-relationship. Countess Renata, niteen-year old, loves, the colonel deeply, knowing fully the imminence of his death. Like A Farewell to Arms, this novel, too, is built up round the opposition between war and love. Renata seems to represent the values of home-life constricted with the life of war.

Towards the end of the novel, Cantwell meets his death in the back seat of his car with serenity and composure on his face.)

(Hemingway's next novel, The Old Man and the Sea,<sup>48</sup> though not a war novel, is a great work of art as it embodies Hemingway's vision of life and world in symbolic terms. So

Far Hemingway had treated specific war-situations in novels like A Farewell to Arms and For Whom the Bell Tolls, but now in The Old Man and the Sea Hemingway takes up the problem at a conceptual level and in symbolic terms.

The novel opens with a descriptive passage dealing with Santiago's physical features. The novel underlines the note of ancientness about his figure and his world. We also become conscious of some temporary setback in his fortunes as Manolin's father separates the boy from the old fisherman as he is commonly considered to be unlucky.

Despite his forced separation, the boy has firm faith in the old fisherman's competence and superiority as a fisherman. The old man too, irradiates hope, confidence and faith when he describes himself as a "strange old man".<sup>49</sup>

Then, Santiago, equipped with his primitive tools and scanty food sets out farthest into the sea, beyond human limits. After a long spell, the old man succeeds in hooking a marlin bigger than his skiff.

On a physical level, it is the story of an old fisherman, unlucky by conventional standards, who sets out farthest into the sea to try out his luck. The action of the novel takes place on a remote sea where no signs of humanity can be discerned. Santiago enjoys a rapport with the world of the sea. In his pursuit of some extraordinary fish, Santiago manages to catch a mighty fish. It involves tremendous

physical effort and spiritual endurance on his part. When it becomes unbearable for him, he cries out.

'Fish, you are going to have to die anyway. Do you have to kill me too ?'<sup>50</sup>

After a painful experience, he wins the battle against the fish but the victory does not last for a long time. The wounded fish leaves behind a trail of blood and the sharks, smelling it, begin to attack and mutilate the fish. The stubborn sharks pose a formidable challenge to the old man. He is nearly pulled down in his long drawn-out struggle against the fish. His material and physical problems have already become worse. And, now, the sharks sorely test his depleted powers. His hands are cramped and they refuse to open or close freely. But Santiago exercises his indomitable will and determination and offers a heroic, stoical resistance to the sharks with his crude weapons like the tiller, harpoon, and oars etc. Despite his heroic effort, Santiago fails to retain his hard-won prize. The sharks destroy the fish bit by bit and reduce it to a skeleton. The old man has, since long, ceased to look backward at the fish. With this experience, he reaches the shore. He unfastens the mast and carries it like Christ on his shoulder. Hemingway writes :

Then, he shouldered the mast and started to climb.  
It was then he knew the depth of his tiredness.<sup>51</sup>



Manolin, on learning about the old man's return, rushes to his shack. Seeing his desperate condition and his cramped hands, he begins to cry. He bestows a loving care on the old man and brings hot coffee for him. The novel concludes with some tourists making ignorant remarks about the fish and the sharks, while the old man sleeps in his shack dreaming about the lions.)

Hemingway's next novel Islands in the Stream<sup>52</sup> was published posthumously in 1970. The novel has a complex plot. It is divided into three sections, namely, 'Bimini', 'Cuba', and 'At Sea'.

Thomas Hulson, a dedicated painter, leads a life of seclusion on the island of Bimini. He is deeply committed to his work and through work, he has found it easy to replace everything in life except his love for his sons. He has highly disciplined and nature personality. His commitment to his art, his work, is so great that he does not admit any distractions—either women or wine. The plot of the novel depicts a gradual change in the fortune of Thomas Hundson from that of a happy father and a contented artist to ruined man.

Hudson leads a lonely life and to mitigate the grimness of loneliness, he intensifies his commitment to work.

The novel abounds in dialogues. In the first section, we have Roger, Davis and Eddy as important characters and the

three of them indulge in the discussion of relevant topics like writing books, women and love. The novel has an elaborate description of David's heroic struggle against a huge fish. Eddy and Roger support him in his struggle against the fish and build up his morale. This part of the novel is reminiscent of The Old Man and the Sea. Handling the fish causes him unbearable pain. Blood comes out at many places and he experiences cramps all over the body. But the boy exhibits stoical qualities and like Santiago, refuses to give in.

Another important development is the sudden death of Hudson's two sons and his wife in an accident. Later, his dearest son, Tom is also reported dead and his cup of happiness is empty. The death of his sons has terrible impact on his life and work, since he cannot apply himself to his painting single-mindedly, with all the grief lodged in his heart. Loneliness engulfs him from all sides and then he turns to his cat for love and friendship.

Hudson, later, joins war-effort in a bid to forget his sorrows proceeding from the death of his sons. In the section, 'Cuba', Hudson has a long conversation with Honest Lil in a bar, and there, his ex-wife joins him. They spend a short time together. But before they could spend a night together, he is summoned by the military command in Havana. He leaves his ex-wife in the company of his cat and prepares himself for the military duty. This shows his preference for duty,

for work, rather than love and pleasures. His appointed duty is to chase a German boat in the Cuban gulf and this physical activity relieves his mind of the deep sorrow. Towards the end of the novel, Hudson becomes increasingly obsessed with death. He comes to believe that death is the absolute end and that any moment can be final in a man's life.

Hudson's decision to join the war is a direct consequence of the death of his sons. He expects war to fill him with utmost tiredness and thus rid him of the deep sorrow lodged in his heart. Thus, his participation in war is a means to an end-the attainment of mental peace for the furtherance of his art.

#### IV

Both Stephen Crane and Hemingway have produced considerable body of war-fiction and there are some close similarities of plot-construction in their fiction namely, preponderance of violent, destructive scenes, intimidating presence of destructive weapons and machines, the agitated movements of the combatants and the resultant tension pervading the battlefield and gripping the minds of the soldiers.

Usually, the war-novels by Crane and Hemingways open on a sober and solemn note. The beginning is usually lowkeyed

with an element of foreboding hovering about it. Crane's The Red Badge of Courage shows the army resting but tense as a result of the rumours flying about when the tall soldier declares that fighting is imminent. It generates conflicting reactions from the soldiers. Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms too, opens on a low key with the marches of troops and the movements of the mules carrying boxes of ammunition:

Sometimes in the dark we heard the troops marching under the window and the guns going past pulled by motor tractors. There was much traffic at night and many mules on the roads with boxes of ammunition on each side of their pack-saddles and grey motor-trucks that carried men...<sup>53</sup>

The opening of both the novels emphasizes the note of foreboding and the resultant tension in the atmosphere and also some preparedness for action. For Whom the Bell Tolls, too, opens on a note of comparative quietness. Robert Jordan the hero of the novel, lying flat on the pine-needled floor of the forest, watches the bridge, the main target of his mission. In both Crane's and Hemingway's war-novels, the action takes place mainly around mountains and rivers which are singled out as their favourite locales by both the artists. Hills, mountains, forests and rivers act as silent witnesses to the bloody exercises of the soldiers. There is thus a remarkable resemblance between the settings of their war-fiction. Both The Red Badge of Courage and Hemingway's



A Farewell to Arms open with a descriptive passage outlining the setting and the faceless mass of soldiers waiting for the action. It is followed by a long conversation centring round the fears and apprehensions about the imminent war as in The Red Badge of Courage and a series of conversations in A Farewell to Arms regarding war, and the pleasant distractions like women and wine-to mitigate the sense of boredom arising out of war. In the opening itself, both artists focus on the varying reactions and responses of the leading characters in their novels. We become conscious of their crude emotions, their preoccupations and propensities.

The middle parts of these war-novels by Crane and Hemingway consist of violent, military encounters. Both Crane and Hemingway draw elaborate pictures of the battle-fields buzzing with shells, mortars and grenades and give elaborate accounts of the human losses with greater emphasis on the wounded and the dead with grotesque expressions on their faces. The middle parts of these novels register the interplay of crude emotions and actions. They stress the unequal fight between men and machines and the wretchedness of human existence.

The men had begun to count the miles upon their fingers, and they grew tired. "Sore feet and  
'damned short rations, that's all," said the loud soldier. There were perspiration and grumblings.  
After a time they began to shed their knapsacks.<sup>54</sup>

This passage from The Red Badge of Courage easily compares with the following from A Farewell to Arms in terms of its depiction of the human predicament.

There were stragglers going by long after the regiment had passed - men who could not keep up with their platoon. They were sweaty, dusty and tired. Some looked pretty bad.<sup>55</sup>

In The Red Budge of Courage, we have the ritual-like death of Jim Conklin and the tattered soldier, in A Farewell to Arms, the death of Aymo during the retreat at Caporetto. In For Whom the Bell Tolls, we have a similar awe-some death of El Sordo, the brave hill leader and his men. The war-novels by Crane and Hemingway seem to take a particular interest in these depictions.

Injury as well as death occupies the artistic attention of the two authors. Henry Fleming in The Red Badge of Courage suffers a wound on his head at the hands of a highly panic-stricken soldier and it marks a turning point in the plot of the novel. The subsequent developments in the plot bear the stamp of this wound. Hemingway, too, uses such wounds as a structural device in A Farewell to Arms, The Sun Also Rises and Across the River and Into the Trees. Frebric Henry suffers a physical wound at Fossalta on the Italian front and later, a crucial psychological wound at Caporetto, which leads to his rejection of war and his 'separate peace'. Jack Barnes in The Sun Also Rises has suffered a sexually debi-

litating wound which accounts, to a great extent, for the narrational complications of the plot. Col. Cantwell suffers from a cumulative sense of wounds and it shapes his entire behaviour in the novel. By emphasising the close relation between physical wounds and the psychology of characters both Crane and Hemingway project a view of man which is whole, in which the body and the mind are inseparable. It is, by extension, also their view of fiction in which style and substance are closely inter-dependent. One may, therefore, say that the plots of their novels are also their themes. The violent middle, following a low-key beginning of a Crane or Hemingway plot is intended to show the pathos of human life in which innocence is followed by brutal ravishment by forces beyond man's perceptions.

The endings of these war-novels consist of the developments which complete the hero's disenchantment with war and mark the beginning of a new consciousness longing for a release in the form of peace or death. In The Red Badge of Courage, Henry Fleming and his friend exhibit great heroism in the latter encounters, yet they are described as 'mule-drivers' and 'mud-diggers'. Again despite their heroic performance from their point of view, they are ordered to retrace to the original point. This impresses upon their minds the meaninglessness of fighting. The same meaninglessness of military exercises is experienced by Frederic Henry

and Robert Jordan in A Farewell to Arms and For Whom the Bell Tolls respectively. Towards the end of the novel, Fleming's passionate longing for the beautiful things of life is his psychological response to the horrors of war and it runs parallel to Henry Frederic's complete acceptance of Catherine and his rejection of war. But Hemingway goes a step further. He shows Frederic getting disillusioned in love and life too. This is true of Robert Jordan in For Whom the Bell Tolls and Cantwell in Across the River and Into the Trees.

Minute depiction of military retreat is an important feature of the plots of Crane and Hemingway. The Red Badge of Courage recaptures the mood and atmosphere of a retreat in psychological terms. His account stresses the fears and craving for life on the part of the soldiers involved:

Presently men were running hither and thither in all ways. The artillery booming, forward, rearward and on the flanks made jumble of ideas of direction. Land-marks had vanished into the gathered gloom. The youth began to imagine that he had got into the center of the tremendous quarrel and he could perceive no way out of it. From the mouths of the fleeing men came a thousand wild questions, but no one made answers.<sup>56</sup>

It is here that Fleming gets his wound at the hands of a panick-stricken soldier. The officers shout and scold frantically, but no one pays attention to them. Hemingway, too draws a picture of a retreat at Caporetto in A Farewell



to Arms with marked emphasis on the elements of chaos and confusion :

We were very close to the Germans twice in the rain but they did not see us. We got past the town to the north without seeing any Italians, then after a while came on the main channels of the retreat and walked all night towards the Tagliamento. I had not realized how gigantic the retreat was. The whole country was moving as well as the army.<sup>57</sup>

Here, the passage refers to Frederic's strenuous journey through battle lines and the massive scale on which the retreat was enacted by the disorganized Italian army and also the people. In his account of the Caporetto retreat, Hemingway, dwells on the abandoned farm-house with no one there, desertion and emptiness stalking the land. He also refers to the confused jumble of abandoned cars and vehicles, making movement difficult. The notes of chaos and disorder and the overbearing conduct of the officers (battle police in A Farewell to Arms) are common to both the accounts. The difference lies in the highly emotional, impressionistic quality of Crane's account and the distanced, objective quality of Hemingway's depiction.

Another common feature in the plots of these war-novels is the nostalgia of the leading characters. In the initial stage of The Red Badge of Courage, Crane dwells on the crucial meeting between Fleming and his mother. The mother

counsels caution and restraint which jars on Fleming's mood of over-confidence. Later, in the midst of fire, blood and commotion, Fleming's thoughts go back to his mother and the homely life. Crane writes :

He bethought him of certain meals his mother had cooked at home, in which those dishes of which he was particularly fond had occupied prominent positions. He saw the spread table. The pine walls of the kitchen were glowing in the warm light from the stove. Too, he remembered how he and his companions used to go from the school house to the bank of a shaded pool. 58

Here, in this passage, Fleming remembers things which he misses the most at the battlefield—warmth, comfort and innocent joys of life associated with home-life.

In Hemingway's war fiction, too, the preoccupation with homely life and its images is pervasive. In A Farewell to Arms Hemingway attributes all the homely qualities to Catherine, the heroine of the novel. She represents warmth, comfort and genuine happiness. She turns every place into a home and it is one of the reasons why Frederic turns to her in his darker moments. As Fleming in Crane's novel thinks of his mother and the felicities of home-life, Frederic too, disillusioned with war turns to Catherine who symbolizes a home-life to him. They escape into Swiss border and set up a homely life in that beautiful Swiss town.

In For Whom the Bell Tolls, we come across numerous scenes of beautiful peasant-life of Spain. Like Catherine in A Farewell to Arms, Maria in For Whom the Bell Tolls represents the whole-some qualities of love, warmth and feminine charms. She serves as a beautiful image of Home-life. Santiago, too, in The Old Man and the Sea, keeps a photograph of his wife, but takes it off as the photograph reminds him of his unbearable loss. This juxtaposition of the past and the present of the leading characters is an important device in the plots of the war-novels.

The treatment of nature constitutes an integral part in the plots of these war-novels. Hills, forests, rivers, the Sun, the sunlight and clouds etc. figure prominently in The Red Badge of Courage and Fleming interprets the objects of Nature subjectively. When Fleming's mind, oppressed by the thoughts of imminent fighting, seeks communion with Nature, he finds Nature highly sympathetic. Crane writes :

He lay down in the grass. The blades pressed tenderly against his cheek. The moon had been lighted and was hung in a treetop. The liquid stillness of the night enveloping him made him feel vast pity for himself. There was a caress in the soft winds; and the whole mood of the darkness, he thought, was one of sympathy for himself in his distress.<sup>59</sup>

But when Fleming runs away from the battlefield out of panic and later gets into the wood, he comes across a pale,

yellow-looking corpse, mouth open with little ants moving about the face.<sup>60</sup> This phenomenon fills him with inordinate fear and explodes his faith in the beneficence of Nature. Earlier, when the fighting was raging fiercely, the youth casts his eyes around, he finds Nature totally indifferent to man's lot.

As he gazed around him the youth felt a flash of astonishment at the blue pure sky and the sun gleaming on the trees and fields. It was surprising that Nature had gone tranquilly on with her golden process in the midst of so much devilment.<sup>61</sup>

Thus, gradually, he learns to discipline his response to Nature and comes to understand the ways of Nature characterized by indifference, if not hostility.

Nature constitutes a large part of Hemingway's plots. Hills and mountains, rivers and valleys, seas and their denizens, flowers and birds form a staple material of Hemingway's fiction. A Farewell to Arms opens with a reference to hills, and mountains and a river with the marked emphasis on its water, clear and fast moving. Images of fertility of Nature are juxtaposed with the fighting going on in the mountains. Most of the fighting is done on the plains, some fighting goes on in the mountains too. One can assume that the towering mountains serve as silent spectators to the bloody acts of man. The fact that Nature moves on unruffled against man's disturbed background is common,

identical note in both Crane's and Hemingway's plots. Nature-- with its rivers and seas, hills and storms - is a stage in Hemingway's fiction where man plays out his absurd, destructive dramas. Most of the crucial acts in A Farewell to Arms, For Whom the Bell Tolls, Across the River and Into the Trees and The Old Man and the Sea take place in the neighbourhood of Nature's great landmarks as it happens in The Red Badge of Courage. Hemingway's fiction is replete with passages describing Nature - some celebrate the beauty and tranquility of Nature, others highlight Nature's ominous character.

The plots of war-novels created by Crane and Hemingway have an intensely dramatic character. Machines, destructive weapons and their operations, wounds and corpses, wine and women are the focal points of the plots. The action in these novels shows the process of destruction of the body, mind and the soul of man. The plots are so devised as to realize these objectives, generating conflicts, violence, death and destruction on a massive scale. They incorporate highly charged scenes, scenes of violent death, of painful separation and alienation, of desperate action. These scenes of physical suffering are counter-balanced by scenes of inner suffering and anguish... which run almost parallel to each other.

Both Crane and Hemingway build episodic plots linking together significant events concerning the lives of their protagonists mainly. They deal with the fluctuations in their

fortunes, changing states of their minds and their shifting attitudes to the proceedings of war. The central structuring principle in the plots of these two novelists is to show the absurdity in the lives of their protagonists and their foredoomed quest to recover the permanently lost paradise of innocence.

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