

# The Fear of Feminization in a Literal No Man's Land

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Negotiations of Masculine Identities in Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also  
Rises* and Wyndham Lewis's *The Revenge for Love*



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Master's Thesis  
English Literature and Culture

University of Bergen  
May 2012

## Sammendrag

Skildringer av en maskulin identitetskrise går igjen i verkene til Wyndham Lewis og Ernest Hemingway. Denne masteroppgaven tar for seg ideen om et feminisert samfunn ved å sammenligne Hemingways «The Sun Also Rises» (1927) med «The Revenge for Love» (1937) av Lewis. Analysen er delt inn i tre moment. Ved å sammenligne stilene til disse forfattere viser jeg hvordan begge omfavner en kjønnestetikk. «Mannlig stil» fremstår som objektiv og følelsesløs, og blir satt opp mot den «feminine» indre litteraturen som er knyttet til psykoanalytiske metoder. Gjennom en nærlesning av karakteriseringsmetoder i disse verkene argumenterer oppgaven for at ideen om feminisering er politisert ved å knytte den til jødiske menn. Mens de «beleirede» hvite protagonistene Jake Barnes og Victor Stamp blir tildelt offerrollen og fremstår som maktløse, gjennom både fysisk og intellektuell impotenssymbolikk, fremgår det at jødiske menn har fornyet sosial og politisk makt. I denne rolleomvendingen mellom det hegemoniske og de marginaliserte støtter Hemingway og Lewis sistnevnte. Idealisererte maskuline normer som individualitet, fri vilje og handlingskraft blir knyttet til den hvite mannen i eksil, mens antisemittiske motiv blir brukt for å framstille jødiske menn som passive, feminiserte, inautentiske og parasittiske. I Lewis' roman inngår denne todelingen mellom ekte og falsk manndom i en politisk konspirasjonsteori der jøden er det fremste symbolet på urban dekadens og korrupsjon.

Sidestillingen av disse bøkene viser at ideen om maskulin identitet er knyttet til spørsmål om sosial klasse, patriotisme og etnisitet. Videre viser sammenligningen at en antisemittisk diskurs ikke utelukkende kan forstås som et produkt av høyreekstremisme. Denne diskursen inngår heller som en større del av det modernistiske tankegodset.

## Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Randi Koppen, for her insightful comments, constructive criticism and motivating responses. By challenging me to hone in my argument whilst allowing me creative freedom, Randi has been a significant influence on my academic progress and in giving me the confidence to complete this thesis.

Through their unremitting support and consistent encouragement, my parents, and my sister have been an invaluable source of inspiration. I also owe them thanks for patiently enduring my prolonged monologues about Hemingway and Lewis's novels. My grandparents provided me with ideal conditions for my writing sojourn in Germany. Their support and interest motivated me to keep going, and a large part of my drafts were written in their care.

The academic staff of the English department as a whole has been greatly supportive in this study, both through academic stimulation in the Work in Progress seminars and with words of encouragement in the hallways. Moreover, I would like to thank the unique community of my fellow students in the study hall for a wonderful atmosphere, intellectual incentive and social amusement. Erik Vågnes deserves special mention. The thematic proximity of our theses made for stimulating and enjoyable debates, and I am certain that his insights have helped to form my thesis.

The University Library of the Humanities has been an instrumental resource in getting hold of the sources needed for this study. I would especially like to thank Kari Normo for her consistently successful efforts in locating the sometimes obscure sources I was searching for.

Finally, great thanks go to my friends outside of the "Ivory Tower". My room and housemates have been priceless in their support and in keeping me afloat. My close friends have been a great source of comfort and inspiration, whilst keeping me grounded in the world at large. For that, I owe them many thanks.

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## Introduction

*“There is not much future in men being friends with great women” –Ernest Hemingway*

*“So we have been invited, all of us, to install ourselves in a very dim Venusberg indeed; but Venus has become an introverted matriarch, brooding over a subterranean ‘stream of consciousness’ – a feminine phenomenon after all – and we are a pretty sorry set of knights too, it must be confessed.” – Wyndham Lewis*

The image of the white man as besieged and under threat of feminization is a central concern to writers as different as Wyndham Lewis and Ernest Hemingway. For both authors, the social reconfigurations that the First World War (1914-18) brought about or intensified – of class, gender and race – were closely tied to the question of masculine identity against a backdrop of perceived feminization. The conflicted search for a coherent masculine self-conception in light of these changes is a recurring theme in Hemingway’s and Lewis’s writing. This thesis sets out to investigate the thematization and expression of these negotiations of masculine identity in Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises* (1927) and Lewis’s *The Revenge for Love* (1937). These two novels are particularly suited for such an exploration as they deal with central tenets of masculine identity in the interwar years. Moreover, as they are written within a decade of one another, the temporal affinity between them allows me to explore their cultural context comparatively.

*The Sun Also Rises* engages with alterations of gender norms in the 1920s. Its narrator, Jake Barnes, is rendered impotent, disillusioned and jaded from the ‘Great’ war. The novel portrays a group of expatriates, a ‘lost generation’, attempting to come to terms with their new surroundings. The central conflict revolves around Barnes’s attempt to re-attain a masculine identity; a conflict that is aggravated by his love for Brett Ashley, who is sexually

liberated and socially independent. The trope of authenticity is central in Barnes's worldview, as he casts his stoic understanding of the world as an epistemologically superior position, explicitly gendered as masculine. Against this, Robert Cohn, the assimilated Jew unscathed by the war, is cast as a naïve romanticist representing urban effeminacy. This binary is reinforced through geographical sites. Hemingway's novel links the social scene of Parisian nightlife to decadence, effeminacy and a blurring of gender norms. By contrast, the Spanish countryside and the art of bullfighting are cast as outposts of masculine independence, challenging these urban reconfigurations.

*The Revenge for Love* satirizes major tropes of the interwar period, including the emergence of totalitarian forces, the impact of technocracy and the decadence of the artistic scene. A host of seemingly unrelated characters are tied together in a plot primarily revolving around gunrunning in the years before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). For this study of feminization, Victor Stamp, the failed artist-turned-forgery, is the primary focus. Stamp's masculine self-conception is portrayed as besieged by the 'powers that be', a triumvirate of capitalism, communism and the Jew as the supreme articulation of urban decadence and corruption. These forces drive him to renounce both his self-identity and artistic independence, and lead him to his death, caused by a conspiracy of political, entrepreneurial and technological forces. As in Hemingway's text, the trope of authenticity is central, as Stamp's crisis of identity is tied to both the commodification of his self-image and to the corruption he undergoes in the decadent art scene of London. Urbanity is cast as a no *man's* land of feminized men who attempt to dismember Stamp's individuality and free will.

This thesis explores how feminization is constructed in these texts, aiming to show how Hemingway and Lewis embrace a gendered aesthetic that serves as an artistic

reassertion of masculine agency. Moreover, in close readings of the modes of characterization at work in these novels, it will investigate how both authors cast their white male protagonists as exiles in modern urbanity by contrasting them to Jewish men as the supreme articulation of feminization and decadence. In viewing how feminization is explicitly politicized, this thesis illuminates the intertwined negotiations of gender norms and political advocacy.

### Hemingway, Lewis and the Feminization of Masculine Identity

Ernest Hemingway and Wyndham Lewis, 'men of 1914' and Modernists both, may well be considered opposites by comparison. The former rose to unequalled literary stardom during his life, his style becoming an emulated standard. Lewis, by contrast, fell out of favour and is often omitted from the Modernist canon, mainly due to his infamous infatuation with fascism. The relationship between the two authors was hostile, as professional criticism was intermixed with personal attacks. In his book-length review of contemporary artists, *Men Without Art* (1934), Lewis satirizes Hemingway's style, combining his uncompromising aesthetic theory with the anti-Semitic undercurrents that structured his political thought. Labeling Hemingway a political ignoramus 'to whom things happen', Lewis goes on to lament the waste of Hemingway's talent by becoming a protégé to his "Jewish mistress", Gertrude Stein (24). The 'steining' of Hemingway is equated with artistic corruption and emasculation. Lewis's polemics are aggressive and embrace a totality of vision, both in aesthetic and political affairs.

Hemingway's retaliation is of a personal and petty nature. Writing on his first encounter with Lewis in *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway notes: "I do not think that I had ever seen a nastier-looking man...under the black hat...the eyes had been those of an unsuccessful rapist" (qtd. in Jameson 5).



In the political polarization between the forces of communism and fascism that swept across the European scene in the 1930s, these authors were in opposite camps. Lewis wrote a series of articles published as *Hitler* (1931), which convey the major tenets of the Nazi movement to an Anglo-Saxon audience, with a distanced but not dispassionate eye. Lewis's enthusiasm, though shrouded in a polemic of objective reporting countering media vilification of Nazism, shines through.<sup>1</sup> Conversely, Hemingway fought the spread of fascism by reporting from and fighting in the Spanish Civil War. The personal animosity and political rift between Hemingway and Lewis is a key factor in the choice of comparing them in this thesis. It is because of, not in spite of the differences in terms of reception, political convictions and style that they are juxtaposed in this study. The comparison of these contrastive figures challenges the binary constructions of the political sphere in this period by highlighting the similarities of their arguments.

The preoccupation with questions of masculinity has been identified as one of Hemingway's central concerns since the publication of his first novels. Jackson J. Benson (1969) claims that "Hemingway's emphasis on the masculine point of view is easily the most characteristic aspect of his writing" (77) proceeding to link this point of view with the central tropes of Hemingway's writing: the self-reliant hero, real-life experience in contrast to intellectualization, the technique of dramatizing rather than discussing emotion and "the emphasis on virile and direct language" (ibid). Moreover, Benson maintains that "Hemingway was vitally concerned with re-establishing what he felt were the proper roles of man and woman in their relationship to each other" (76). In recent

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<sup>1</sup> On the question of Hitler, Lewis concludes with the observation that: "I...am content to regard him as the expression of current German manhood – resolved, with that admirable tenacity, hardihood, and intellectual acumen of the Teuton" (201, 202). The admiration of masculine traits is specifically tied to ethnicity and underlines Lewis's sympathy towards the fascist cause.

revisions, focusing on biographical accounts intermixed with psychoanalytic readings of his novels, a more complex view of Hemingway's gender discussions has challenged this heteronormative impulse. These gender complexities are most prominently identified in Mark Spilka's *Hemingway's Quarrel with Androgyny* (1990). Spilka identifies Hemingway's childhood years and the cross-dressing that he and his sister undertook as a primary impetus for his fascination with androgyny and gender-crossings. Moreover, Hemingway's views on gender have been further complicated by the posthumous publications of *The Garden of Eden* and *A Moveable Feast*. Juxtaposing these two texts, Gerald Kennedy (1991) identifies an ambiguous matrix of gender patterns and desires, but concludes that they "primarily display a need to deny that ambivalence" (207).

In contrast to the stress placed on psychoanalytic readings and biographical interpretations in these studies, this thesis focuses on the question of masculine identity in *The Sun Also Rises* as embedded in the specific cultural context of post-World War One Europe. My concern is not to identify the over-arching masculine conflicts of Hemingway as a man, but rather to illuminate how his novel engages in the expression of perceived male powerlessness and in what manner his characterizations reveal aspects of feminization. Moreover, by identifying the moral coding of Hemingway's text, this thesis explores what I call a 'heteronormative imperative' that accounts for the novel's outcome and is underscored by its antithetical structure.

In Wyndham Lewis's writing, the question of masculine identity is tied to an overarching political ideology. Frederic Jameson (1979) has engaged with how Lewis's political thought informs his fiction. In Lewis's work, Jameson identifies an ideological narrative framework that functions as a fantasy structure, which places the individual subject into a "collective and historical process" (ibid). In this way, ideology cannot be

viewed as a simple 'checking off' of what one does or does not believe in, but rather as a psychological process of finding a coherent frame through which to understand an ever shifting and discontinuous reality. The central tenet of Lewis's narrative ideology is the focus on a strong, masculine personality (110). Jameson labels this the "central organizational category of Lewis' mature ideology, from which the 'derivative' ideologies of racism, fascism, sexism spring" (110). For Lewis, the modern world is involved in a conspiracy that consistently seeks to undermine the strong personality; it is "a vast cosmological plot...to reduce strong personalities to the level of the mediocre and the mindlessly standardized" (116). In his political treatise *The Art of Being Ruled* (1926), Lewis ties this plot to the notion of feminization, arguing that "all orthodox opinion – that is, today, 'revolutionary' opinion...is *anti-man*" (199). Moreover, Lewis claims that a combination of scientific and pseudo-scientific forces has conjoined to form a 'Matriarchate', which is bent on an absolute rule of society "where feminine values are predominant" (ibid). Lewis ties his militant anti-communism and fear of feminization together by claiming that feminism primarily originates in an economic construct of universal labour, which by extension leads to the death of the traditional family (195). The plot against the strong male personality is thereby constructed as a conspiracy between communism, feminism and feminized men.

The construct of feminization is thus a key factor in the synthesis of ideology and masculinity that informs Lewis's ideology. However, it is at this point that Jameson's analysis falls short of its mark. While he identifies the importance of an 'Enemy'-structure in Lewis's worldview, he does not pay sufficient heed to the question of who these 'enemies' are. Debunking what he calls Lewis's "momentary infatuation with Nazism" (110) to a "chronic oppositionalism" (6), Jameson surprisingly ignores the

importance of the central fascist impulses that unify Lewis's worldview. In looking at the function of anti-Semitic tropes in *The Revenge for Love*, this thesis argues that the fascist undercurrents in Lewis's thought were vital to making his ideology cohesive and played a significant part in his portrayals of besieged masculinity.

### Contextualizing Masculine Anxiety

This thesis engages with the articulation of masculine disempowerment in Lewis's and Hemingway's texts in the specific context of post-World War One Europe. Three major social reconfigurations inform the contextual backdrop of this study. The 'Great' War itself marked not only a devastating loss of life, but also "the completion of the Industrial Revolution's construction of anonymous dehumanized man, that impotent cipher who is frequently thought to be the twentieth century's most characteristic citizen" (Gilbert & Gubar 1989, 259). The war had proven that the individual man was "infinitely replaceable" (ibid), shattering notions of masculine agency and the value of individuality. Impotence thus became a common metaphor both for the physical maiming of the male body and for its intellectual counterpart: the disillusionment with the idea that man could control his environment.

In shattering the notion of masculine autonomy, however, the First World War was a catalyst rather than a cause; this development reflected broader historical reconfigurations. In the nineteenth century, masculine ideals were centered on the importance of personal autonomy (Hatten 1993, 79). This idealization of autonomy shifted for both the working and middle classes, as the former experienced the atomization of employment through increased monopolistic power given to employers, while for the latter, the decline of the *petit bourgeoisie* and increased office work had the same effect (80). In both cases, "these broad social trends generated a disruption of...[a]

masculine ideal of stout independence” (ibid). The technocratic and bureaucratic besiegement of masculine autonomy was the historical foundation for a perceived crisis of masculinity.

The decades following the First World War marked a reconfiguration both of sexual norms and gender roles. As premarital sex became more widely acceptable, divorce more common and previously deemed ‘deviant’ expressions of same-sex love more publically visible, the patriarchic understanding of the man as *pater familias* was challenged. Furthermore, as minorities grew more vociferous about social equality and gained power and influence, the notion of white masculine dominance appeared besieged from all sides and “the language of male anxiety was almost as widespread as the language of race” (Minter 2002, 151). The besieged male attempted to fight back against a number of enemies, grouped under the heading ‘decadence’: “the spread of ‘unmanly’ urban subcultures, including those of visible homosexuality...female political activism...and a general blurring of... dichotomous gender distinctions” (Allen 2002, 199). As “male fear of being engulfed and displaced...flourished in the twenties” (ibid, 155), its literary representations become more widespread as well. Both *The Sun Also Rises* and *The Revenge for Love* articulate instances of ‘fighting back’. In viewing these texts as being in dialogue with their historical context, this thesis explores the political advocacy that they engage in as part of a cultural expression in which literature is understood as a shaping force of social change, engaging with a specific historical and societal context.

### ‘Masculine’ Aesthetics and the Gendering of Modernism

The artistic renegotiations that Hemingway and Lewis undertake are tied to a gendered aesthetic in the Modernist movement. While W. H. Auden’s dictum that “Art is not life

and cannot be/ A midwife to society” reflected the prevalent Modernist self-conception that art should be autonomous and separated from the political sphere, Sara Blair (1999) argues convincingly that Auden’s lines “obscure the way in which modernist texts, writers and institutions not only reflect...but in turn contribute to social experience, shaping ideals being forged in the name of culture” (157,161). Moreover, Blair argues that the question of what ‘culture’ was and how it informed national or racial allegiances is a “deeply political issue” (157-8). In the present thesis, the construct of feminization is seen as a major tenet in this cultural debate. Hemingway and Lewis engage in what they understand to be a battle to defend masculine agency and power. My argument thus aligns itself with Blair’s conviction that the writer’s attempt to shape culture through literature is a political stance in its own right.

Following this train of thought, it is vital to view the gendering of the Modernist aesthetic as a political expression as well. In reviewing the contemporary self-conception of the Modernist movement, Marianne Dekoven (1999) observes that “instances of modernist advocacy of firm, hard, dry, terse, classical masculinity, over against the messy, soft, vague, flowery, effusive, adjectival femininity of the late Victorians, abound, and instances of male modernist antifeminism and misogyny are legion” (176). Bonnie Kime Scott, in *The Gender of Modernism* (1990), argues that gender “coexists and interacts with...categories [including] class, race, nation”, and that it must be understood not in isolation but as one amongst many “layers of identification” (3). The interplay between the gendered self-conception of the Modernist movement and the political advocacy taken against feminization is a central backdrop of this study.

### Masculine Identity as Ideology

This thesis approaches the study of masculinity as an ideological construction and as the primary 'layer of identification' through which Hemingway and Lewis engage in a politicized expression of feminization. Critical studies focusing on masculinity are still fairly novel in gender studies and are marked by a lack of consensus on central issues concerning methodology and theoretical paradigms (Allen 192). One unifying trope that Judith Allen has identified is the theme of a 'crisis of masculinity', whereby manhood consistently is portrayed as "fragile, defensive, threatened and at risk" (199). The notion of a besieged masculine identity after the First World War is thereby part of a larger pattern of masculine crises.

In tracing the origins of western masculinity to a stereotype of normative behaviour, social historian George Mosse (1996) outlines a hegemonic view of masculinity that embraced a synthesis of manhood, race and nation at its core (24). In his model, the implicit and explicit ways in which men and women defined their roles is based on a framework of normativity. From the end of the eighteenth-century, Mosse argues that the stereotype of masculine behavior incorporated aristocratic ideals of chivalry, bravery and courage, while adding to this the bourgeois qualities of discipline, order and restraint (17-24). Moreover, Mosse claims that outward appearance was understood to mirror the 'inner qualities' of a man, reflected in his rephrasing of the Swiss physiognomist Johan Kasper Lavater: "the more virtuous, the greater the beauty of any human being; the less virtuous, the uglier his appearance" (25). This male stereotype was reinforced by the creation of countertypes, which served as foils and reinforced the notion of an ideal homogenous male identity. These countertypes were

found in marginalized groups, such as Blacks or Jews, and the stereotypes against them provided “justification for discrimination” (6). Moreover, this dualistic view of masculinity led to a strengthening of the hegemonic stereotype of masculinity, as the notion of a coherent self was reliant on a self-conception in which sexual identity, political allegiance and national affiliation are cast together in seeming harmony. Mosse’s pan-European theory has been rightly criticized for being reductive in dismissing local anomalies and idiosyncrasies, as well as for being “tranhistorical” (Allen 197) His approach, however, highlights the hegemonic conceptualization as tied to a specific, ‘white’ cultural tradition and illuminates the gendered negotiations in *The Sun Also Rises* and *The Revenge for Love*.

The link between physical attributes and personal traits, along with the synthesis of ideology and masculine identity, are two central backdrops to understanding the concept of feminization in this thesis. By discerning how anti-Semitic tropes of ‘the Jew’s’ physical appearance inform an ideology that casts him as a corrupter and usurper, this thesis explores how Lewis and Hemingway portray masculine identity through a series of dichromatic structures. Thus, the manner in which Jewish men are portrayed as countertypes and placed outside the hegemonic tradition of masculine identity is a central concern of this thesis. Moreover, in viewing how masculine identities are racially coded, I highlight the ethnic taint that underlies both Lewis’s and Hemingway’s portrayals of masculine disembodiment and feminization.

#### Setting the Scene – Perspectives and Fields of Exploration

The study of the manner in which these texts engage with the question of feminization and a crisis of masculine identity is structured on three levels. First, the question of narration and narrative style will be addressed, as it functions as a differentiation



mechanism between the masculine and feminine. Hemingway and Lewis engage in what I call an 'aesthetic of the surface', which is explicitly gendered to imbue its male narrators with an epistemologically superior viewpoint. By vilifying emotional internalization and embracing an objective and external perspective, the narrators of both texts explicitly mark their writing as masculine. Chapter 1 will explore the function of this style by comparing the opening passages of the two books and illuminating the narrative aesthetics that Hemingway and Lewis embrace. The question of style will serve as a backdrop when considering the primary focus of this study, namely aspects of characterization.

In Chapter 2, the question of characterization will be addressed by a comparative reading of the protagonists of *The Sun Also Rises* and *The Revenge for Love*: Jake Barnes and Victor Stamp. The juxtaposition of these two characterizations will examine how the masculine struggle is depicted and structured, and in what ways the masculine identities these characters strive for are idealized. In both texts, the trope of a pastoral landscape serves as a structural antithesis to decadent urbanity, which raises the question whether a 'genuine' masculine self-conception is portrayed as incompatible with modern society. Moreover, this chapter explores how masculine reassertion is tied to individuality and creativity, casting the artist or writer as the final bastion of masculine power.

Finally, in Chapter 3, the discussion will turn to the manner in which feminization is exemplified at the level of character by exploring how Jewish men function as a countertype to the masculine ideal. In both texts, Jewish men embody characteristics identified with the feminine, whereby physical attributes become telltale signs of intellectual feminization. Moreover, Robert Cohn and Peter Wallace are structurally cast as foils against which Barnes and Stamp attempt to reassert themselves. By exploring

the anti-Semitic tropes that underlie these characterizations, this thesis addresses how a trope of inauthenticity informs the dichotomy between 'white' and 'Jewish' masculinities. In this way, the focus on the political aspects of Modernist writing may be discussed more clearly at a textual level, while gender role constructions can serve to illuminate the political undercurrents of a text. Moreover, the political divergence between Hemingway and Lewis raises the question to what extent anti-Semitic tropes were part of a wider socio-cultural norm in Modernist writing, and thus cannot solely be linked to the political right wing at the time.

## Chapter 1 - The Schoolteacher and the Aficionado: Narrative Voice, Focalization and the Aesthetics of the Surface

In contrastive ways, both Jake Barnes in *The Sun Also Rises* and the unnamed Lewisian narrator of *The Revenge for Love* employ narrative techniques in which the narrative voice resides in an epistemologically superior position. By extension, I want to argue that this positioning must be understood as an attempt at masculine reassertion.

Moreover, these techniques illuminate important aspects of characterisation and focalization that are central to an understanding of the text's protagonists and their feminized countertypes. The use of these techniques will be discussed by exploring how the narrative aesthetics that Hemingway and Lewis embrace are implemented in each of the books' opening passages.

### Satire as Truth, the Theory of the External and the Philosophy of the Eye – Wyndham Lewis's Narrative Aesthetic

*I have taken the cow by the horns...and broached the subject of the part the feminine has played – and minds as well, deeply feminized, not technically on the distaff side, in the erection of our present criteria. (Men Without Art, 140)*

The "criteria" Wyndham Lewis speaks of here is the differentiation of his narrative aesthetic against what he perceives as a feminized internal view on literature. In response to a critical essay in which a reviewer claimed that *The Apes of God* revealed Lewis as a "personal appearance artist", the author takes this criticism as a compliment and outlines his narrative aesthetic in a series of dichotomies that differentiate between the internal and external methods of literature. Through the polemical duality Lewis constructs, he casts his own style of writing as objective, non-emotional and masculine, against a feminized mesh of psychological imprecision that comes across as unintentionally comic. Lewis maintains that his narrative method is based on the dogma

of the “Great Without...the wisdom of the eye, rather than that of the ear” (105). In this approach, it is the outside of people, “their shells or pelts, or the language of their bodily movements” (97) that is moved to the forefront. Moreover, the aesthetic of the external is tied to satire, which Lewis alleviates out of its historical definition and labels “the truth” (99). In this view, satire becomes the literary equivalent of natural science, as “that objective, non-emotional truth of the scientific intelligence sometimes takes on the exuberant sensuous quality of creative art... [that] has been bent...upon being true” (ibid). In merging the satiric with the external, Lewis outlines a dispassionate and seemingly objective narrative aesthetic.

Lewis contrasts this aesthetic to what he labels the internal approach in writers such as Virginia Woolf, Henry James and James Joyce. Here, Lewis attacks the “brooding over a subterraneous ‘stream of consciousness’” (138), which he labels a “feminine phenomenon” (ibid). Moreover, Lewis maintains that the internal focus produces literature that is devoid of “all contour and definition” (99). Thus, the internal mode of writing is polemically rendered as meaningless “psycho-babble”, linked to femininity and feminization, in contrast to the “masculine formalism” (104) of Lewis’s own project. In this manner, Lewis creates a gendered epistemological dichotomy, in which external objectivity, non-emotion and the pursuit of truth are cast as a masculine aesthetic, against the emotional and feminine or feminized internal aesthetic in the no-man’s land of speculative streams of consciousness.

*The Revenge for Love* shows how this narrative aesthetic functions in practice. The unnamed Lewisian narrator stages a series of episodic sequences with a multiplicity of characters, revolving around the tropes of falsity, deceitfulness and self-interestedness, reflected in the recurring motif of the ‘false-bottom’. The opening

sequence, set in a Spanish prison, satirically outlines the nature of internationalist politics by allegorically tying it to three masculine roles. In this triangular structure, Percy Hardcaster, the inmate who was caught for gun-smuggling, represents the feminized internationalist position; Don Alvaro, the warder, is the figure of archaic and nationalistic hyper-masculinity; while Serafin, the working class prison guard, is only interested in monetary gain and thus reflects the corruptive nature of materialist capitalism (Ayers 1992, 159). The narrator satirizes these characters through their discussions, and employs the external lens to reveal aspects of their character, where features of the male body, most prominently the moustache, are employed to reflect character traits.

Through the characterisation Don Alvaro, the Lewisian narrator satirizes the archaic masculine role of the chivalrous and honourable Don by revealing his self-aggrandizement, misuse of power and false national loyalty. Alvaro basks in the power and glory of his position as warder of the prison, and abuses this power where he can. As the peasant girl approaches the prison to deliver a false-bottomed basket of newspapers and a means of escape to Hardcaster, Alvaro has already identified this ruse of betrayal, and calls the bluff. As Alvaro interrogates the girl, the narrator satirizes his hyper-masculine posing, as his gaze becomes a metaphor for rape: "Painfully...the *male will* made its way into her body, compelled with all the potency of Spanish *eyes*, taking over all its nervous centres with an *iron control*" (22, emphasis added). Furthermore, the narrator comments that Alvaro "was not the man to conduct himself as if a woman were a boxer in petticoats, or to depart from the *strict male canon*" (17). The 'strict male canon', here used as an ironic statement reflecting the traditional conception of a chivalrous masculine code of honour, is juxtaposed to Alvaro's animalistic gaze, thereby

rendering his sense of honour meaningless. For Alvaro, the vision of an independent woman can only be rendered as the ridiculous image of a 'boxer in petticoats', but the text primarily ridicules Alvaro's hyper-masculine self-conception.

Against Alvaro, Serafin takes on a subjugated role. This subjugation is expressed through the moustache, as a symbol of masculine strength and potency. While Alvaro's moustache is described as "pungent" (15), Serafin's is "small...[and] dankly" (22). Moreover, Serafin's mouth is "a dental museum...[of] superb caries...which suggested...all the comforts and advantages of extreme corruption of a *moral* order as well" (24). Serafin's physical appearance is taken as an outer reflection of his inner corruption, as he is working as a double agent to break Hardcaster out of prison. Thus, Serafin gains money from both sides: paid by his government to watch over Hardcaster, he is willing to take money to allow for his escape. Serafin reflects the role of the 'cannon-fodder', which is tied to the working class as the victims of governmental exploit and corruption, given to be sacrificed freely at any time (see Chapter 3).

After having intercepted the double-bottomed basket, Alvaro has known of Serafin's role as a double-agent, and intercepts Hardcaster's attempt to escape, killing Serafin and injuring Hardcaster. In the ensuing confrontation, Alvaro asks: "Why, Don Percy, did you never propose to *me* a little deal? Every man has his price" (50). Alvaro reveals that his loyalty is just as bound to money as is Serafin's, although the price may be higher. At this point, Hardcaster sees Alvaro in a new light: "He saw that this man was *false*. His moustache was stuck on – it did not grow there! When he coughed, he realised that it was a goat that coughed, not a man" (ibid). The narrative aesthetic of the external is brought to light here. Alvaro's false moustache reflects his false chivalry: his masculine self-image is 'stuck-on', and, in the final analysis, is revealed to be both false in

its pretences of national loyalty and in its upholding of tradition. The romantic notion of a chivalrous 'Don' is displaced to reveal a lust-driven, power-crazed and corrupt character.

While Alvaro is depicted as the figure of hyper-masculinity in this sequence, Percy Hardcaster cast as his foil. Prone to infantile tantrums, Hardcaster's "touchy, somewhat unbalanced" (28) personality is at odds with his surroundings. He is "not a *front-fighter*...but rather a careerist of the propaganda section: wielding the pen, not the pistol" (45). Physically, he is described as robust, which reflects his self-indulgence and narcissism. David Ayers argues convincingly that through Hardcaster, Lewis characterises what he sees as the feminized split-self of the internationalist, as Percy oscillates between the roles of the schoolmaster and the schoolboy (159). In an argument with Serafin, where the guard has asked if Percy is on bad terms with Alvaro, Hardcaster indignantly replies "I'm on bad terms with no one except myself" (*Revenge for Love* 23). Serafin's mocking response, "With *yourself*...with your *self*" (ibid), reflects Hardcaster's split self. On the one hand, he is the only character in the prison guard sequence who comprehends the dynamics of the international political game. On the other hand, he is cast as a petulant child, prone to outbursts of anger. This duality is reflected in name allegory, as his identity oscillates between Percy, the schoolboy, and Hard-caster, the schoolmaster and propagandist.

After the attempted escape backfires, leaving Hardcaster with a wounded leg, the narrator comments that he plans an "immediate withdrawal from these troublesome scenes – a man's world, yes, but he was through with the whole business" (51). The 'whole business' refers both to gunrunning and the conflict of masculinity in this scene. Percy has been confronted with a 'man's world', and is 'through with it', thereby

rejection the masculine conflict as a whole. According to Ayers, this extends into Lewis's critique of the 'Youth-politics' of his age, whereby "baby-like half-men" were manipulated by politicians in what Lewis calls a "male-matriarchy" (160). Thus, Hardcaster, is satirized as the victim of feminization on a societal level. Hardcaster is estranged from the 'whole business' of masculinity because it is a field to which he has no frame of reference. Thus, Percy is cast as a 'child-man', whose masculine self-understanding is shattered by the confrontations with Alvaro and Serafin. This confrontation leads him to exile the question of masculine self-identity from his consciousness. In this manner, symbols of masculinity are used allegorically to underscore political standpoints. Alvaro, the hyper-masculine nationalist, is out-of-date, and also proves willing to betray his cause for money. Percy Hardcaster is the feminized internationalist who offers propaganda, but when the going gets rough, realizes it is time to get going. He thereby reflects cowardice, which Ayers sees as Lewis's interpretation of the impotence of the internationalist cause (160). Finally, Serafin works as a double agent, focused only on money, which costs him his life, and is portrayed through physical displays of corruption.

The mode of narration in this sequence is complicated by the perspective of characterization. Instead of focusing on character development, the episodic structure of the novel is an exemplary structure through which the narration explores the themes of duplicity, falseness and hollowness in a series of contexts.

"Listen With Great Attention!" – Multiple Focalizations and the Duplicity of the Narrative Voice in *The Revenge for Love*

In the conclusion of the first episode of the novel, its narrative agent makes an ironic, self-reflexive comment concerning narrative voice. This is focalized through Alvaro. In



the aforementioned confrontation between the peasant girl and the warden, the narrator comments on Alvaro's conduct in the following manner:

'Listen with great attention!' His voice took on the argumentative modulation of the indulgent lecturer – a master of his subject, resolved that no pains shall be spared to make his omniscience accessible to the most benumbed intellect which could possibly be brought up against him by the perverse destiny that delights to obstruct the path of the teacher. (20)

This analogy to the role of the teacher is an ideal starting point in accounting for the complexities of the Lewisian narrator. This narrator retains a marked distance to the characters portrayed in terms of intellect and epistemological understanding. The novel serves as an example-based study in which the narrative 'teacher' guides the 'benumbed intellect' of his 'students' to an insight that he has already reached. In this way, the narrator employs distance as a tool of conviction both in relation to his characters and to the reader. The assumed privilege that the narrator takes on at these moments, as he renders the thoughts and convictions of all three characters in the above sequence, is complicated by the use of focalization.

Schlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983) maintains that the concept of focalization entails "how a story is presented in the text through the mediation of some 'prism' or 'perspective' ...verbalized by the narrator though not necessarily his" (71). Rimmon-Kenan distinguishes between external focalization, in which the narrative agent and focalizer are in close proximity or cannot be differentiated, and internal focalization, where a character involved in the plot is the main vehicle of focalization (74-5). Moreover, the concept of focalization is extended to include "cognitive, emotive and ideological orientation" (ibid), which Rimmon-Kenan differentiates into three facets of

focalization: the perceptual (time and space), the psychological (cognitive and emotive) and the ideological, “the norms of the text” (75-82). The great benefit of the concept of focalization is that it distinguishes between the narrative voice and the lens through which the story is told.

On the one hand, the mode of narration in *The Revenge for Love* is externally focalized, as the narrative agent and the focalizer cannot be differentiated, and the narrator remains a constant in every episodic sequence. At the same time, however, this distinction is unclear in each individual episode. When Don Alvaro speaks of the failings of nationalism and masculinity, or that the peasant girl means nothing to him, it is unclear whether he is the focalizer of this viewpoint himself or if it is an assertion made by the narrator-focalizer. This uncertainty leads to an obfuscation of narrative voice in the novel, which can be understood as an oscillation between the narrator-focalizer and several character-focalizers. The opening sequence thus reflects the obfuscation of meaning and intent in the novel, as the focalization in each scene shifts between the distanced and intellectually superior narrator-focalizer and the limited perspectives of the character-focalizers. There is no clear distinction between these focalizations, as they overlap and there is no assured way of knowing from whose perspective a point of view is uttered at any given time. In this way, the theme of the false bottom is extended to the narrative aspects of *The Revenge for Love* as well, making the narrative voice a slippery one and complicating attempts at evaluating characterisation. At the same time, the narrator-focalizer retains the ideological facet of focalization, both in terms of plot structure and in the shaping of a hierarchy of meaning. As Rimmon-Kenan notes, “the ideology of the narrator-focalizer is usually taken as authoritative, and all other

ideologies in the text are evaluated from this 'higher' position" (82). This hierarchy and its implications will become clearer in the analysis of Victor Stamp and his corruption.

#### Epistemological Superiority as Masculine Reassertion – the Narrative Voice of Jake Barnes

While the two first chapters of *The Sun Also Rises* revolve solely around Robert Cohn, they say as much about the narrator relaying them as they do about Cohn. These scenes function as a manner through which to establish narrative authority. Barnes states that he "mistrust[s] all frank and simple people" (3), implying that he is neither, and in the following establishes an authorial voice that mixes factual retelling, normative colouring and sardonic wit. In recounting Cohn's failed marriage, facts are intermixed with assumptions, as the narrator relates that Cohn: "was married five years, had three children...[and was] hardened into a rather unattractive mould under domestic unhappiness with a rich wife" (4). Sarcasm and wittiness, such as the aside that Cohn had not left his wife because he felt it "too cruel to deprive her of him" (ibid), or that Barnes claims that he has "a rotten habit of picturing the bedroom scenes of my friends" (11) intensify the distance between the narrative voice and the characters he describes, and to give the impression of an objective rendering of events. Thus, when Barnes claims that Cohn "distained boxing" (3) or that the novel Cohn wrote was "a very poor novel" (5), these statements are related in a manner that implies complete superiority of understanding. At the same time, throughout the novel, Barnes hardly makes a single reference to his own background. What does come across is that he is from Kansas City (18), that he has played football (167) and is Catholic (27, 85, 160). Aside from his injury, not a single reference is made to his physical appearance, with the exception of calling himself Cohn's "tennis friend" (6) and enjoying swimming (208), hinting to a degree of physical fitness. His intellectual capacity is not evidenced by example either.

While Barnes ironically comments on Cohn reading the “very sinister” *The Purple Land* (8), the only reading he explicitly undertakes during the novel aside from the New York *Herald* is two bullfight papers (27) and “*L’auto...to read about and catch up on French sporting life*” (209). Thus, it is not through comparison within the plot that Barnes elevates his masculine status beyond that of his peers, but in the narrative act itself.

In reassessing Barnes’s narrative role, Todd Onderdonk (2007) argues that the style of omission, suggestion and suppression that Barnes employs creates a renewed masculine empowerment for a man who has otherwise lost his masculine and sexual agency (70, 75). Onderdonk calls this “iceberg masculinity” and contends that it has the “rhetorical effect of intensification” (ibid). Thus, the act of omission in the narrative becomes an effect in itself. Following Onderdonk, Barnes, and by extension Hemingway, is the only author to truly conceptualize and ‘conquer’ the construct of feminization in a masculine manner, as the narrative functions as a normative construct, inviting the reader to sympathize with Barnes rather than Cohn, Brett or even Pedro Romero (62). It is this “superior epistemological profile” (70) that differentiates Barnes from the rest of the characters in the novel. At the same time, this narrative technique has an important effect on the reader. Nina Schwartz (1984) argues that Hemingway’s strategy of omission “inscribes the reader as impotent slave to the master author” (52). The word-play on “impotent” is vital here. Just as the casting of impotence is displaced within the novel from the physical in Barnes to the social through Cohn (see Chapter 3), the narrative itself undermines the notion of impotence by rendering the reader helpless to evaluate or verify the narration. This, of course, could be said of any plot as a construction, but it holds special significance here, as the role of impotence is displaced

both on the intra-textual level and on the extra-textual level by placing Barnes's masculine agency not only above the other characters, but above the reader's also.

Thus, masculine signification occurs at the level of style as well as within the plot. Jake Barnes is a dramatized narrator who also functions as the narrator-focalizer, as there is no distance between Barnes as focalizer and as character. Moreover, this narrator assumes the privilege of combining fact with fiction in his characterisations, as seen through the example of Robert Cohn above. In this manner, Barnes's style of omission functions as a verification of authority and as an imperative to accept the epistemological superiority and normative undertone of the plot. As the Lewisian narrator comments on his role through the image of the teacher, Barnes reflects this through the figure of the *aficionado*, literally translated by Barnes as "one who is passionate about the bullfights" (115). Moreover, the narrator claims that, upon being tested on the authenticity of his passion, there "was no password, no set of questions that could bring it out, rather it was a sort of oral spiritual examination" (ibid). The same could be said about masculinity in the novel. There is no way to unlock the key to acting out masculine behaviour correctly; Cohn attempts a series of approaches and fails at each of them. In the context, the dialogue as a whole becomes a continual "oral spiritual examination", whereby a certain code of behaviour is expected and demanded. All this, however, is in the hands of the narrator Barnes, who from the first chapter of the novel has asserted his authority on the text in his role as narrator-focalizer. In this way, the problem of masculine identities in *The Sun Also Rises* is evident both at the level of plot and on the level of the narrative frame at large.

### **Masculine Reassertion through the Aesthetics of the Surface**

Understanding the mode of narration through the concept of focalization opens new corridors of exploration when dealing with aspects of characterisation in these novels. While the use of focalization differs markedly in these texts, the notion of epistemological superiority is a striking similarity. Jake Barnes employs focalization to assert his own perceptual and masculine authority, while the Lewisian narrator engages in a complex oscillation between internal and external focalization to illuminate a host of political and social standpoints. Yet, by juxtaposing the “blind” character-focalizers with the satiric and “objective” narrator-focalizer, the normative truth of Lewis’s text is unearthed. Although they differ in form, both of these narrative techniques can be understood as profiles of epistemological superiority that aim at providing the reader with a normative ideology. Tying epistemological superiority to what they consider an explicitly masculine aesthetic serves to gender this ideology. Both authors thus engage in an aesthetic of the surface. For Hemingway, the act of omission, of silencing feeling and cultivating emotional detachment at the narrative level is a masculine reassertion in its own right. This does not entail, however, that the internal dimension is irrelevant or feminized, as Lewis maintains. Rather, as the image of ‘iceberg masculinity’ reflects, this internal level is present, but must be kept beneath the surface and not commented on explicitly. In *The Sun Also Rises*, then, narrative encompasses an unarticulated internal dimension, which must be omitted in order to retain masculine grace. For Lewis, the aesthetic of the surface is a gendered platform in its own right, as it encompasses the objective, scientific and non-emotional perspective on narrative and the satirist’s imperative of revealing unpleasant truths; in the Lewisian worldview, these are masculine perspectives by default. Thus, these two narrative aesthetics hold different

implications as to where the line is drawn between the masculine and the feminine, but both are gendered to reinvigorate the masculine perspective. Through Jake Barnes, the question of masculine reassertion at the level of narrative and plot are conjoined. The Lewisian narrator, by contrast, employs an external perspective as a masculine alternative to the notion of feminized internal narration. Here, physical representations of the male body are one method through which the “truths” about a character are revealed. The aesthetics of the surface thus reveal the stylistic basis on which aspects of characterization are built.

## Chapter 2 Dismembered Bodies and Minds: A Comparison of Victor Stamp and Jake Barnes

Victor Stamp in *The Revenge for Love* and Jake Barnes in *The Sun Also Rises* are two primary examples of the negotiations of masculine identities that preoccupy Hemingway as well as Lewis. Stamp and Barnes are both characterised as ‘strong men’, are portrayed as out of place with their surroundings and depicted as being in the midst of a masculine crisis of identity. The manner in which these crises are negotiated is the central concern of this chapter.

### Victor Stamp – the Man-of-Action

The plot of *The Revenge for Love* witnesses the struggles of self-understanding and the search for a coherent masculine self through the artist Victor Stamp. The narrative follows a three-fold structure. The would-be artist Stamp is portrayed as besieged, his masculine self-identity is in disarray. After failing to reconcile his identity by painting an original picture, Stamp becomes a forger of self-portraits, which marks the corruption of his conception of self. Even though Stamp finally rejects the act of forgery, the self-understanding can no longer be reconciled, and in the final episodes of the novel we are witness to the complete renunciation of a masculine self by what to Lewis are the ‘powers that be’: a triumvirate of communism, capitalism and the corruptive nature of ‘the Jew’.

Victor Stamp’s physique is the symbolic reflection of the masculinity he represents in the novel. He is a “large, rough fellow”, with a “lovely brown face”, he is “strong” and has “a handsome profile from the hinterland” (86, 161). Moreover, his partner Margot at several intervals likens Victor’s appearance to that of a Greek god, where Stamp is attributed “godlike antipodean beauty”, and is seen as “her beautiful



private Apollo" (295). Unlike the communist "sham intellectuals", as Margot sees them, Victor is a man of "flesh and blood" (178), and exhibits the "*instinctive* scepticism of the cannon-fodder, regarding all wars, of Class or Nation" (76). Thus, Stamp is cast both as the artist and the 'man-of-the-people', with no regard for the political world at large. By juxtaposing instinct and godlike Hellenic beauty, the Lewisian narrator links mythological and biological imagery to cast Stamp as a "natural" man. The image is intensified by Margot's metaphorical casting of Victor as nature. When Margot is looking at a stream, she finds it false: "it was too artless...it was too much a senseless agitation of unfeeling things" (308). In contrast to this, it is Victor who is "her *nature* now; and 'wild nature' too, at that" (309). Moreover, he is infused with an "animal will" (80). Physical beauty, instinct and nature symbolism are cast together in synthesis to inform a trope of authenticity. In this light, it is clear why Stamp is Australian: he serves as a manifestation of a type of masculinity that cannot be found in the modern West. David Ayers argues that this is tied to the fact that Lewis saw British society as far too feminized to be able to muster a man of Stamp's calibre (175).

Stamp's physicality reflects the tenets of his masculine self-understanding, "his being a world of black and white, composed of clear-cut individuals, it followed that each and all had his own business to attend to, not secretively but as an unchallengeable free-agent" (*Revenge for Love* 348). This individualism encompasses ideals of masculine behaviour that Victor adheres to, namely to "eschew inquisitiveness, and to cultivate detachment" (350). The detachment of Victor functions on several levels. His love of "great open spaces" (81) is juxtaposed to his "big, lean, Australian head" (92). Thus, he is detached from the conflicts of class and nation that permeate the novel because he does not recognise his place in them, other than as 'cannon-fodder'; as a sacrifice to the

'powers that be' against what the novel as a whole deems a structural hollowness and an intellectual 'nothing'.

In this manner, Stamp's physical appearance is mythologized and linked to the properties of a masculinity that is shown to be out of place in the society it inhabits. The narrator satirizes Margot's slow-witted realization of this symbolism: "Victor was...*a symbol*. Some men are symbols...she grasped quite well the fact that he *stood for something*...the lion is a symbol of a life that is passed" (358). The 'Victor as lion' metaphor encapsulates both the strong man persona that he symbolizes and its detachment, or rather out-of-place-ness, with what it encounters in modern Britain. Margot continues this analogy to that of the Neanderthal Man, and argues that Victor, being out of place, is to be hunted, "with guns, pitchforks, hammers and sickles" (359). Tellingly, the hammer and sickle are two symbols associated with communism, and, by analogy, this is the supreme force which Victor's masculinity is hunted by. In this way, Victor Stamp's body gains "symbolic capital" (Mosse 24), and Lewis employs the aesthetics of the external to denote Stamp's individuality and agency.

At the same time, however, Victor's masculine self-identity is shown to be standardized and not fully his own. Innumerable references are made throughout the novel to his 'Clark Gable' smile, grin or smirk. The link to a Hollywood actor indicates the typecasting of Victor to match a commercial role, which is given to him by something outside of his own control. Moreover, the Clark Gable reference ties Victor Stamp's masculinity to a role that it would otherwise reject: the concept of acting and role-playing, as well as of *product*-ion. Stamp here becomes merely a part of the culture industry that his vision of art and self are attempting to rebel against, reflecting the commodification of his identity.

### Stamp's Moment of Originality

Through painting, Victor attempts to retain his individuality. After an unsuccessful attempt at an early start, Stamp re-awakens with the will to paint. Just hours earlier, in his morning exchange with Margaret, he had deemed himself a “rotten useless bum of a man” (77) who says he feels “as though I was alive with cooties jabbing at me day and night, and don't know what I'm doing or saying half the time” (78). This is an early foreshadowing of how the narrator depicts Stamp's masculine identity as besieged. Following his second awakening, the “animal will” within him is tied to “the chin-high buffalo-grass of his native continent...[as he was] back in the noisy nothingness of his whoopee days...he felt back into the days before he suspected that the dice were all loaded against him, as an artist” (82-83). The pastoral scenes of Stamp's native Australia provide the structural antithesis to his London apartment. It is from there that his creativity springs, by extension implying that there is no creative impetus left in his current surroundings.

Stamp's artistic endeavour, however, is already challenged at this point. His work is at best derivative of Van Gogh, Braque and Matisse (they are mentioned explicitly), and the narrator asserts that Stamp “was no good as an artist”, his major talent being choice of colour, which was taken “to mask his formal shortcoming” (ibid). The focus on colour is furthermore labelled as an “ineradicable *prettiness*” (ibid). What emerges here is the implication that Stamp's art does not possess the formal qualities necessary to succeed as an artist. The notion of colour is tied to sentimentality and cheerfulness, qualities that the narrator deems unfit for true artistic practice. Stamp's drive to creativity is tied to the nostalgic memory of a pastoral Australia, which gives the artist “a fresh eye, no longer tired and harassed by irrelevant problems of bohemian economy”

(83). The 'bohemian economy' refers to the inauthentic pretensions with which the narrator invests the London art-scene. The commodification of art is satirized in the juxtaposition of 'bohemian', linked to a libertine and individualistic artist, and the economics of the art scene. In contrast, Stamp's moment of original inception originates in individual creativity and a state of disinterestedness with respect to the world at large. In this dichotomy, Stamp is a force of authenticity and originality, working against a decadent art scene.

Intuition plays a central role in the conception of the only "passable picture" (89) that Stamp is to paint in the course of the plot. The object Stamp paints is a still life in red monochrome. The narrator notes that this is an unusual choice of colour, and that Stamp "had allowed nothing on his palette that would make his favourite milk-pink punch" (88). Stamp's creative impulse is tied to intuition. The narrator comments that "this flight-from-*self* had been undeliberate...intuition had been its prompter, telling him that what would come off best would be what would remind him least of Victor Stamp. Even his hand...called upon his help as little as possible" (89). The satiric idea that Stamp's first original painting should be a 'flight-from-*self*' is misleading. It is, after all, the 'Clark Gable' self, the self which is besieged by the decadent London art scene outlined above, that Stamp's creation is fleeing from. The intuitive act emerges from the 'open space' of his masculine self, where his creativity resides. Thus, only when the man-of-action Stamp can lay aside the 'bohemian economy' that shapes his reality can he create a true work of art. In this manner, the flight from self can be understood as a flight from self-doubt and self-questioning. This as the only passage in the novel in which Stamp's masculine self is integral, and this freedom is irrevocably tied to the creative process.

The moment of celebratory exhilaration at the picture's completion never arises, however. The narrator comments that "it was worth nothing...no one would give anything for a picture of that sort today unless it had a Name attached to it" (89). In contradistinction to the originality of the work, the narrator makes clear that the view of art has shifted to one of celebrity, whereby the significance of the name of the painter outweighs the singularity of the work produced. Individual talent is thereby rendered meaningless and secondary to the economic concerns. The worth of the painting is equated to the financial gain that can be had upon selling it. Still, the successful completion of the painting provides a momentary stall to the malaise Victor senses. While it "altered nothing", it is sufficient to ensure that "he was *not* going to put his head in the gas-oven" (ibid). The painting sequence thereby marks the only moment where Victor's masculine self is integral and integrated in an artistic production. The structural opposite of this sequence is found in the forgery scene.

#### The Corruption of the Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction

Being in financial dire straits, Stamp reluctantly agrees to take on work in a factory engaged with the production of forgeries. The art critic and communist propagandist Peter Wallace stands at the centre of the corruptive influences that bring Victor to this point. Wallace is portrayed as a manipulator and corrupter, whose paradigmatic view of art quenches Victor's creative spirit (see Chapter 3).

In the forgery factory, Victor is assigned to produce a counterfeit self-portrait of Van Gogh. The irony that a man whose self is being corrupted should do a self-portrait of another man, is apparent. Physically unlike Van Gogh, Stamp wears a costume to make for a greater likeness. In the version of the Van Gogh legend that the narrator distils, the artist, as his artistic prowess was waning, cut off his ear in jealousy over the talents of

his friend and painter-rival Paul Gauguin (251). The narrative ties the missing ear explicitly to Stamp, a “wounded hero” (252) of the art world, where “the romance of the missing ear [played] its lucrative part” (ibid). The missing ear in the self-portrait is a physical representation of the corruption of self that Stamp is undergoing. The physical maiming of Van Gogh is equated to the maiming of self-identity on Stamp’s part. In a heated argument with Abershaw, the businessman who got Victor the job, Stamp comments on this structural link explicitly, stating that “it’s about as intelligent to cut off one’s ears...as to fake pictures for a living” (260). As the forgery sequence continues, this link is intensified through transference. In costume, Victor moves across the room, but the narrator states that “Van Gogh...got up from his workstool” (255). The simultaneous action of Stamp being Stamp and Van Gogh is displayed in the following passage: “Victor Stamp sat down, and took out of Van Gogh’s pocket a packet of cigarettes” (256). The satiric mode in which this duality is recounted obfuscates the struggle of self-identity that this passage marks. The maimed mirror image of Van Gogh is simultaneously recognised and disavowed by Stamp. This reflects the complexity of the corruption of self that Victor is undergoing. On the one hand, he has borrowed off of Van Gogh in his own work (76), and in this sense the act of faking is just the final outcome of an already failed artistic career. On the other hand, the nature of faking a self-portrait by extension leads to the complete surrender of self, as Victor’s mirror image is no longer his own.

Throughout the scene, Victor is portrayed as rebellious and attempting to break away from his noose. Early on, the manager of the factory, Freddie Salmon, worries that Stamp may be “a dud” (253). The military term *dud* alludes to the fact that, to Salmon, Stamp truly seems to be on the brink of explosion at any minute. Moreover, Salmon questions if Stamp is “artist enough” (254) to complete the Van Gogh forgery, claiming

that the work demands a man of Stamp's physicality and power, but that he by that very nature is hard to be trusted.

Against Stamp's impressive physique, Salmon is cast as its countertype. The narrator comments that Salmon "had a really enormous false bottom to his face. The face proper obviously terminated a short distance below the line of the lower lip: and what was palpably a bogus jaw had been superadded" (256). Salmon's 'bogus jaw' represents both the falsity of his occupation and character. Moreover, Salmon is cast as a shadow, as Margot would have it. His face is flesh coloured "as if violently pretending to be flesh and blood at all costs" (259). The dichotomy between the natural and organic (Victor) and the inorganic and manipulative (Salmon) is evident here as well. Furthermore, the climax of Victor's rebellion is presented in organic imagery. Victor is consistently out of place in the forgery factory, as he "could not be digested into his select universe, marked off by these four walls, and to which each of the others...belonged – as much Tristy as Freddie, as much Abershaw as Wohl" (262). Each in their own way, these four represent elements of modern society that Victor's masculine identity is at odds with. Tristy is caught up in the paradigm of Marxism to the extent that he believes that Van Gogh was a proto-Marxist who cared nothing for property (261). Freddie Salmon, though he knows nothing about art, has a sharp nose for business (262). The same goes for Abershaw, who runs the entire operation. Wohl is portrayed merely as a perfectly reliable machine (254), and has no notion of self left to him (see Chapter 3). Thus, Stamp is caught in a world where communism, industry, business and "the Jews" are in bed together.

Against these forces, Stamp's rebellion is cast in animalistic imagery:

this young giant crouched...for these broad and hostile shoulders belonged to Nature, with her big impulsive responses, with her violent freedom, with her animal directness: unconservative, illogical and true to her *elemental self*. He subscribed therefore to a larger scheme: the smaller, watertight, the theoretic, the planning of man's logic, he repudiated. Like a camel, he must remain a creature of the wild, and never, like a horse, wholly submit to discipline. (262)

Behind the comic image of Victor as a camel lurks a more serious implication. Against the inorganic and dehumanised factory and its work force, Stamp is depicted as true to an "elemental self", which is tied to impulse and intuition. This is done with a view to "self-preservation" (263). Tristy ironically comments that "[Stamp's] is the religion of will" (272). Taken together, these elements mark a pattern whereby Victor's masculinity is cast as a synthesis of mythic beauty and biological supremacy. By contrast, his surroundings come across as stale, lifeless and parasitical. Victor is portrayed as a force of Nature, and it is his biological instinct rather than his intellect that grants him this rebellion. The idea that Stamp embraces a religion of will is vital in this context also, as it, along with the organic imagery, bears close resemblance to the mythologizing aesthetization of the male in fascist images of masculinity.

In the forgery episode, the mass production of counterfeit art is related to the corruption of the art form. The operations at work here are better understood when linking them to their intellectual antithesis. In "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1929), Walter Benjamin outlines how new methods of production, most prominently photography, have changed the concept of originality in the artistic realm. Tying the idea of the singularity of the artwork to the role of tradition, Benjamin argues that the process of reproduction has an emancipatory effect on art (17). Moreover, he



claims that the idea of art for art's sake a "negative theology" of "pure art" (18).

Benjamin proposes a politicization of art, whereby its emancipation from tradition by extension frees art from the confines of the bourgeoisie. In this manner, art is imbued with a political function as a representation of class consciousness in the Marxian scheme. Against this, Benjamin contends that a fascist theory of art represents a conservation of class difference, marked by an aestheticization of politics, wilful submission and an aesthetic of war (43).

In discussing artistic property, three major positions are focalized in the factory sequence. Tristy, from his communist standpoint, maintains that property is a bourgeois concept which confines art and proposes that ownership is irrelevant (*Revenge for Love* 261); Salmon has a "keener sense of property" (ibid), but focuses only on capitalist gain, knowing and caring nothing for art itself. Stamp, "[does] not share...these unorthodox views of property...the work of his hand, even left-handed work, was a property belonging inalienably to Stamp" (262), thus maintaining an individualistic standpoint. Even his "left-handed work", such as the forgery of Van Gogh, he considers to be his own. Ownership is tied to the act of creation itself. In contrast to this, Tristy's position (and by extension Benjamin's) is satirised and humiliated. The idea that "Rembrandt does not belong to Rembrandt, but to mankind" (261) is countered and repudiated by Stamp's assertion that all work created by an artist is inalienably his own. In this way, the forgery scene is also an exploration of and comment on the consequences for art's mechanical reproduction. Where Benjamin sees this shift as an emancipation from tradition, the novel structurally holds it to be art's supreme corruption. Moreover, the figure of Stamp is mythologized as the individual strong will that breaks through the barricades, eventually stamping on and destroying his "self"-portrait (266). The

'stamping out' of reproduction can be understood as a metaphorical act of war against communist class erosion and capitalist moneymaking. In this manner, Stamp's rebellion is aesthetized through the image of the lone strong-man in battle with his corruptors.

The forgery factory sequence is thus the enactment of a battle for the individual masculine self, whereby the self-determination of artistic enterprise becomes synonymous with individual free will as a whole. The strong-man Stamp attempts to stand against the three-fold corruption of capitalist business, communism and the figure of the Jew (see Chapter 3). The artist is thereby cast as the last bastion of masculine power, and this role is linked to creativity and individuality. It would be an oversimplification, however, to argue that the outcome of the sequence is a victory for Victor. The 'stamping' of the Van Gogh portrait does not only mark the rejection of forgery, but also of artistic creativity in general. The Van Gogh portrait functions as the mirror image both of the self and of the other. Through its destruction, then, Stamp is not only rejecting the life of a forger but of an artist as a whole. The corruptive influence of the forgery scene is thereby irreversible, even as it ends in seeming victory for the individual over the 'powers that be'.

### The Renunciation of Self

In the denouement of the novel, Victor and Margot act as gun-runners on the French-Spanish border, assigned to smuggle weapons into Spain for communist agitators. Despite Margot's warnings that they are in danger, Victor is ignorant of the dire straits that they are in, reassuring Margot that there is no danger he "can see" (293). The loss of in-sight is a reflection of Victor's lost self. As at the onset of the novel, Victor does not care about the conflict at hand: "he [feels] no interest in things Spanish" (315) and, by extension, no interest in "one of the bitterest class-wars in the West" (ibid). This

carelessness is now mixed with hubris. Through Margot, the narrator here pokes fun at the feeling of invulnerability of Stamp and the masculinity he reflects. Margot is prepared to “reveal to *any* handsome man whatever how fatal it was to regard his attractive presence as a charm against the shaft that flies by night...” (356). The fatalistic element in this scene is furthermore reflected in the fact that Percy Hardcaster muses that Victor, after another fearful outburst from Margot, is now sure to complete the mission at hand, as it is “for nothing” (333). The renunciation of self is now complete: “I’m *nobody*” (358), Victor calls out to Margot in the desperate escape sequence in the car carrying the guns. David Ayers argues that throughout this entire sequence, Victor and Margot are no longer true selves, but merely Hollywood stock types cast in roles outside their own making (182). Moreover, he argues that they are depicted as helpless on two levels: in terms of plot, they are reduced to pawns in the conspiracy of business and communism to run guns to Spain; in terms of action, they are confined by the powers of the automobile that carries them. In both cases, they are devoid of agency and unable to act (*ibid*).

The car takes on a symbolic significance in this sequence. “This monster” (335), is attributed with anthropomorphic elements. It is a “muscular machine”, “pounding” (354) beneath Margot. The car here becomes a stand in for the entire conspiracy of business and communism that Victor and Margot fall victim to. This conspiracy revolves around the juncture of business “which is the political expression of technology”, and communism, “which is the logical creed of humanity levelled by technology” (Ayers 182). In this way, the car is the “agent of technology that turns men into machines” (*ibid*). It also reflects the complete surrender of self that Stamp has undergone. Margot comments that “Victor and this brute [the car] were in collusion, he had deceived her for

its sake! She disliked its psychological habits even more than its physiological habits...” (354). The car reflects the change of Victor to the “angry man”, who had been turned back to the “original Stamp...this stranger called Stamp was not [Margot’s] Victor now...it was a strange burly fellow who was rather sulkily detached...she avoided contact with this foreign Stamp” (353). Even as he emerges from this mood, Margot comments that Victor was “not quite himself...but a passable imitation” (355). The idea of an ‘original Stamp’ in this sense seems oxymoronic. Victor’s identity is no longer his own, he literally has been stamped down by the collusion of business and communism, and, as symbolized through the car, he has become a pawn to them; the ultimate expression of the cannon-fodder. The rejection of self is also reflected physically: Stamp’s Clark Gable smile has become “wistful and reproachful” (319), while his voice is “lifeless and dull” (365) as well as “dead and discouraged” (373).

The scene reaches its climax when two Civil Guards attempt to block the road. Victor does not, in fact cannot, stop the car, as Margot notes: “there was no Victor there to stop...it was this machine – *it would not stop*” (361). Thus, the final scenes of the novel represent the complete loss of self to the strong man. It is not surprising then, that the final revelation proves to be that the false-bottom of the car contains bricks rather than guns. Victor has been played to risk his life over a structural nothing. These “good honest bricks” (373) could, like the car, be understood as a symbol of the collusion of business and communism. Presumably red, the bricks symbolize the collusion between business and communism by tying the ‘red brick’ of the industrial revolution to the colour of communist rebellion and the Soviet Union. Thus, the bricks mark the final levelling of Stamp, equating him to the ‘nothing’ he has risked his life for. Moreover, Stamp’s corruption was foreshadowed by his painting a “red monochrome” (see above).

Thus, even Stamp's moment of originality is revealed to be tainted and commodified. The scene ends with the revelation to Percy that both Victor and Margot have died, presumably from falling off a precipice.

#### The Strong Man Corrupted – the Fatalism of Victor Stamp

In the final analysis then, Stamp's name reflects the negotiations that his character undergoes. Victor, the he-man, alpha-male and force of Nature, is juxtaposed to Stamp, which refers to the commodification of his individuality. The stamp becomes both an ironic demarcation of originality (as a stamp is normally used to guarantee authenticity) and refers to the attempts at mindless standardization around which Victor's conflict of self revolves. Name allegory is employed to underscore this conflict. The only mark the strong man Stamp can make is a destructive one, a stamping first of himself as an artist and finally, the passive act of being stamped to death by the conspiracy that erodes his masculine self.

The casting of Stamp's masculinity in organic and mythological terms holds political implications as well. While the type of nationalism conveyed by Alvaro is rejected as primitive and simplistic, the drawing together of individualism, self-expression and masculinity gains nationalistic impulses through the simile of Stamp as Nazi Germany (Ayers 175). In correlating the codex of the strong man with a strong nation, the Lewisian narrator casts Stamp, and by extension Nazi Germany, as victim of a threefold conspiracy of business, communism and the corruptive figure of the Jew (see Chapter 3). In the Lewisian text, there is no place for the strong man within the confines of a society that is depicted as feminized and over-run by paradigmatic political propaganda. There is no escape then, for the strong male persona, other than a fatalistic death, and even that is not of his own making.

### **The Dismembered Masculinity of Jacob “Jake” Barnes**

*The Sun Also Rises* engages with the exploration of an array of masculine roles and codes, questioning the implied correlation between masculinity and sexual agency, expounding on homosocial camaraderie and contrasting this to homosexuals and feminized others. At the centre of this exploration stands protagonist and narrator Jacob “Jake” Barnes, who having suffered an injury in the Great War is no longer sexually potent. The characterisation of Jake Barnes has been the subject of considerable academic debate. More often than not, analyses of Barnes have tended to focus on the significance of Barnes’s impotence and what this is representative of. Where earlier readings saw Jake’s war injury primarily as a consequence of the devastation of World War One, reflecting “cultural dislocation and psychological malaise” (Fjellestad 1997, 89), later scholars have paid more heed to gender norms by interpreting the loss of a functioning penis as the symbolic reflection of a lost sense of masculine agency and patriarchal superiority. Recent work in gender studies and literature has brought across the complexity of gender role exploration in the text more fully, avoiding the dichotomy of male/female altogether. Literary critic Ira Elliott (1995), following Judith Butler’s approach to gender performativity, reads the masculine code presented by Barnes as a series of masculine significations, whereby Jake’s seeming disapproval of homosexuality is linked to the concept of gender crossing (80). In a similar vein, Danuta Fjellestad reads the novel as “an exposure and critique of the social construction of compulsory heterosexuality” (92). For Todd Onderdonk, the novel engages with a discussion of “the construct of a feminizing modernity against which the male patriarch must redefine himself” (62), arguing that the narrator Barnes overcomes this sense of disempowerment by being attributed with a “superior epistemological profile” (70). From the perspective of

disability studies, Dana Fore (2007) links Jake's impotence to the growing eugenicist discourse in the 1920s, arguing that fears of degeneration and being cast as an outsider never allow Barnes to achieve psychological stability and coming to terms with what has happened to him (74-76).

This selective overview shows the breadth and diversity of interpretation that *The Sun Also Rises* invites to, not least, I would argue, because of the style of omission and suggestion outlined in Chapter 1. A general tendency that unites much recent Hemingway scholarship, however, seems to be the attempt to revise the thesis of Hemingway as a male-centred, chauvinistic, machismo writer, prone to homophobia and anti-Semitism. While moving away from the idea of viewing gender roles in the novel simply in terms of a dichotomy certainly is commendable and necessary, these analyses tend to attribute Hemingway with a cause which is much more their own: the idea of a gender-role conscious, subversive culture-critic who exposes gender and racial inequalities. Without a doubt, *The Sun Also Rises* does engage with these questions, but the conclusions drawn and condemnations made by Barnes strike me as more reactionary and conservative than what recent scholarship suggests. The following analysis aims to highlight how closely Barnes's struggle is tied to a 'heteronormative imperative' and how the reassertion of masculine agency is reflected through dichotomies and hierarchies of gender norms.

### Stoicism, Silence, Suffering

The main dynamic of the narrative in *The Sun Also Rises* is Jake Barnes's struggle to come to terms with the fact that he, due to his war injury, cannot attain what he desires most, namely Brett Ashley. It is Jake's struggle to retain and redevelop a masculine identity,

one that is not irrevocably linked to sexual potency, which forms the central conflict of the plot. This conflict is reflected in the structure of the novel, which is divided into three books, each book taking on a new locale and set of ideals. Book I deals with the expatriate community in Paris, and focuses on the Parisian nightlife scene. Here, Barnes comes across as disillusioned, jaded and cynical, where the recurrent meetings with Brett lead to increasing despair and self-loathing. The decadent scene of Paris is contrasted in Book II, first through the Irati River fishing trip and secondly through the fiesta at Pamplona. In the fiesta sequence, Barnes takes on the role of pimp in bringing together Romero and Brett, corrupting the code of conduct that Barnes outwardly embraces. The novel here reaches its narrative climax as tensions rise between Cohn, Barnes, Brett and Mike Campbell, also leading to the group's breaking apart. Finally, in Book III, Barnes goes off on his own to San Sebastian, only to be called back to Madrid by Brett, who calls for his help after leaving Romero. Here, Barnes rejects Brett and discovers a new found equilibrium which is not based on the supposition that Brett is the antithesis to nihilism and despair, as seen in Book I.

Chapter 3 of the novel serves as the first exposé of Parisian nightlife and offers the ideal starting point for exploring the masculine code of conduct that Jake Barnes embraces. After having picked up a prostitute at random, Barnes takes her along to the dancing club the *bal musette*, where he encounters Brett for the first time in the plot. Barnes states that he invites the prostitute Georgette along because of "a vague sentimental idea that it would be nice to eat with someone" (14). Jake refuses her first advances, stating simply that he is sick, to which Georgette responds that "everybody's sick" (13). Barnes expounds on his condition that he was "hurt in the war" (14). The cynicism of this sequence is extrapolated when Barnes comments on their exchange,



starting that “we would probably have gotten on and discussed the war and agreed that it was in reality a calamity for civilization, and perhaps would have been better avoided. I was bored enough” (ibid). The key term here is boredom: Barnes comes across as utterly distanced and stoic about his condition and the war that caused it. Georgette’s claim that everybody is sick reflects the totality of the situation, but no emotion is conveyed in either case.

This scene is indicative of how Barnes relates to the world around him. On the one hand, it reflects the camaraderie of those who suffered in the war, as everyone is in the same boat. Thus, private experiences can be exchanged in a seemingly meaningless manner. The exchange with Georgette also relates to Barnes’s sexual nullification. The “vague sentimental idea” of dining with a prostitute is countered by the claim that Barnes “had forgotten how dull it could be” (14). The point of contrast is that due to Barnes’s condition, the dull dialogue does not, as it otherwise might, serve as foreplay to sexual exchange, but is in and of itself “as good as it gets”. Thus, the notion of dining with a prostitute is sentimentalized for Barnes because it reminds him of his lost sexual agency and potency. In the novel, the notion of a failed exchange, of giving something without getting anything in return, is a recurrent trope, and reflects both the disillusionment of the ‘lost generation’ and the feeling of loss of masculine agency that is reflected in Barnes’s condition.

In his first dialogue with Brett, Barnes comments on her promiscuous nature, stating, “I suppose you like to add [men] up”, to which Brett responds, “what if I do?” and Barnes maintains that it means “nothing” (19). As with the boredom discussion above, the “nothing” here is contextually based. Given the nature of the situation that Barnes and his group find themselves in, notions of sexual morality mean as little as does the

war itself. In their ensuing scenes, however, it is evident that this 'nothing' is little more than a lie. While Brett maintains that she loves Barnes, and "turn[s] all to jelly" when Barnes touches her, she claims that she cannot "stand it" (22). When Barnes suggests that he and Brett had better stay away from one another, Brett retorts, "I have to see you. It isn't all that, you know", to which Barnes replies "No, but it always gets to be" (23). The gist of 'it' here is that for Brett, a sexual component is a prerequisite for a romantic relationship.

The use of 'it' as a shorthand both for Barnes's impotence and the entirety of his struggle to come to terms with his role is a recurring motif in the novel and highlights the phases that Barnes goes through in his struggle for identity. This is structurally reflected in the fact that each book contains one central 'it'-sequence.<sup>2</sup> The use of 'it' is the best example of how the Hemingwayesque style of omission functions in the novel (Onderdonk 82). Barnes conveys that he has approached his injury in a number of ways: "I had probably considered it from most various angles, including the one that certain injuries and imperfections are a subject of merriment while remaining quite serious for the person possessing them" (23). The consideration that his injury is funny in some way takes on a different significance when it is juxtaposed to the war that caused it. After having left Brett with a new acquaintance, Count Mippipopolous, Barnes reflects on the evening in private. "Of all the ways to be wounded", he laments: "I suppose it was funny" (26). This comment is immediately countered by the observation that "it was a rotten way to be wounded and flying on a joke front like the Italian" (27). The transference from the injury itself being funny to the 'joke front' indicates the convergence of the war as cause and impotence as consequence. Thus, Barnes ties his loss of potency directly to a war

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<sup>2</sup> I am indebted to Todd Onderdonk (2007) for pointing out the centrality of these sequences.

that is rendered meaningless. The concept of an exchange of values recurs here: Barnes has sacrificed his sexual potency for a war that is rendered a joke, or by extension, a 'nothing'. However, it is Brett who is blamed for this realization as Barnes reflects: "I [probably] never would have had any trouble if I hadn't run into Brett..."(27).

Structurally, it is Brett who stands in opposition to the war, as she is the 'something' that Barnes can no longer attain, due to a sacrifice over 'nothing'. This is the central conflict of Barnes's identity, expounded upon through a series of 'its':

I lay awake thinking and my mind jumping around. Then I couldn't keep away from it, and I started to think about Brett and all the rest of it went away. I was thinking about Brett and my mind stopped jumping around and started to go in sort of smooth waves. Then all of a sudden I started to cry. Then after a while it was better...and then I went to sleep. (27)

The three 'its' in this passage each represent different levels of Barnes's identity struggle. First is the notion of attempting to repress the conflict itself, by keeping away from it. Suppression comes across as the primary masculine form of coping with the situation. When Barnes thinks about Brett, 'the rest of it', which here indicates the disillusionment and loss of self outlined above, goes away, making Brett the structural antithesis to the 'nothing' that permeates the novel's failed-exchange metaphor. Moreover, thinking about Brett is likened to 'smooth waves'. The use of nature imagery and water invokes sexual connotations and is employed by the narrator to form a structural antithesis to the decadent scene of Paris. The final 'it' reflects the unassailability of Brett, which brings about the first moment of emotional display for Barnes in the novel. Crying makes the sense of loss bearable, and reflects the only real emotion that is triggered by this reflection. Thus, the three 'its' in this passage can be

said to reflect three major aspects of the conflict of Barnes's masculine identity: repression and silence; stoicism and disillusionment; and private emotion and suffering.

In considering the Hemingwayesque code of masculine conduct, the distinction between the public and private spheres is vital when it comes to the sharing of emotion. Public displays of emotion and love, such as Cohn's numerous advances on Brett, are rendered effeminate and unmanly (see Chapter 3), while by contrast the ability to show emotion in a private setting is portrayed as masculine and reflects a superior understanding on behalf of the narrator. Thus, the question of acting in a masculine manner is not primarily tied to a set of emotions or feelings that one can or cannot have, but rather to acting appropriately and revealing them in the correct place and time.

In Book II, another series of 'its' outlines the development in Barnes's conflict of identity. Here, the deliberations take on an epistemological character. During the fiesta, Barnes reflects on this love for Brett, stating that:

I had not been thinking about her side of it. I had been getting something for nothing. That only delayed the presentation of the bill... I thought I had paid for everything... No idea of retribution or punishment. Just exchange of values. You give up something and get something else... I did not care what it was all about.

All I wanted to know was how to live in it. (129)

The 'its' in this passage tie together the metaphorical 'exchange of values' motif of societal change and decadence with Barnes's personal struggle. Barnes now explores Brett's side of 'it', his impotence, and concludes that he has been getting 'something', Brett's love and care, for 'nothing', which is the void of his sexual nullification. Barnes here ties his impotence to nothing, to the 'rest of it' from the passage above, while Brett still holds the antithetical position as 'something'. However, this role is complicated by

Barnes's claim that Brett is yet to 'present the bill', which can be read as a foreshadowing of the manner in which Brett convinces Barnes to act as pimp between her and Romero.

The key word in this passage is 'bill', as it reflects the 'exchange of values' metaphor, which is a central trope in the novel. The 'exchange of values' metaphor encompasses the idea that the First World War and its consequences have displaced the idea of reciprocity, of simple exchange, or, in Barnes's words, of giving up something for something else. Bill Gordon explicitly states this to Barnes, in a facetious manner. As they are walking past a taxidermist's, Bill tries to convince Barnes to buy a stuffed dog, saying that it would be a "simple exchange of values. You give them money, they give you a stuffed dog" (64). The stuffed dog here marks another 'nothing', an empty shell. It is a reference to Barnes's impotence, as he sees himself as an empty shell of a man. What Barnes laments, through this metaphor, is the social change whereby things no longer are what they appear to be. Whether it is a question of gender roles or financial exchange, the conditions and expectations have shifted for Barnes. Here, his conflict takes on the dimension of survival.

The epistemological pursuit of what 'it is all about', which is a query into the causes of these changes, stands seconded to the question of 'living with it', of coming to terms with the world as it has become. This consideration complicates the role of the narrator in the novel. As the novel is written in hindsight, the narrator may of course take liberties in highlighting, omitting or contrasting certain parts of the story. This raises the question, however, of how to come to terms with these two levels of temporality: that of narrative and that of plot. As outlined in Chapter 2, Barnes's narrative voice takes on a guiding and normative role from page one, but in the plot the

narrator is challenged by multiple crises of identity. The oscillation between epistemological superiority at the level of narrative and vulnerability at the level of plot underscores the normative and formative aspect of the novel. Barnes invites the reader to take part in this journey of maturation and masculine redefinition, of getting the (implied masculine) reader back to being able to live with 'it' also. This oscillation between Barnes as a character in the plot and Barnes as the all-knowing narrative voice adds a normative imperative to the novel, which must be kept in mind when considering the outcome of Barnes's conflict and in what way this is presented as a universal ideal.

At the end of the novel, another repetition of 'its' serves a different purpose; Barnes's ultimate realization that he cannot hope to find a coherent masculine identity together with Brett Ashley, thereby rejecting her. After sending a telegram to Madrid, promising Brett to come to her rescue as soon as he can, Barnes comments:

That seemed to handle it. That was it. Send a girl off with one man. Introduce her to another to go off with him. Now go and bring her back. And sign the wire with love. That was it all right. I went to lunch. (210)

The notion of 'handling it' is linked to the role of pimp that Barnes has taken on at the fiesta. By bringing Romero and Brett together, Barnes has become her 'pimp', but the role usually connected to misogynistic power is here reversed. The second 'it' marks finality, and indicates that Barnes now rejects the role he has had towards Brett throughout the novel. The remainder of the passage reads like a rationalisation of this rejection, whereby Barnes for the first time sums up what his and Brett's relationship really boils down to. The final 'it', suffixed by 'all right', intensifies the finality of this deliberation, while the stoic comment that Barnes is going to lunch reflects the degree of emotional detachment he has gained by rejecting Brett.

The juxtaposition of these three scenes reveals the manner in which Barnes comes to terms with, tackles and finally resolves his conflict of identity. Moreover, the fact that all these significant passages revolve around 'it' reveals how closely the narrator's masculine self-image is tied to the idea of a masculine style as outlined in Chapter 1. Barnes's most personal deliberations and emotions are articulated through omission, and this use of 'it' "guarantees Jake's dignity by remaining submerged" (Onderdonk 79). Furthermore, the three 'it' scenes can be understood as the introduction to, complication of and resolution to Barnes's conflict of identity, which is structurally mirrored by the three books into which the novel is divided.

"Che mala fortuna" – The Nullification of Sexual Agency: Barnes as Negotiator, Steer and Pimp

In the context of masculine agency and the consequences of a felt feminization, it is important to consider the role that Barnes is attributed in social situations. In this context, the recurrent theme is the manner in which Barnes's lack of sexual agency is interpreted or displayed as a form of neutrality. Barnes acts as a negotiator and liaison in several conflicts in the novel. In the fiesta sequence, he furthermore takes on the role as pimp for Brett and Romero, and his neutrality is displayed through the image of the steer.

From early on in the novel, Barnes is cast into the role of the negotiator. When Francis and Cohn are having a fight, Francis takes Barnes aside and pours out her heart to him (40-42). Barnes takes on the role of sensitive confidant, repeating the question "what's the matter?" several times and asking if there is anything he can do (43). Jake also repeats the phrase "such rotten luck" (42) several times. Given the distanced and critical tone in which Barnes has depicted Cohn at the start of the novel, the question

arises whether this kind of humouring is not best understood as another antidote for boredom. While the tone and style of the exchange certainly validates this point, I would argue that the central issue here is to evaluate the fact that Barnes, disregarding his reaction, is in fact cast in the role of negotiator. In another argument, this one between Cohn and Bill Gordon, Barnes is asked to be the book-keeper of a meaningless bet about the arrival of Mike and Brett (83). Here again, Barnes takes on the role of liaison, mediating between the sides with comments such as “it’s a sure thing they’ll come...just maybe not tonight” and finally ending the argument by stating “that’s enough” (ibid). On the one hand, Barnes’s function in exchange marks nothing more than bringing an uncomfortable conflict to an end. Seen in the context of Barnes’s role at the fiesta, however, it takes on greater significance.

In the fiesta sequence, Barnes performs as a negotiator or liaison in three ways: firstly, as the keeper of peace in a group which is growing increasingly hostile to Robert Cohn; second, in keeping the worlds of Romero and the expatriates separate; and finally, through Brett’s request of Barnes to help bring her and Romero together. Each in their own way, these performances of neutrality seem to stand in contrast to what is expressed as Barnes’s self-interest as well as with each other. After Brett has revealed her short-lived affair with Cohn, Barnes has become violently jealous and vengeful towards him, yet he accepts Mike’s charge to talk to Cohn in order to tell him how to behave (125). Moreover, when tensions rise between Mike and Cohn, Barnes keeps Mike from assaulting Cohn and refuses to acknowledge that Mike is right about Cohn, even as he has passed the same judgement in private (155). One of the major facets of the sympathy Barnes still feels towards Cohn is their mutual infatuation with Brett. Barnes claims that he would have been “as big an ass as Cohn” (158) if put in the same situation.



Later in the same dialogue, however, he refutes any sympathy for Cohn, stating “I’m not sorry for him. I hate him, myself” (ibid). This dynamic of recognition and disavowal is explored further in Chapter 3. What is relevant here is that Barnes again takes on the neutral role.

Montoya, who respects Barnes for being an aficionado, asks him for help in how to deal with Romero, hinting at the worry that the commotion of the fiesta and specifically Brett’s influence on him will have a corrupting effect on the bullfighter (150). Barnes implicitly agrees to keep these worlds separate, being the one person at the fiesta with insight into both of them. However, as he attempts to comfort Brett who is growing increasingly miserable out of tension over Cohn and Mike’s behaviour, along with her infatuation with Romero, he agrees to help her meet him, becoming her pimp, in Cohn’s words (165). Barnes thus refutes his promise to Montoya, prioritising his love and care for Brett over what he knows would be right. Even though he pleads with her not to, saying “don’t do it”, “you ought to stop it” and “you oughtn’t do it” (159), Barnes finally bows to Brett’s wish, simply asking “what do you want me to do?” (160). As in the earlier scenes with the Count, Barnes becomes a completely passive figure in relation to Brett. One way of reading this is that Brett has the sexual agency in their relationship, relegating Barnes to a passive, docile, and traditionally feminine role.

In terms of symbolism, this is linked to the image of the steer. At the first bullfight of the fiesta, Barnes introduces the role of the steer, saying that they “have steers in the corral to receive [the bulls] and keep them from fighting...and the steers run around like old maids trying to quite them down” (116). Steers are neutered, and in this case likened to old maids and a feminine sensibility. Symbolically the role of the steer in the bullfight mirrors Barnes’s role at the fiesta. This link is explicitly stated in the text when Barnes

likens the bull's horns to the gloves of a boxer (121), and Bill refers to Barnes as "Old Jake, the human punching-bag" (173) after he is knocked down by Cohn. While clearly meant as an endearing term here, the link between 'old maids' and 'old Jake' is semantically significant and further underlines the transference of the steer-role to Jake. The image of the steer also holds implications about the transference of impotence from Barnes to Cohn (see Chapter 3). The image of Jake as the 'human punching bag' is the epitome of how Barnes is relegated to the role of negotiator in the narrative, especially in times of conflict. Furthermore, the image of the neutered steer as old maid intensifies the correlation between this feminized role and his injury. It is primarily the nullification of Barnes's sexual agency that casts him into this passive role. This role is complicated, however, when considering the function that Barnes has as the narrator of the plot. Firstly, Barnes's passivity may be understood as a narrative tool to increase the notion of objectivity and critical distance he aims to convey. Moreover, given the profile of epistemological superiority that Barnes establishes, one could argue that he is not required to take an active masculine role in the driving the plot forward, as he establishes his masculine agency in the very act of understanding the implications that the characters around him are blind to. Finally, Barnes's passivity raises the question of how to understand the role of Brett Ashley. It is clear from the scenes outlined above that she takes on the active (masculine) role in her relationship to Barnes, while he is submissive and servile. Therefore, it is vital to understand the characterisation of Brett in relation to the question of feminization to gain a fuller understanding of how Barnes breaks away from this dynamic.

### The Challenge of Brett Ashley and the Rejection of Female Sexual Agency

It is tempting to view Brett as a representation of the modern woman, as subversive of traditional gender norms, as sexually liberated and financially independent. By extension, Brett could be understood as a focal point through which Hemingway exemplifies the feminizing effect Brett's position has on masculine agency. Brett's independence and Jake's impotence are two consequences of the same event, the First World War, but with contrastive outcomes, as for Brett it results in a form of emancipation, while Barnes's masculinity is dismembered physically and socially. While such an analysis of the dynamics at hand in *The Sun Also Rises* would not be altogether false, a number of vital differentiations and delimitations must be made.

In terms of physical appearance, Barnes describes Brett as "damned good-looking", with "curves like the hull of a racing yacht" (19). Leaving aside the misogynist aspect of linking Brett's physical appearance to a yacht, and by extension to a possession, what is key here is the fact that "her hair was brushed back like a boy's" (ibid), that she continually wears a man's hat (22) and that she refers to herself as a "chap" (18). Brett does not conform to a traditional code of dress. She is also frequently portrayed out-drinking her male companions. Moreover, her multiple associations with men, including Mike, the Count, Robert Cohn and Pedro Romero, as well as her two marriages, reflect her sexual liberation. In these trysts and relationships, Brett is consistently the active force; the seducer and the decision-maker, who chooses and rejects her sexual partners. She also rejects any attempts at 'reform', as evidenced through Cohn and Romero, who share the preoccupation of making Brett more 'womanly', by having her hair grow out and making her a wife. Following this strain of

thought, it is clear that the most vital aspect of Brett's characterisation in this context is her consistent sexual agency.

In response to this, Mike Campbell attempts to attribute redemptive feminine traits to Brett. Mike comments on Brett that she is "rather cut up. But she loves looking after people" (176). The idea of nurture as a feminine trait, especially tied to maternity, follows a traditional gender pattern. For Mike, this seems to be a way of justifying Brett's escapades with other men. The implied immorality of Brett's actions is also reflected in her own terms. Brett considers Barnes's condition as her own personal punishment, as she says "when I think of the hell that I've put chaps through. I'm paying for it now" (ibid). The same notion is conveyed in the final scenes of the novel, where Brett reflects on wanting to change, stating that she left Romero because "I'm not going to be one of these bitches that ruins children" (213).

The relationship between Brett and Barnes marks a gender role reversal where Brett inhabits the active role, reminiscent of the role that Barnes would hold in the group were it not for his impotence. It is this shift in sexual agency that leads Barnes into his crisis, and each of the three "it" sequences outlined above saw Brett as their catalyst. Each time Brett engages in a new implied sexual relationship (the Count, Cohn, Romero), this sets off a new moment in Barnes struggle, as each of these three partners is juxtaposed to a new symbol of his impotence (Georgette, the steer, the corrupted aficionado). In this light, the much-quoted final dialogue between Barnes and Brett holds significant implications. As in their first dialogue scene, Barnes and Brett are in a taxi, moving from one place to another. Brett repeats similar sentiments as in the first scene, saying that "we could have had such a damned good time together", to which Barnes's famous last words are "yes", followed by "isn't it pretty to think so" (216). Two words

stand out in this exchange and deserve greater attention. Recall that Barnes first refers to Brett as “damned good-looking” (19), while Brett considers the inability to consummate their relationship to be “hell on earth” (24) and Barnes, in anger, repeats the phrase “to hell with you, Brett” (24). The repeated use of “damned” and “hell” adds an apocalyptic vision to Barnes and Brett’s relationship. The implications of this link become clearer and more significant when considering that Barnes refers to himself as being Catholic (79) and regrets not living a more pious life (85), whereas Brett claims that she “gets nervy” (181) around churches and Barnes notes that it would be impossible for Brett to attend a confession because “it would be in a language that she did not know” (131). The reference here is to a foreign tongue, but not one that the narrator deems Brett can learn. The antithetical nature of Brett and Barnes’s relationship extends to morality and religion. Thus, when Brett states that a “damned good time” would be had, for Barnes it is damnation that stands out.

This antipathy and the underlying trope of Brett’s immorality is underscored by linking her to the Circe myth. Mike comments that Cohn refers to Brett as Circe, because “he claims she turns men into swine” (125). Milton A. Cohen (1985) has analysed this analogy at length and convincingly argues that the Circe myth, with its “theme of sexual domination and debasement suffuses every detail of the [novel], both literally and symbolically” (294). In his reading, Brett, like Circe, “usurps the traditional masculine-aggressor’s role”, and her victims are “not only debased but emasculated” (295). The image of Brett as a mythological corrupter is heightened by two moments in which Barnes sees Brett surrounded by dancing men. The first, in the *bal musette*, sees Brett surrounded by a company of homosexual men, and Barnes’s anger at this image is tied

primarily to Brett's role in those surroundings. The second sequence, at the fiesta, is portrayed in the following way:

Some dancers formed a circle around Brett and started to dance...they were all chanting. Brett wanted to dance but they did not want her to. They wanted her as an image to dance around. (135)

This pagan ritual illuminates two elements of Brett's characterisation. First, in the pastoral setting of the fiesta, she is not seen by the locals as a woman, but rather as an idol or a goddess, as something apart from traditional society. Her role cannot be merged with social norms, and therefore she is cast outside of it. This redefines her status, according to Cohen, away from being merely a member of the expatriate group and to "a Manichaen pole of evil" (293). Secondly, when the dancing scenes are juxtaposed to the failed attempt at attending church and giving confession, they underline how Brett is cast outside of a traditional, religious setting, thereby voiding any hope of redemption in the altruistic sense. The Circe symbolism underscores the portrayal of Brett as an inherently immoral character, which adds a moral imperative to Barnes's rejection of her and symbolically equates the only alternative to that rejection a choice of damnation.

Equally, in his final rejection of Brett, Barnes uses the word 'pretty', evoking a sense of sentimentality and romanticism here tied to femininity. Their union is a 'pretty' thing to imagine, but is equated with the way in which Cohn imagines South America, as an unreal and non-existent entity. Moreover, it reflects the emotional distance to Brett that the final 'it' scene evidenced, whereby Barnes has rejected the 'pretty' idea of some union with Ashley. When this is linked to the trope of damnation, it is clear that Barnes rejects not only Brett Ashley per se but the character of a promiscuous, drinking and

sexually aggressive woman altogether. This rejection is tied to a faint religiosity, which seems to reflect little more than the semblance of order and tradition, also in terms of gender norms. Thus, the final exchange between Brett and Barnes shows the reassertion of masculine agency through the rejection of its female counterpart.<sup>3</sup> The normative style of narration discussed in Chapter 1 invites the reader to do the same. This normative aspect of traditional gender roles is also reflected in the heteronormative undertone that both plot and structure of the novel take on.

Fishing, 'Fairies' and the Function of the Policemen: Readdressing the Heteronormative Imperative in *The Sun Also Rises*

The antithetic nature in which Books II and I stand against one another is epitomised in the contrast between Bill Gordon and Barnes's fishing expedition to Burguete and the *bal musette* sequence in Paris. Where the former explores the good-natured camaraderie, openness and trust of a homosocial environment, the latter displays Barnes's distaste for what comes across as homosexual 'posing and gesturing'. Juxtaposing these scenes highlights the heteronormative undertone of the plot and narration of *The Sun Also Rises*. Moreover, this comparison adds complexity to the understanding of Barnes, as the Burguete episode does not reflect the nullification of sexual agency outlined above, while the anger Barnes displays towards the homosexuals at the *bal musette* is the supreme articulation of his sexual void.

The pastoral nature of the Basque countryside is outlined in surprising detail compared to the sparse comments made about Paris in Book I. Where depictions of Paris

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<sup>3</sup> Brett Ashley is an anomaly in the Hemingway canon as the only female character who truly represents sexual agency. In two major successive works from this period, *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), the female protagonists Catherine Huxley and Maria are marked by submissiveness, innocence and the trope of angelic goodness. Milton A. Cohen brings this point home with two quotes that reflect this notion. Catherine tells Frederic Henry that "there isn't any me, I'm you", while Maria claims "If I am to be thy woman, I should please you in all ways" (304). With this in mind, Barnes's rejection of Brett reflects Hemingway's rejection of female agency, both sexual and societal.

amount to little more than street and bar names, along with the general notion of a “tight” atmosphere, the “rich grain fields”, “green valley[s]” (93, 94) good weather and clear streams of Burguete establish an idealised and pastoral setting. This idealization is underscored by the fact that the locals reflect the good-nature of their surroundings, gladly sharing their wine (92) and even mistaking a tip for a misunderstanding in price (93). “These Basques are swell people” (92), is Bill’s succinct conclusion. It is the intimacy, honesty and immediacy of this setting that makes the Burguete sequence antithetical to the decadence of Paris outlined in Book I. This change in setting allows Bill and Jake to engage in facetious and satiric exchanges, which hold serious implications as well. Bill expounds on Barnes’s situation in Paris in the following manner:

You’re an expatriate. You’ve lost touch with the soil. Fake European standards have ruined you. You drink yourself to death. You become obsessed with sex. You spend all your time talking, not working... (100)

Much as the ‘it’ passages sum up the nature and progression of Barnes’s conflict, this passage enunciates the factors that weigh into the disillusionment felt by the ‘lost generation’. The passage in its entirety reflects the fear of feminization, the “fake European standards” that leave man disconnected with his roots or soil, resulting in excess drinking and an obsession with sex. The implied contrast between talking and working is another binary, where talking is rendered effeminate; producing nothing, while the idea of ‘working’ is linked back to the soil. Finally, it is interesting to note the close homophonic relationship between the terms *expatriate* and *ex-patriarch*. As Bill continues his satiric analysis, he comments that the American Civil War was caused by Abraham Lincoln being “a faggot”, who “just freed the slaves on a bet” and that “sex



explains it all" (101). By linking New York to the 'fake European standards' of Paris, Bill clarifies that Barnes's conflict is not that of the expatriate per se, as the same changes are going on in America. Barnes's exile is patriarchal than the patriotic. The notion that 'sex explains it all' links back to the idea that society has become obsessed with sex, which in turn is an articulation of perceived feminization. Moreover, this passage could be read as a satiric attack on the rise of psychoanalysis in general and Freudian theory of the sex drive and libido in particular. Bill's reinterpretation into the 'sexual politics' of American history could then be seen as an attack on the reinterpretation of all that is known through psychoanalysis.

This attack is launched in a pastoral fishing scene, which casts Bill and Barnes back into the 'men of the soil' paradigm. It is out of this anachronistic position, which reflects both the expatriate/outcast searching for a home and the ex-patriarch searching for masculine agency that these attacks on gender relations can be launched. It is the pastoral and homosocial setting of Burguete that allows for these distanced and dispassionate analyses of their own position in society to be articulated. Barnes here stresses the importance of male camaraderie, which is tied to trust and to the ability to playfully oscillate between joking banter and serious scrutiny.

Bill is the only character in the novel to use the term "impotent" explicitly. While Barnes and Brett refer to his injury only as 'it', Bill confronts Barnes by exclaiming flat-out: "One group claims women support you. Another group claims you're impotent" (101). Barnes responds that he just "had an accident", and Bill attempts to offer a solution to the problem by analogy, saying, "That's the sort of thing that can't be spoken of. That's what you ought to work up into a mystery. Like Henry's bicycle" (ibid). "Henry's bicycle" is a reference to the mystery-shrouded "obscure hurt" that Henry

James suffered, which made “an active life as a soldier, husband or father impossible” (Nissen 1999, 51). It is also a reflection of the extent to which James’s condition had become popular myth by the late 1920s (ibid). The juxtaposition of Barnes and James’s injuries takes on greater significance when Bill comments on his feelings for Barnes, stating that “I think you’re a hell of a good guy” and commenting on James that “I think he’s a good writer” (101). The implication here is that Bill does not link Barnes’s injury to a loss of masculine agency. Barnes, according to Bill, can still be a “hell of a good guy”; hence he can still perform as a man. Moreover, the link between James as impotent writer and Barnes as impotent narrator underscores the notion that writing and the role of the author as observer leads to an epistemological superiority that can be understood as a reassertion of masculine agency. Bill’s comments also offer a counterpoint to the nullification of sexual agency, which is evident in Barnes’s role in the group at large. However, this attempt at redefinition is only possible in a pastoral setting. In a society “obsessed with sex”, Barnes can only hope to gain insight into an alternative masculine identity in the pastoral realm because it serves as a contrast both to the outcast role of the expatriate and to the sexually nullified conceptualization of the ex-patriarch. Bill articulates this contrast further by stating “I’m fonder of you than anybody on Earth. I couldn’t tell you that in New York. It’d mean I was a faggot” (101). The idea that male intimacy and homosocial trust must be tied to homosexual impulses here exemplifies another way in which Bill and Barnes define themselves against the image of a decadent society. They can only exist as ‘men of the soil’ and share genuine male friendship outside of societal confines.

Literary critic Axel Nissen reads these scenes in a very different manner, claiming that Barnes’s impotence is best understood as a reflection of an unarticulated

homosexual longing (42). Nissen contends that the Burguete sequence is “one of the sections of the novel that most distinctly thematizes same-sex desire”, arguing that the aforementioned “fondness” Bill feels for Jake is a declaration of love and that his acceptance of Barnes’s injury is an invitation to step out of the closet (56). On a more holistic level, Nissen claims that Barnes’s conflict of identity is primarily tied to accepting his identity as a gay man. While Nissen presents a coherent argument with several convincing examples, he misreads or ignores the significance of the dualism between the pastoral cast as simple, honest and ‘natural’ set against the societal as feminized, decadent and sexually obsessed. Thus, the depiction of Bill and Barnes’s friendship is cast into a world contrary to the ideas that Nissen attributes to it. The pastoral setting of Burguete allows for unquestioned, uninhibited and unequivocal male friendship, and underlines the heteronormative undertone that is central to the novel’s discussion of masculine identities. The Burguete sequence can be read as an ex-patriarch’s answer to the social questioning of gender roles. In the pastoral setting, Barnes is able to redefine his masculine self-image, as Bill articulates an alternative identity that does not link masculine agency to sexual performance. This is achieved by the use of dualistic imagery whereby Burguete stands in opposition to the ‘fake European standards’ that permeate the Parisian scene and aggravate Barnes’s conflict of identity.

Pastoral Spain finds its antithesis in decadent Paris. The *bal musette* scene prominently features homosexual men. Brett enters the bar with a “a crowd of young men” (17), who Barnes immediately dismisses as effeminate by commenting on their “newly washed hands” and “wavy hair” (ibid). By implication, Barnes also links homosexuality to promiscuity, through the extended metaphor of dancing, stating

simply that “they would all dance with her” because “they were like that” (ibid). The acting out of an explicitly homosexual code of behaviour, which Barnes calls a “superior, simpering composure”, leaves him feeling “very angry” (ibid). In fact, Barnes disapproves of this group so much that “the whole show makes [him] sick” (18). Primarily, stereotypical homosexual behaviour is tied to acting out what are considered to be feminine impulses. This idea of ‘acting’ stands in stark contrast to the stoic Hemingwayesque code of masculinity that Barnes adheres to. The notion of performing in a ‘false and unmanly’ manner is underscored when Barnes comments on the group a second time, stating “as they went in under the light I saw hands, wavy hair, white faces, grimacing, gesturing, talking” (17). The physical and performative here go hand in hand: effeminate features such as well-kept hands, wavy hair and white faces (implying the use of make -up) are juxtaposed to what Barnes portrays as a feminised performance which stresses the display of emotion and affectation through gesture. Tellingly, the lumping together of grimace, gesture and *talk* foreshadows the dualism between talking and working, where the former is seen as effeminate. The focus on the clean hands seems to hold a similar implication: these are not hands that have worked the soil, or held a gun. The overarching theme of Barnes’s characterization of the homosexuals is that there is something ‘false’ about them. Ira Elliott sums up Barnes’s reaction succinctly, arguing that “gender-crossing is what troubles Jake: the rupture between a culturally-determined signifier (the male body) and the signified (the female gender) disrupts the male/female binary” (80).

While the disdain of gender-crossing underlines what I call the “heteronormative imperative” in the text, it does not fully account for why Barnes is “very angry” (17) at seeing Brett in the company of these men. Barnes’s anger is linked to the inability on

Jake's behalf to cast the homosexual men as an 'other', due to his own impotence. While the narration continually attempts to create a dualism between the heterosexual (Barnes) and the homosexual ('they'), this is not the case. Brett comments that she enjoys drinking with the homosexuals because "one can drink in such safety" (19), signalling the lack of sexual interest or threat. It is the very same idea of safety that reflects Barnes's role as a negotiator in the novel. Thus, Barnes's anger toward the homosexuals is also an expression of self-hate, due to the fact that they create a mirror-image of his own role in terms of sexual agency, as "Jake is unable or unwilling to disclose that his relationship to women resembles that of the homosexual" (Elliott 84). In this way, the portrayal of the homosexuals reveals that for Barnes they are the supreme articulation of the 'fake European standards' of sexuality, as well as of the feminization of masculinity that Barnes's conflict revolves around. Elliott offers an interesting perspective on this in arguing that "Jake's inability to perform sexually corresponds to the homosexual's inability to perform his 'correct' gender. Jake's sexual inadequacy and the homosexuals' gender transgression are therefore conjoined: neither can properly signify 'masculinity'" (82). The term "conjoined" is misleading, however. The gender transgression of the homosexuals and Jake's impotence are portrayed as opposite rather than conjoined forces. While Jake's injury reflects the inability to perform sexually, the homosexuals reflect the willingness to transgress traditional gender roles, which may be understood as one of the causes of Barnes's condition. Thus, Barnes's conflict of redefining his masculine self-identity is cast against homosexuality, which is portrayed as effeminate and 'false'. In the contrast between Burguete and the *bal musette*, the heteronormative imperative of the novel comes across clearly, where Barnes outlines the 'proper' interaction and nature of male intimacy in the scenes with

Bill Gordon, and casts this against the effeminate and false homosexuals. Jake's anger marks his frustration at being linked with the latter group, to being 'safe' and sexually nullified. This conflict and its resolution are also reflected symbolically through the role of the policemen in the novel.

In two key scenes of the novel, Barnes sees a policeman. As the group of homosexuals arrives at the *bal musette* with Brett, Barnes notes that "the policeman sitting by the door looked at me and smiled" (17). Again, in the final scene of the novel, Barnes eyes a "mounted policeman in khaki directing traffic. He raised his baton" (216). This second sighting comes immediately before Barnes's "famous last words" to Brett, marking the resolution of his identity conflict. When looking at these two scenes in tandem, the policemen become symbols of law and order, and by extension an expression of a traditional, dualistic assessment of gender norms. Moreover, the fact that the policeman in the final scene raises his baton can be read as a symbol of the erect phallus, marking the reinvigoration and reassertion of masculine agency and authority that Barnes gains by rejecting Brett Ashley. Thus, the policemen symbolically underscore the heteronormative and gender-dualistic frameworks that denote the resolution to the novel's conflict. Then sun also rises then, even for ex-patriarchs.

### **Dismembered Minds and Bodies – Fatalism and Reassertion**

The analyses of Victor Stamp and Jake Barnes reveal important similarities and significant convergences in dealing with the construct of feminization and its consequences. The ramifications of each of these portrayals differ greatly. One central trope in both accounts is the notion of victimhood. The fact that society has been feminized is placed outside the realms of the protagonists' influence, both at the societal level (World War One) and at the personal level (as seen in the corruption through Peter

Wallace and the challenge of Brett Ashley). The central tenet in this construct of feminization is the loss of masculine agency and supremacy, and the feeling of helplessness it induces in the protagonists leads to anger, exemplified by Stamp's stamping of the forgery and Barnes's displaced rage towards "unworthy" men such as the homosexuals and more prominently Robert Cohn.

The characterization of these two ex-patriarchs functions at different levels, however. In both cases, masculine agency is equated with originality, creativity and individuality, as reflected in the roles of the artist and writer. For Barnes, the act of narration represents the supreme force of masculine agency in itself, and functions as a counterweight to the nullification of sexual agency seen in the plot. The merging of the narrative voice with the heteronormative imperative of the plot frames Barnes's struggle for renewed agency. In Hemingway's novel, genuine masculinity is equated with a code of behaviour outlined by its narrator.

Where narrative assertiveness counters Barnes's impotence in *The Sun Also Rises*, the opposite is true of Victor Stamp. The mythologizing of his physical potency is countered by his artistic impotence, eventually leading to a complete renunciation of his masculine self-image. Thus, both novels operate on a schema where intellectual and artistic assertiveness outweighs physical potency. Masculine agency is in both cases primarily linked to an epistemological superiority. This can be understood as a reaction to the changed reality following the First World War, which had proven a devastating blow to the idea that man could control his own environment. Masculine agency thereby shifts away from physical control and toward the creative and epistemological supremacy. In this shift, the two novels engage in opposite operations: for Barnes, it is the journey out of a fractured and dismembered masculine identity, while for Stamp the

plot moves from a besieged, to a corrupted and finally defeated self-identity. The key difference between Barnes and Stamp is thus one of understanding: Barnes reasserts his masculine identity by rejecting the other (see Chapter 3), while Stamp, unable to grasp the forces corrupting him, falls victim to them.

The trope of corruption and decadence permeates both novels, although it also functions on different levels. In both novels, decadence is synonymous with the urban milieus of Paris, London or New York. In *The Sun Also Rises*, this corruption is not tied to a concrete political platform, and is primarily identified through a shift in gender norms, both of female sexual agency and of men “posing” as homosexuals. In *The Revenge for Love*, by contrast, this decadence is tied to a political corruption and conspiracy between the left-wing (Jewish/Marxist) intelligentsia, profit-seeking businessmen and communist agitators. The construct of feminization is portrayed not on the level of character or an individual’s conduct. Rather, it has taken on institutional forms, against which the individual has no chance.

This contrast also accounts for the different uses that are made of Spain and the Spanish countryside in both novels. For Barnes as well as Stamp, Spain represents a different world, a pastoral setting of traditional values and clear-cut gender divisions, and both characters identify with this pastoral setting as a more natural male environment, Stamp finding new motives to paint and Barnes enjoying a moment’s peace fishing at Burguete. Structurally, however, Spain becomes the site of the clash of two world views. While the Spanish setting at first sight offers instances of escape from London and Paris, it shifts to the place where the central conflict of each novel is dramatized and played out: for Stamp, it becomes the site where he falls victim to the conspiracy and into his technocratic tomb, while Barnes’s fiasco at the fiesta leads him



to completely debase his power by acting as pimp on Brett's behalf. In *The Sun Also Rises*, the pastoral setting of Spain functions as the structural antithesis to Paris, making Barnes's corruptive influence at Pamplona all the more poignant. In the denouement of the novel, however, San Sebastian becomes a site of redemption for Barnes. In *The Revenge for Love*, Spain simply becomes another site of the international power-game, as much a pawn as Victor Stamp himself is, blindly eyeing the mountains from which he will fall to his death. The trope of corruption thus functions on different levels in these novels and has significantly dissimilar outcomes. The redemption of masculine agency evident in Hemingway's work is countered by the complete surrender thereof in Lewis's.

A final instance to be explored is how the characterization of Victor Stamp may be viewed as a parody of Hemingway's protagonist. In his scathing criticism of Hemingway's writing, "The Dumb Ox" (1934), Lewis attacks his peer for writing about characters "to whom things happen", who are politically ignorant and submerged in their environments without grasping the larger implications (19-20). Moreover, Lewis labels Hemingway a writer of the "urban proletariat", using a "folk" style (ibid), whose writing echoes "the voice of the masses...who are the cannon-fodder...the cattle outside the slaughter house" (36). The mention of "cannon-fodder" evokes parallels to Victor Stamp, who is cast in the same class and circumstance. Moreover, Hemingway, like Stamp, is tied to an animalistic force, as Lewis comments that Hemingway's work "possesses a penetrating quality, like an animal speaking" (19). According to David Ayers, the "original Stamp" of the final episodes of *The Revenge for Love* can be seen as a parody of the Hemingwayesque protagonist that Lewis so heavily criticized in "The Dumb Ox" (Ayers 183).

Thus, through the characterisation of Victor Stamp, Lewis comments on and parodies the masculine self-image of the Hemingway protagonist, making him simply another pawn in the political game. On the one hand, this is a reflection of Lewis's class-antagonism and distrust of the working class. To him, Hemingway represents a simple-minded, unrefined voice that echoes the 'folk', thus also reflecting his popularity (22). As in *The Revenge for Love*, this submergence is tied to political corruption and anti-Semitism. In Lewis's view, Hemingway's prose is corrupted by Gertrude Stein's influence, which he calls an "infantile, dull-witted, dreamy stutter" and claims that "this brilliant Jewish lady has made a *clown* of [Hemingway] by teaching [him] her baby talk" (26). The conception that Hemingway has been corrupted by his "Jewish mistress" marks the coming together of Lewis's anti-Semitic world view his explicit fear of feminization. The matrix of a feminized, 'Jewish' urbanity thus recurs both in Lewis's non-fiction and in *The Revenge for Love*, underlining the importance of his narrative ideological framework. In the following chapter this link will be made more evident as I turn to the role of the Jewish countertype in both novels.

### **Chapter 3: ‘Split-Men’ and Usurpers – the Function of the Jewish Countertype in *The Sun Also Rises* and *The Revenge for Love***

Chapter 2 has discussed the negotiations that Hemingway’s and Lewis’s protagonists undergo in pursuit of a reaffirmation of masculine agency. Contradistinctively, in both these novels, Jewish men hold an important position as countertypes. This chapter will explore the manner in which these men are portrayed as antithetical to what Hemingway and Lewis understood as genuine masculinity, before the political themes of this undertaking are analyzed. Given the fact that ideas linked to anti-Semitic and stereotypical portrayals of Jews are a complex and controversial matter, it is necessary to briefly expound on the classical formations of anti-Semitic thought. In this context, Hannah Arendt’s work on anti-Semitism offers a way of understanding the negotiations of masculinity and anti-Semitism in a manner that draws the political to the foreground.

#### **Tropes of Anti-Semitism: Physiognomy and Politics**

The focus on the portrayal of Jewish men, and by extension on anti-Semitism, is an important dimension of the construct of feminization. The dynamics of anti-Semitic scapegoating in these texts can be understood as a formative aspect of that dialogue. That is not to say that one should salvage the works of Hemingway and Lewis solely for anti-Semitic portrayals of Jewish men. Rather one needs to reflect on how these stereotypes and culturally coded undercurrents create a backdrop, out of which more directly political trains of thought arise. The specificity of casting Jewish men as effeminate is best understood through the link between the political spheres of anti-Semitism and the casting of the ‘Jewish body’ as a differentiating factor through the use of physiognomic traits.

The social function of the image of 'the Jew' can be understood as an oscillation between the roles of the insider and outsider. On the one hand, the Jew was identified as the "perpetual outsider, whose unsettling presence serves to define the bounds that separate the native...from the alien Other" (Felsenstein 1995, 4). At the same time, the Jew was seen as a threat to the harmony of social order by his very existence in that society, as well as by "unwittingly mirror[ing] the cracks and tensions already inherent there" (ibid). The social differentiation at work here thereby attributes a double function to the Jew, serving both as a consistent Other whose presence has a uniting effect on "native" society, as well as exposing heterogeneous tensions in what otherwise would be perceived as a homogenous group. On a political scale, this process is tied to degrees of social influence. Arendt (1958) argues that in tracing the rise of anti-Semitism to the birth of the nation state, hatred against Jews must be understood in terms of a power discourse (5). Moreover, in arguing that the notion of power is generally respected and acknowledged as necessary in society, Arendt maintains that it is that discrepancy between 'the Jew's' perceived wealth and comparative lack of political power and influence that led to images to the Jew as an exploiter and social parasite (ibid).

These political prejudices were mirrored in the perception of a Jew's physical appearance. Jay Geller (2006) identifies specific "corporeal ascriptions...to pin the identity of the other...to the telltale truth of the body" (7). Geller outlines a physiognomic analysis of stereotypes against Jews, whereby what were seen as defining physical characteristics were understood to reflect aspects of a Jew's character. Sander Gilman (1979) has identified examples of specific physical characteristics, such as the nose, voice or feet of Jews, as supposed telltale signs of their inner workings. This physiognomic understanding of the Jew was, according to Geller, especially linked to the

practice of circumcision, as this “mediated Jewish identification” (7). The idea of a specifically ‘Jewish’ body becomes a negotiation of difference. The physiognomic casting of the Jewish body as an other, tied together with the political conceptualization of the Jew as simultaneously powerful and without influence, creates a backdrop for the scapegoating of Jewish man as the primary image of feminization.

### **The Usurper Robert Cohn and the Significance of the Jewish Countertype**

Robert Cohn is a central catalyst in the plot of *The Sun Also Rises*. The first chapter of the novel revolves exclusively around Cohn and creates an implied distance between him and Barnes (see Chapter 1). In the ensuing plot, Cohn falls head-over-heels in love with Brett Ashley and has a short-lived affair with her at San Sebastian (73). Unwilling to acknowledge that for Lady Ashley, he was merely a moment’s fling, Cohn continues to pursue her with unremitting enthusiasm and effort. After Brett Ashley sleeps with the bullfighter Pablo Romero, Cohn becomes destitute and violent, attacking Barnes for refusing to tell him where Brett is (165) and later attacking the bullfighter himself (174). In disarray, he begs forgiveness of Barnes and Romero, trying to shake hands (*ibid*) with everyone, and leaves the fiesta along with the novel itself.

The fact that Cohn is Jewish is a focal point of the novel, which the remainder of the characters comment on in frequent intervals and consistently with a disdainful and distancing attitude. Examples abound: Barnes comments that Cohn has a “hard, Jewish, stubborn streak” (9); Bill Gorton comments on Cohn’s disinterest in bullfighting: “He’s got this Jewish superiority so strong that he thinks the only emotion he’ll get out of the fight will be being bored” (141), and calls Cohn a “kike” (142); Mike Campbell attempts to make Cohn understand that he is unwanted at the Fiesta: “Go away, for God’s sake.

Take that sad Jewish face away” (154). This multitude of references exclusively links the negative qualities the group attributes to Cohn with his being Jewish.

The characterization of Robert Cohn has sparked controversy and debate amongst scholars. In his 1928 book review Allen Tate, describes Cohn as a puppet, an “offensive cad”, and a “Jewish bounder” (43). Tate focuses on the fact that while a majority of the novel’s main character are bounders, they are spared by the fact that they have survived the ordeal of the First World War, while Cohn’s innocence and naivety make him the scapegoat of the piece. In reassessing claims that Hemingway’s portrayal of Cohn is anti-Semitic, Gay Wilentz (1990) provides an overview of the history of Cohn-criticism, dividing critics into the following four categories: 1) interpretations tracing biographical information, looking to the ‘real life model’ for Cohn, Hemingway’s acquaintance Harold Loeb, and hence seeing Cohn’s negative portrayal as a personal vendetta against Loeb; 2) critics who focus solely on Hemingway’s personal anti-Semitism and see Cohn as a fictional representation thereof; 3) those who see Cohn as an outsider for reasons other than his Jewish background, stressing his romantic Victorian notions of chivalry; 4) and critics who see Robert Cohn as a misunderstood hero in contrast to the rest of the ‘lost generation’ (167). While Wilentz’s overview by no means is exhaustive, it does give a good indication of what scholars have stressed in their attempts to understand Cohn. What is striking in many accounts, however, is the implicit attempt to defend Hemingway and his writing from incriminating charges. A recurring theme in these accounts is to state that while it is unfortunate that the negative portrayal of Cohn is indistinguishably tied to his being Jewish, it should in no way influence the reading of the novel or give it charged political implications. This conviction has some merit, as the symbolic use of dichotomies in a

literary work cannot be equated with their author's political standpoints. However, the fact that Cohn is attributed with a multiplicity of negative traits, which are explicitly linked to the fact that he is Jewish, raises the question of why this specific dichotomy was chosen. The fact that the novel's racial slurs were considered damaging enough that the post-Holocaust publication in 1949 censored the book by omitting them reveals how egregious Cohn's characterization was considered at the time. Moreover, the tie between the Jewish man and the construct of feminization can reveal culturally coded undercurrents of how feminization was gendered politically and tied to a marginalized ethnic group.

#### The Characterization of Cohn - Romanticism, Suffering, Usurpation and Defilement

Throughout the novel references are made to Cohn's naivety and to his disconnectedness from the world around him. Barnes comments that Cohn has been reading and rereading *The Purple Land* by W.H. Hudson, commenting with satiric distaste that this is "a very sinister book when read too late in life" (8), and noting that Cohn took every word of it "as literally as though it had been an R. G. Dun report" (ibid). Cohn transfers this idealistic outlook and approach to his infatuation with Brett Ashley. Barnes comments on Cohn's first reaction to seeing Brett, noting, "[Cohn] looked a great deal as his compatriot must have looked when he saw the Promised Land" (18). The allegorical tie to the 'promised land' ridicules Cohn's interest in Brett; his gaze is tainted by ethnic differentiation. Moreover, Cohn's curiosity leads him to interrogate Barnes about her past. He stoically sums up her two marriages, making them appear convenient (34), leading Cohn to comment that "I don't believe she would marry anybody she didn't love" (ibid). Barnes's response that "She's done it twice" only enforces Cohn's original claim, as he repeats: "I don't believe it" (ibid). This exchange foreshadows the entirety of

Cohn and Brett's relationship. Cohn has cast her according to his own image and refuses to accept Barnes's insight, instead indulging in his own fantasy. This is also evident in the final scenes of the book, where Cohn attempts to "fight for Brett's honour", both against Barnes and Pablo Romero, revealing to what extent his vision of Brett is an idealized objectification.

Cohn's romanticism is closely linked to the idea of suffering. In a fashion reminiscent of Werther in Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, Cohn's self-pity becomes, for him, the sorrow to end all sorrows. After having knocked Barnes down, during his ensuing breakdown, Cohn describes his emotional state in the following way: "I just couldn't stand it with Brett. I've been through hell...I can't stand it any more...now everything's gone. Everything" (168-9). Cohn's egocentrism and his blindness to the suffering around him make his reaction appear not only naïve but ruthlessly selfish also. The fact that Cohn was unscathed by the Great War becomes the point of contrast here. While arguably every other character in the book has in one way or another lost something as a consequence of the war, Cohn's only point of reference is himself. As Wilentz notes, "Cohn's self-deception is countered by Jake's ability to face his own wounds" (188). The romantic notions that Cohn distils thereby become meaningless in the world that Barnes and his compatriots find themselves in. Literary critic Robert E. Meyerson (1995) argues that the casting of Cohn as Jewish and as a 'perpetual sufferer' is a deliberate juxtaposition. Drawing on Hannah Arendt's analysis of anti-Semitism as rationally and deliberately chosen, Meyerson argues that Hemingway seeks to displace the notion of the Jewish people as the 'sufferers' of history by drawing attention to the baselessness of this claim when contrasted to the hardships of the 'lost generation' (104).



Cohn's attempted assimilation leads him to embrace an archaic worldview, which in juxtaposition to the realities faced by the 'Lost Generation' is portrayed as meaningless and banal. Drawing on an example where Brett Ashley's fiancé Mike Campbell needs to pay heaving business payments 'to Jews', Meyerson notes that he immediately corrects himself by stating: "they're not really Jews. We just call them Jews. They're Scotsmen, I believe" (101). For the critic, this reflects that Hemingway's preoccupation here is not Judaism or anti-Semitic stereotypes of "Jewish niggardliness and Shylockian business practice" (ibid) per se, but that the group's dismissal of Cohn stems from his continuous 'suffering'. Brett Ashley focalizes this feeling: "I hate [Cohn's] damn suffering" (ibid). For Meyerson, the exposure of Cohn as a "false sufferer" and his exodus from the novel marks "the dismissal of the Jewish question from Hemingway's literary presence" (104). Meyerson is quick to add that this needn't be read as a political standpoint, as "there is...a difference between personal prejudice and an attempt to raise such bigotry to a philosophical or political principle" (ibid). Meyerson's reading offers important insight on one manner of viewing the dynamics surrounding Robert Cohn's characterization. However, by focusing exclusively on the trope of suffering, Meyerson ignores other significant tropes of Cohn's characterization that affiliate the Jewish man with the construct of feminization. Hemingway's portrayal complicates rather than dismisses 'the Jewish question'.

Cohn is portrayed as a fool, and though he is occasionally pitied, the group generally treats him with malice and malcontent, asking him to "go off somewhere" (*Sun Also Rises* 157). Perpetually a nuisance to the remainder of the group, Cohn is seen as a social 'parasite' clinging on to the group, who attempt to chase him off. Throughout the fiesta sequence, the expatriate 'in-group' attempts to get rid of Cohn; Campbell echoes

the following sentiment a number of times: “Go away, for God’s sake. Take that sad Jewish face away” (154). The notion of parasitism is problematic, as it introduces an entire set of anti-Semitic undertones to Cohn’s characterisation. This thesis argues, however, that the persistency with which this theme is pursued legitimises the label of parasitism.

Inauthenticity is another central trope of Cohn’s characterisation. Barnes claims that Cohn cares nothing for boxing, using it only as a tool to boost his self-confidence and to become more assimilated at Princeton. The fact the Cohn represents an archaic worldview is complicated by the implication that these ideas are ‘stolen’, that Cohn is attempting to represent a tradition which is not only outdated but also not his own. The image of Cohn as a usurper adds a significant element to the discussion of the importance of his being Jewish. Cohn then not only represents a broken tradition, but, by casting it into his own image, makes that image lose its nostalgic notion. Cohn is omitted from the Burguete sequence as it is implicitly understood that he would be out of place there, unable to be a ‘man of the soil’, despite his dreams to the contrary. Cohn is thereby characterised as false and feminized, and his consistent attempts to ‘remedy’ these shortcomings increase the group’s disparagement towards him.

Another telling episode is the reaction Brett Ashley has after the conclusion of her affair with Pablo Romero. Though she refuses to marry him, realizing that she was corrupting Romero, Brett Ashley tells Barnes “I’m all right again. [Romero]’s *wiped out* that damn Cohn” (212, emphasis added). This formulation is complex and could be interpreted in a number of ways. On the one hand, Brett focuses on the fact that Romero wanted to marry her, in that way *wiping out* the memory of Cohn’s pretence to do the same. When seen in the context of Cohn as the ‘usurper of tradition’, however, this

reference takes on a more sinister undertone. The idea of wiping out Cohn becomes a metaphor for disease, whereby Brett was cleansed of Cohn's imprint by Romero. In sexual terms, Cohn becomes the 'defiler', the Jewish man who 'infected' Brett Ashley in a manner that demands 'cleansing'. The anti-Semitic undertone of this reading adds an important dimension to the features outlined above. By adding claims of sexual defilement to social parasitism, the anti-Semitic tropes of Cohn's characterisation become more significant, as they link the constructs of the Jew as a 'free-rider' and 'bearer of disease'. Taken together, the five tropes of Cohn's characterization (false romanticism, suffering, parasitism, usurpation and defilement) reveal how a set of anti-Semitic discourses is conjoined to differentiate between Cohn and the white Americans of the 'lost generation'. These tropes are also explicitly tied to feminization.

#### Cohn's Effeminacy and the Inverted Masculine Countertype

Robert Cohn does not represent the Jewish countertype male in the exemplary sense. Firstly, his body is not weak and fragile. Cohn is an able boxer, reflected in his champion's title from Princeton (3) and the fact that he can knock down Barnes and beat up Romero with ease (164, 175). In the introductory sequence of Cohn from Barnes's perspective, he notes that Cohn at one point was pinned in a fight which he lost, which "permanently flattened" (3) his nose. Moreover, the narrator ironically comments that this punch "certainly improved his nose" (ibid). This comments reflects the distance the narrator places between traditional physiognomic portrayals of Jews and the one of Cohn. Based on his physical appearance, there is no way to signify Cohn as Jewish. Barnes notes that Cohn took up boxing "to counteract the feeling of inferiority and shyness he had felt on being treated as a Jew at Princeton. There was a certain inner comfort in knowing he could knock down anyone who was snooty to him" (3). The

depiction here is reminiscent of the physician and Zionist Max Nordau's notion of the 'muscle Jew'. In an article for the *Jewish Gymnastics Journal*, Nordau calls for Jews to counteract the stereotype of the physically weak and intellectually sustained Jew through rigorous exercise and discipline. Nordau's argument states that Jews would have to become more assertive and to "dis-prove" the stereotypes made against them (Mosse 1992, 566-8). In the case of Cohn, this certainly holds true. Though he dislikes boxing, he uses it as a means to achieve social recognition and assimilation. Although Cohn's physical strength and agility, along with his sexual potency, appear to make him a weak candidate for the countertype model, the concept can be applied meaningfully here.

In a series of scenes in the novel, Cohn is socially and intellectually emasculated. The lover's quarrel between Cohn and Francis (*Sun Also Rises* 42-3) is one decisive example. Here, Cohn is depicted as helpless and unable to defend himself, leaving the spectator Barnes to muse: "I do not know how people could say such terrible things to Robert Cohn" (43). After having knocked him down, Barnes discovers Cohn in their hotel room. The repetitions in this passage are worth considering. Barnes notes:

Cohn was crying. There he was, face down on the bed, crying. He had on a white polo shirt...he was crying. His voice was funny. He lay there in his white shirt on the bed in the dark. His polo shirt...He was crying without making any noise.  
(168)

The fascination with tears and the polo shirt carry a double meaning. The polo shirt encapsulates Cohn's naivety and his book-smart Princeton approach to the real world. The juxtaposition of the polo shirt and his tears mirrors the failure of both his 'book-smart' approach to the world and of his exaggerated response, which elsewhere in the

novel has been described as a case of “arrested development” (38). While the image of emasculation is complicated by the fact that the stoic narrator Barnes himself has cried over Brett (30), their reactions are still opposites, as Barnes’s frustration stems from his inability to fulfil his relationship with Brett (who he accepts for who she is), while Cohn’s reaction is based on Brett’s unwillingness to be the object he has idealized. The same reaction is repeated after Cohn has confronted and attacked Romero. Bill Gordon retells the episode in hindsight: “[Cohn] nearly killed the poor, bloody bullfighter... then Cohn broke down and *cried*, and wanted to shake hands with the bullfighter fellow. He wanted to shake hands with Brett, too” (174, 175). Cohn fails to stand up for himself, and in those cases where he does, it is never for his own benefit, but only as a romantic and foolhardy attempt to save Brett’s honour. Yet even in these moments he is forced to retreat, to completely surrender himself to his surroundings and companions, even after having physically bested them.

Thus, the more physically assertive Cohn becomes, the more he is emasculated socially, eventually being forced to flee the scene. In this manner, Cohn can be understood as a masculine countertype, where his physical aptitude is contrasted to his social effeminacy, the latter outweighing the former. Cohn is portrayed as an inverted countertype through which he is emasculated and expelled from the group. Turning back to Nordau’s idea of the ‘muscle Jew’, the characterization of Cohn can be understood as a satire of physical assimilation. Even though Cohn cannot be differentiated physically, he is ‘still a Jew’ and represents a feminized masculine identity. Cohn is furthermore locked in a mind-set that makes him incompatible with the members of the ‘lost generation’. One manner of reading this would be to argue that Cohn is depicted in the vein of the Jew as perpetual outsider “in this expatriate in-group”

(Wilentz 188), where attempts at assimilation only widen the divide to Barnes and his compatriots, ending in additional ridicule and contempt.

In this manner, Hemingway employs a series of anti-Semitic stereotypes in his characterization of Cohn, using these to create a hierarchy of masculinities. The relationship between Barnes and Cohn, however, is more complicated than one of simple antagonism. The manner in which Barnes's early sympathy for Cohn shifts to disregard and finally full-blown hate must be explored.

#### Displaced Castrations, Dispossessed Hegemony

The threat of Cohn's alternative masculine identity takes on new significance as it is juxtaposed to Hemingwayesque 'ice-berg' masculinity. Cohn is a threat not simply because he is different, but because that difference is now acceptable. Thus, while the turning point of Barnes's relationship to Cohn does come about after the episode at San Sebastian, Cohn and Brett's affair represents more than the personal jealousies of the narrative's impotent protagonist. Barnes does not take issue with Brett choosing any other man (this has, after all, already taken place numerous times), but *Cohn* in particular. Mike Campbell cements this point with his comment that "Brett's gone off with men. But they weren't ever Jews..." (125). Thus, ethnicity plays a major part in the Hemingwayesque negotiations of masculinity. This ethnic taint need not be understood as a political statement in its own right, however. Cohn has the 'new thing', which the Hemingwayesque Barnes despises. Whether ethnicity is used here primarily to signify difference, or if it also entails a clear political undertone, remains to be seen. The oscillation between Cohn and Barnes can be understood as a quest for masculine agency. This conflict is complicated through a sequence of physical, emotional and social castration metaphors.

By emphasising the opposition between Barnes and Cohn in ethnic terms, a new dimension of the negotiation of masculinity may be uncovered. In his analysis of the stereotypes and colonial discourse, "The Other Question" (1983), Homi Bhabha argues that the function of stereotypes must be understood as modes of representing otherness, rather than as scapegoating. Drawing on Freudian theory of fetishism, Bhabha contends that the encounter with an "Other" triggers a "reactivation of the material of original fantasy" (343), this being castration anxiety and sexual difference. Moreover, the fetish functions to normalize the conflicts with ideas of "historical origination, racial purity and cultural priority" (ibid) that these encounters trigger, as it acts as a substitute for it. The fetish then, allows one to hold multiple beliefs simultaneously. In discourse, this is expressed in the simultaneous play between metaphor *as substitution* (masking absence/difference) and metonymy (registering the perceived difference). What occurs, then, is "a vacillation between the archaic affirmation of wholeness...and the anxiety associated with lack and difference" (ibid). Through the use of the fetish Bhabha accounts for the ability to hold two ideas at once, in what is a simultaneous recognition and disavowal of the perceived subject.

The understanding of the process is made clearer as Bhabha links the trope of the fetish to the Lacanian Imaginary. As an extension of Lacan's analysis of the formative mirror stage, Bhabha argues that the dynamics at work here are those of narcissism (recognition) on the one hand, against aggressivity (disavowal) on the other. What follows is a four-fold model of the stereotype that oscillates between "the tropes of fetishism- metaphor and metonymy, and the forms of narcissistic and aggressive identification available to the Imaginary" (346). Thus, the relationship between hegemonic discourse and the Other is one of simultaneous recognition and disavowal,

whereby stereotyping must be understood as a complex process of “projection and introjection...displacement, overdetermination, guilt [and] aggressivity” (350), rather than simply a process of scapegoating.

This analysis adds a dimension to the understanding of Barnes and Cohn’s interaction. Rather than understanding Cohn simply as a ‘foil’ and scapegoat, Bhabha’s theory illuminates the manner in which Barnes simultaneously accepts and disavows Cohn. Some cautionary statements as to the limitations of this analysis are necessary at this point. By unreflectively casting Cohn in the role of the Other, one runs the risk of simply perpetuating the stereotype of the Jew as other. Moreover, the idea of a hegemonic discourse is complicated by the fact that the novel is set in France and Spain, while its protagonists are American, thus obfuscating the division of a hegemonic order. The social community that is the expatriate circle around which the novel revolves, however, can be understood as a microcosm in its own right. In this way, I here infer Bhabha’s theory of the macro-phenomenon of colonial discourse at a micro level.

In viewing the relationship between Cohn and Barnes, it is vital to understand the social function of how the latter labels the former. The narrator Barnes immediately casts Cohn as the Other, illuminating his Jewish background and expounding on his attempts at assimilation. In the early stages of the novel, however, there is little antagonism between Barnes and Cohn. However, through a series of displacements of hierarchy, their relationship changes to one of open hostility from Barnes’s side. The most obvious cause of this antipathy is Cohn’s affair with Brett, but more importantly, there is an underlying conflict of masculine identities. This struggle for masculine hegemony is evidenced through Hemingway’s deployment of a series of characteristics to Cohn that differentiate between Barnes’s and Cohn’s masculinities. Along with the



characteristics imbued to Cohn, the tension in the relationship between him and Barnes can be understood as a series of physical and social castrations.

In the early scenes of the novel, Barnes displays a good deal of sympathy for Cohn. In the scene where Cohn is attacked by Francis, whose fledging and public attacks leave him helpless and socially castrated, Barnes looks on silently, musing: "why did he keep on taking it like that?" (45). I would argue that Barnes's sympathy in part arises out of a mirroring of his own situation with Brett. In a previous scene, Jake is left crying out of frustration for his own situation with Brett (34). The sympathy Barnes feels for Cohn at this point arises out of what Barnes here perceives as a dual castration. Barnes sympathizes with Cohn (as Other) because they here are the same.

The most pertinent example of displacement between Cohn and Barnes is found in the fiesta sequence. The expatriate group, losing patience with Cohn's lingering, want him gone, Mike Campbell angrily commenting, "Why do you [Cohn] follow Brett around like a bloody steer?" (123). In bullfighting, castrated steers are used in the ring to calm the bulls before the onset of the fight. In this sense, the true 'steer' of the group is Barnes, who acts as a liaison in the conflicts that arise, both between Mike Campbell, Bill Gordon and Cohn, but also in relation to Romero and Brett, attempting to keep the peace as the group becomes increasingly antagonistic toward Cohn (see Chapter 2). The displacement of the castration label from Barnes to Cohn signifies the displaced anger of the white male group, whose waning masculine hegemony leads to excess aggressiveness against the Other, in Bhabha's terms. The conflict between Barnes's and Cohn's masculinities is thus presented as a series of inverted castration metaphors. Castration anxiety, which in the Freudian and Lacanian interpretation of the Imaginary

is the basis of narcissistic attacks on the Other, here translates directly in both physical and psychosocial castration.

Jeremy Kane (2006) has re-evaluated the concept of agency in relation to Cohn's characterization in the novel. He argues that one must question the idea of Cohn as the object of anti-Semitism, asking if he could not be viewed as "an agent of Jewish manhood, disrupting the novel's privileged pairing of hegemonic and Hemingwayesque masculinity?" (46). Claiming that Cohn is the novel's "figure of hyper-masculinity" (ibid), Kane traces the concept of agency throughout the novel, stating that it is Cohn who has an affair with Lady Brett, Cohn who defeats Barnes and Romero in combat, thereby making him the principle protagonist of the plot, "exert[ing] a certain control over the narrative" (47). Kane leaves no doubt that Hemingway's portrayal of Cohn is anti-Semitic, but rather questions why a multitude of critics have accepted the animosity Barnes exhibits towards Cohn and attempt to rationalise and justify it (ibid). He concludes that the strong Hemingway persona has led critics to have an innate desire to be a part of this identity construction, in turn leading them to conclude that Hemingway could not have been anti-Semitic, analysing the role of Cohn in this framework.

In contrast to this, Kane offers a reading whereby Cohn is so well assimilated that the only reason the remainder of the characters consistently refer to him as a 'Jew' is to remind themselves of something which is otherwise impossible to see (50). Moreover, Kane claims that "Cohn performs white masculinity so well...that he exposes its very nature as a construct rather than as essential identity" (51), that "Cohn's performative function...open[s] up a field of racial disavowal and desire that challenge[s] the novel's myth of masculine wholeness" (53). Following this strain of thought, Kane links Cohn's departure from the fiesta to what he considers to be "Jake's masculine dissolution" (ibid)

at the end of the novel, explaining that “everything falls apart for Jake” (ibid) from this point onward.

The novelty in Kane’s approach in comparison to other critics’ lies in the fact the he turns around the concept of failed assimilation. Where Meyerson attributes Cohn’s ousting as a consequence of his failure to conform to the masculine stereotype Hemingway depicts through Barnes, Kane maintains that it is precisely this failure that gives Cohn a subversive potential in the novel, by seeing him as a representation of successful Jewish manhood. The validity of this approach is clear when considering the role of agency Cohn is attributed here. However, Kane’s approach is problematic when seen in light of the normative undertone of the novel outlined in the preceding chapters. Cohn’s masculine agency, his ‘alternate’ masculinity, is linked to the anti-Semitic tropes of inauthenticity, usurpation, parasitism and defilement. The normative imperative of the novel thus invites the reader to exile Cohn in the same manner that Barnes does. Just as Cohn’s success with Brett becomes more egregious to Barnes than her affairs to other men, the juxtaposition of Cohn’s Jewish background and the values attributed to it make his characterisation more egregious to a contemporary reader. Kane is right in giving Cohn subversive potential, but in doing so belittles the perceived threat that such subversion has on Barnes. Masculine agency is placed in a hierarchy based on ethnicity in *The Sun Also Rises*. Before concluding the analysis of Cohn, his role as an Other in the novel must be contrasted to the multiple Other masculinities presented in the novel.

### Multiple Others

While Cohn is the primary example of the masculine Others in Hemingway’s novel, his characterization must be contrasted to the multiple Other masculinities presented in the novel: the two short episodes featuring black men and the bullfighter Pablo Romero. In

the first episode, Barnes and Lady Ashley encounter a black drummer, who Brett describes as “a great friend of mine” (55). To Barnes, he is “all teeth and lips” (ibid). Tellingly, this is one of only two examples of an ungrammatical recount of discourse in the novel.<sup>4</sup> The unnamed drummer’s dialogue is recounted as “hahre you” and “thaats good” (56). Equally, in the continuation of the scene, the drummer’s voice is simply recorded as “.....”, while he drums in a chanting manner (ibid). The sensuality of the drumming, along with the implied sexual history between Brett and the drummer, is contrasted to her remark that Barnes is a terrible dancer. The idea of dancing here represents sexual potency.

In the second scene, Bill Gordon recounts an episode from Vienna, where he was witness to a prize-fight gone wrong, in which a black boxer defeats a local fighter, leading to the onslaught of mass fighting. Gordon compares the fighter to Tiger Flowers, a famous black boxer at the time, only “four times bigger” (62). Throughout the dialogue, the boxer remains unnamed, and is only referred to as “the nigger”; the reference is made a total of 12 times in less than two pages (62-3). Moreover, in recounting the episode, the “local boy” opponent is referred to as the “local white boy” (62). The entire episode is retold with a playfully distanced voice. While the boxer is referred to as a “wonderful nigger” (ibid), and Gordon takes pity on his plight, lending him money and shelter, he also remains satirically superior, telling Jake in the manner of a wise uncle: “big mistake [of the boxer] to have come to Vienna. Not so good” (ibid). These scenes are better understood with Bhabha’s idea of the stereotype in mind. Gordon and Barnes each express a fetishist response to these Others, where the oscillation between physical admiration (the potency of the black men) and intellectual disavowal (their naivety and

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<sup>4</sup> The only other example is the offensive and nosy German waiter Barnes and Bill experience at Pamplona (181).

apparent lack of intelligence) creates a discourse of a hierarchical understanding of masculinity based on ethnicity.

These two episodes reveal another version of ethnic coding of masculine roles in the Hemingway text. Anonymous, unnamed and physically potent, the black men in *The Sun Also Rises* are cast in animalistic coats. These characters become focal points for a physically potent but intellectually and social inferior masculinity, and reflect what Bhabha refers to as the fixated stereotype of the “bestial sexual license of the African” (335). This image is complicated, however, by the fact that the unnamed boxer, according to Gordon, “[is] married. Has a family” (*Sun Also Rises* 63). This factual statement, retold with no evaluative or emotive coding, differentiates the boxer from the expatriates by giving him the stability that they are denied.

At first glance, the bullfighter Pablo Romero appears to have the opposite function in the text. As an *aficionado*, Barnes has the knowledge and love of bullfighting to identify Romero as a true artist, who has the “old thing” (146). This artistry is irrevocably tied to authenticity. Barnes notes of Romero’s style: “[he] never made any contortions, always it was straight and natural in line...[his] bullfighting gave real emotion” (145). Moreover, Romero is not boastful about his fighting, as “he talked of his work as something altogether apart from himself. There was nothing conceited or braggartly about him” (151). Furthermore, as opposed to the boxing episode, Romero’s fighting is based on a code of honour and tradition, which Barnes labels a “system of authority” (161). Contrasted to the portrayal of Cohn, which is based on inauthenticity and a false pretence of talent, Romero embodies a tradition that Barnes respects. This respect is a double-edged sword, however. While acknowledging the fear of corruption that Brett’s influence may have on Romero’s purity (161), Barnes still acts as pimp in

their affair. In the structure of the narrative, it is Romero who represents Cohn's foil, rather than Barnes. In both cases, the importance of tradition and a code of life play a major role; they are contrasted mainly through the question of authenticity. Both characters, also, see Brett as something she is not, as Romero also wants to marry her, and make her more 'womanly' by having her grow out her hair (212). Brett's final refusal of Romero is the obverse of her affair to Cohn: in the latter, she fears that she is corrupting the purity of the bullfighter; in the former, she herself feels corrupted by the 'usurper' Cohn. Both examples reflect an inability to understand or accept new gender identities, leaving Barnes (and to an extent Mike Campbell) as the only characters in the text who acknowledge Brett as she is.

Thus, the masculinity that Romero characterizes in the text contrasts that of the black men only in so far as that his ideals and actions are placed in a system of code behaviour that is endorsed by the Hemingwayesque understanding of masculinity. This masculinity, however, falls short in the world in which it is cast because it is out of place temporally. Whereas Barnes represents a novel understanding of coming to terms with the challenges of masculinity with dignified stoicism, Romero is also an Other in the sense that he is alien and oblivious to these negotiations of gender norms altogether. The purity of line he represents also encompasses a primitivism, or rather, a purely traditionalist view of gender roles. Thus, Romero's masculinity too is cast below the Hemingwayesque masculinity in the sense that it is incompatible with the world in which it is set.

### Conclusions on Cohn

The preceding analysis has uncovered two major tenets in the characterisation of Robert Cohn. On the one hand, Hemingway employs a series of anti-Semitic motifs in

characterising Cohn's masculinity, and thereby placing it in a hierarchy marked not only by a code of conduct, but also by ethnic divisions. On the other hand, the relationship between Barnes and Cohn is manifested in a series of castration metaphors and displacements, whereby the idea of an Other challenges and complicates the very ethnic order that the narrative seeks to uphold. Thus, a number of statements hold true about Cohn at the same time: he is a scapegoat, a chivalrous romantic fool, a sensitive man, and a case of 'arrested development'. But he is also an agent of change, a successful fighter and lover, and, physically, a reflection of 'hyper-masculinity'. In characterizing Cohn as a physically assimilated but intellectually emasculated Jew, Hemingway reasserts an ethnic masculine hierarchy through the trope of inauthenticity. The implication that this inauthenticity is inherent is also a recurring theme in Lewis's portrayals of Jewish men in *The Revenge for Love*.

### **'Split-men' and Corrupters: The Jewish Countertype in *The Revenge for Love***

In *The Revenge for Love*, two episodes are vital in understanding the role of the Jewish counter-type. In the first, Victor Stamp encounters Peter Wallace at a party he reluctantly attends, and the ensuing confrontation sends his idea of self as an artist into disarray. This leads to the second scene, in a forgery factory, where Stamp encounters the Jewish forger Isaac Wohl. In each of the episodes, the Jew represents a countertype to the 'strong personality' of Stamp as outlined in Chapter 2. David Ayers argues that a key to understanding Lewis's conception of self is how he "participates in a mythologizing of the Jew closely akin to that of Nazism" (34). In contrast to Frederick Jameson, Ayers maintains that anti-Semitism is as a central element of Lewis's worldview, observing that Jewish characters in Lewis's works are depicted as "split-men" who attempt to manipulate and thereby destroy the "strong personalities" that his

protagonists strive to be (34-35). “The Jew”, then, “becomes a central focus for the whole range of Lewisian prejudices and anxieties, and is structurally their supreme articulation” (14). Arguing against a history of ideas <sup>5</sup> approach to anti-Semitism, Ayers contends that a psychoanalytic approach is vital to understanding the dynamics of these structural formulations (36-7). Drawing on the work of psychologists Ackerman and Jahoda (1950), Ayers outlines a four-fold structure of anti-Semitic discourse. Firstly, anti-Semitism is understood as a “release of latent anxieties otherwise censored by the consciousness in terms of normalizing attitudes” (ibid). Secondly, an exaggerated sense of vulnerability leads to a powerful attack on the Jewish other, as he or she is seen as particularly vulnerable. Ayers ties this to Lewis’s preoccupation with a “confusion of the concept of self” (ibid). Thirdly, the patients Ackerman and Jahoda studied showed an inability to create close personal relationships, which Ayers links to Lewis’s personal paranoia. Finally, a predisposition to anti-Semitism is marked by “a tendency to conformity and fear of the different” (39). This four-fold approach offers an insightful if speculative approach to understanding the dynamics involved in the Lewisian prejudice. However, this thesis holds that Ayer’s approach too closely ties the biographical Lewis to the narrator of *The Revenge for Love*. Therefore, this study of the novel will focus on the structural function of the Jewish countertype. Moreover, in my approach, I will explore the close ties between physical representations of Wallace and Wohl and the socio-political standpoints that they are attributed in the novel.

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<sup>5</sup> Reed Way Dasenbrock has undertaken a history of ideas approach to Lewis’s writing. Dasenbrock contends that the fascist undercurrents of Lewis’s writing must be tied to the concept of paranoia, studying the topic on three levels: the historical/biographical; the ideological; and the thematic (83). Arguing that Jameson’s reading of *Hitler* is a “labeling operation” (84), he claims that Jameson is incorrect in giving Lewis a coherent political ideology. As with Ayers, he focuses on the schema of paranoia that underlines Lewis’s political consciousness. Dasenbrock states that Lewis’s endorsement of fascism primarily relates to his distrust of and disgust in parliamentary politics and the political sphere as a whole, thereby embracing the “extrapolitical politics of fascism” (93). Finally, Dasenbrock claims that: “Lewis is not at all anti-Semitic at any point” (94). The dynamic at work in *The Revenge for Love* shows the inaccuracy of this claim.



Peter Wallace (né Reuben Wallach)

The encounter between Victor Stamp and Peter Wallace at a high-end party hosted by Communist-sympathiser Sean O'Hara is the primary example of anti-Semitic portrayal in *The Revenge for Love*. Here, the assimilated Jew Wallace (who has taken on a more British sounding name, assumedly to ease his conduct in the intellectual circles of London) is engaged in a discussion with Victor's friend Tristram, who is soon joined by the Stamp. The ensuing exchange, and its evaluation by Margot, who observes it, deserves close attention.

The onset of the exchange is a discussion of whether or not Pablo Picasso's art is bourgeois and uphold capitalist values (155). Wallace supports this claim, drawing on Carl Einstein, while Tristram disagrees, although he does not like to, as Wallace "makes him feel small" (156). Moreover, Wallace is described as a "Levite", and "the great fountain of pure doctrine" (ibid). Victor joins the conversation, which has now turned to Braque's family background and the revelation that Braque's father was a house-painter, commenting: "like old Hitler" (ibid). The animosity between Victor and Wallace is immediately evident. The narrator comments that Pete "had two quite separate responses, one for Tristy...and one for this wild goat...for whom he was nothing but "Pete" – a little guy who scribbled pretentiously about pictures and sculpture" (ibid). For Wallace, Victor is a wild card out of Australia, as contrasted to Tristram who is "a sheep of his own fold" (ibid). For Victor, on the other hand, the informal pet name "Pete" evokes a mixture of disrespect and false affinity. Wallace is clearly aware of the reasons for which Victor dislikes him: "[he] did not like him, and regarded him as a pretentious word-slinger" (ibid). Moreover, the drawing in of Hitler immediately puts Wallace on the defensive, and this mention is both deliberate and, when considering the discussion at

large, out of place. The tension is increased when Victor again mentions Hitler, now asking if he is a Böcklin fan, clearly enjoying the discomfort that the name and its implications have on Wallace, who is eager to “[brush] Hitler aside” (157).

As the discussion continues, the theories of Carl Einstein resurface, implying that Wallace is reciting an established position, rather than offering opinions of his own. The basic tenet of this theory states that art needs to be understood within the Marxian paradigm. Wallace maintains that the notion of art for art’s sake cannot be done. Victor agrees with the assertion that art cannot be done simply for art’s sake, but questions whether it is reasonable to bring Marx into the discussion at all, remarking in jest: “Marx wasn’t a painter” (158). Moreover, Victor attacks Carl Einstein by questioning Peter Wallace: “what does he know about painting anyway?...He’s one of those Jewish smart-alicks from Paris.” (ibid). The juxtaposition of “Jewish” and “smart-alick” here signals a more direct attack by Victor on Wallace. The implication is that they are Jewish intellectuals who live in the ivory tower of art criticism without truly understanding the work at hand. This insinuation manifests itself further when considering the fact that the arguments made in their entirety appear to be dogmatic derivatives of the Marxian (Jewish) paradigm. Thus, the text here creates a dichotomy between the Jew as art critic (and communist) and the true artist Victor Stamp. Name allegory is employed to underline this contrast. The Lewisian narrator introduces Peter Wallace by referring to his ‘real’ name, parenthetically rendered “né Reuben Wallach” (155). Dietz Bering (1988) has identified this semantic juxtaposition as a pan-European anti-Semitic tradition that aimed to ‘expose’ seemingly assimilated Jews by using their ‘original name’ as a demarcation of difference (18, 393). The identification of a ‘Jewish name’ is tied to a stigma of prejudice. Moreover, ‘Wallach’ translates from German to ‘gelding’,

which refers both to a castrated male horse and to a eunuch. Considering the use of name-allegories in the novel, this is clearly not a name chosen at random. The juxtaposition of Wallace's 'true name' and the image of the eunuch symbolize the feminization of Wallace's character, which is underscored by multiple physiognomic demarcations. Lewis thus employs an anti-Semitic tradition to cast the Jewish man as a castrated other.

#### Peter Wallace and the Physiognomy of the Other

The most basic physical contrast between Wallace and Victor Stamp is that the former is described as a "little man" (156), compared to the impressive physique of Victor, as discussed in Chapter 2. Wallace is also described as having "cat-like eyes" (ibid), which can be understood as a physiognomic sign of duplicity, cunning and keeping one's own council. The latter point is also evidenced in the manner in which Wallace reacts to input in discussions. The narrator comments: "while Tristy was speaking Peter had stood quite still, as if he had been listening to the *recitation of a lesson*...for his eye was fixed upon a distant point, with a *slight smile* played upon his lips" (156). Here, Wallace is portrayed as entirely self-referential; the opinions of others do not really concern him. Moreover, the 'slight smile' indicates an arrogant air of superiority, as if he already understands what is about to be said, and does not expect or welcome any new input. Physically, this is portrayed in the way that Wallace looks at Victor "from under his eyelashes" (157). The eyelashes here symbolize the curtain through which Wallace views those around him, wearing them like a shield against intrusion. This notion of self-referentiality is reflected in the discussion at large: Wallace is a focalization of a theory, and does not so much take part in a discussion as spell out the Communist gospel according to Einstein and Marx. The notion of the Marxian paradigm as a gospel is

strengthened by the fact that Wallace is likened to a “visiting vicar...[who becomes] bored after too protracted a pumping by an elderly *devote* upon matters of doctrine” (ibid).

The importance of the eyes as a physiognomic motif returns in Margot’s description of Wallace from afar, commenting that he had “a most *vixenish* and vindictive look [in] ... his eyes” (161). Linking the idea of the vixen with that of the cat, Wallace’s eyes and gaze reflect that of a feminized man. This feminization links up to the general idea of the Jew as somehow effeminate, as shown by Gellar in his analysis of anti-Semitic stereotypes. In addition to the eyes, other elements of Wallace’s physique are focalised in these scenes. After the mentions of Hitler, when Wallace is angry or astonished, the narrator comments that his hair would “retreat from his forehead” (156). This is repeated in Margot’s vision of Wallace’s oratory: “the hair would hurry back from his yellow forehead” (160). The implication of male pattern baldness here serves as an indicator of a lack of potency. Symbolically, the implied thin texture of Wallace’s hair can be understood as a physical reflection of what Victor understands as a ‘thin’ line of argument. Moreover, the mention of ‘yellow’ skin serves as another reminder that Wallace in some way is different from Victor and Margot.

The final physical motif in the portrayal of Wallace is his mouth and speech. Margot comments that Wallace bars his teeth “in a self-confident and self-satisfied grin as he *withered* the air with his tongue”, and labels the same tongue as “destructive” (160, 161, emphasis added). The implication here is that Wallace is corrupting those around him. The use of ‘withered’ in this context is telling, as it links the ideas he is spreading to a plague. It is not only the listeners who are affected but the very air itself. This reflects a long line of anti-Semitic ideas that the Jews are carriers of disease, both physical, such as

syphilis, and mental, the cast in point here being communism. Furthermore, the organic imagery of disease was employed in anti-Semitic propaganda to insinuate that society was in some way 'infected' by Jewish influence, which needed to be 'cleansed'. Thus, Wallace's external appearance reflects the effeminacy and corruption that the narrator attributes to him. Anti-Semitic tropes of the Jew are employed to bring this image across.

#### Wallace as Manipulator, anti-Artist and Parasite

When Victor is confronted by the fact that he and Wallace actually agree on their interpretation of Picasso, Stamp is put on the defensive, stating that he never said it (159). The narrator comments: "Victor rolled about against a wall, as if he were a hobo dealing with his parasites" (ibid). The fact that the mere insinuation that Victor and Wallace agree on something leads to this response is significant. Even more so, the choice of the term 'parasite' denotes that Victor sees the same 'illness' that was described by Margot above. He is left physically fighting off the influence of Wallace. The juxtaposition of the ideas that Wallace is spreading a disease, and that this disease parasitically 'clings' to its host, are two evocations of anti-Semitic discourse. Wallace becomes the focalization of the corruption of Victor Stamp, and the fact that he is Jewish is by no means a coincidence. Margot articulates the current of corruption that she envisions herself and Victor fighting against, making Wallace the supreme articulation of the world they are at odds with:

Within a few minutes, led by Pete...they were discussing things that made her blood run cold. Everything they said bore upon the fact that in the modern world...there was no place for the artist...everyone they knew was robbed by dealers...and Pete...had been employed to disseminate terror and despair amongst all those who wielded brushes...(He himself never seemed to be in want

of money – he must have received it for the predication of death.) He seemed to experience a diabolical satisfaction in this picture of the apocalypse...she felt that almost *physically* he was forcing Victor's head into the gas oven. (160, 161)

Peter Wallace is here cast into the role of manipulator and Satan. His craft is described as the wilful and pleasurable corruption of the free will of the artist into the confines of political dogma. To Margot, and by extension to Lewis, this road to perdition is paved by the vision of the Jew as an anti-artist. The implied dichotomy between the individual and creative cast against the Jewish as collective and corruptive is a long-standing tradition of anti-Semitic discourse.

In his analysis of George Sorel, Mark Antliff (1997) outlines how the view of the Jew as an anti-artist came about. Antliff maintains that Sorel envisioned a new aesthetics of class, seeing class conflict as a productive and necessary means of social dynamics, whereby heterogeneous interests are pitted against the 'lie' of homogeneous democratic society which can be traced back to a rational Enlightenment philosophy (52). Sorel here employs the Bergsonian distinction between intellectual modes of thought and intuition, where the latter is synonymous with creativity (51). In this dichotomy, Sorel states that democratic institutions are stifling the role of the artist and claims that the overly rationalist ideas underlying democracy have eroded the importance of myth. By contrast, his theory endorses an aestheticization of politics and gives the artist, as myth-maker, a central position in social life (ibid).

In the dichotomy between the rational and intellectual forces of society and the creative and forceful ones, Sorel instils the figure of the Jew as the epitome representation of the former. The Jew is understood as the anti-artist; "the abstract, disembodied symbol of the 'pure idea', divorced from all qualitative and corporative

entities... exemplify[ing] all that served to stultify creativity” (61). From an economic perspective, this is linked to the fact that the Jews are understood as ‘lechers’, tied to finance institutions but utterly unproductive themselves. Furthermore, the Jew is seen as stateless, “rootless and uprooted” (59), whose allegiances are a ‘sham’. Finally, this is linked to feminization and impotence, as contrasted by Sorel’s vision of a masculine “warrior state” (61). Thus, in Sorel’s theory, the Jew is devoid of mythical belief and masculinity, and is wedded only to “mercantile interests and intellectual ideology” (63).

Sorel’s understanding of the social function of the Jew casts light on the characterisation of Peter Wallace. Here too, the assimilated Jew (né Wallach) becomes a stand-in for the destruction of artistic creativity and free will. Wallace is portrayed as an ideologue who ‘disseminates terror’ on Victor Stamp by attempting to tie him to a dogmatic and lifeless intellectual understanding of art, devoid of intuitive creativity. The episode with Wallace functions structurally as the antithesis to Stamp’s creative pursuits, and foreshadows the breakdown of his integrity by accepting a position at the forgery factory. Wallace thus embodies the corruption of Victor Stamp, and is his structural antithesis.

In this manner, the anti-Semitic portrayal of Wallace functions on three levels. Physically, he is cast as the masculine countertype to Stamp, both in terms of appearance in general, such as by size, but more importantly through feminization and hints at impotence. On the economic plane, Wallace is seen as the ‘lecher’, who is never in want of money but does not perform any productive work, rather indulging in the propagation of dogma. Intellectually, Wallace is the manipulator who disseminates hopelessness and stifles creativity. Thus, Wallace functions as the physical counter-type

and intellectual anti-thesis to Victor Stamp. The significance of the anti-Semitic implications deserves closer attention.

David Ayers argues that Wallace represents the “manipulator-Jew” (178), but adds two interesting considerations. Firstly, on the theoretical plain, he maintains that Lewis views the Jew as a ‘split-man’, with no genuine self, and launches attacks on the coherent selves, such as Stamp, thereby throwing them into disarray (ibid). On the political level, Ayers takes note of the fact that Margot states Wallace is “employed” to spread fear, arguing that this can be seen as a hint that Wallace as employed by the Soviet Union, “which may well fund these possible agents in their campaign against the self; the Soviet State structurally [here becomes] the Kingdom of the Jews on Earth” (ibid). This link between what is portrayed as the corruptive nature of the Jew and the spread of Communism adds another political dimension to the characterisation of Wallace. The merging of the images of ‘the Jew as corrupter’ and ‘the Jew as propagator of communism and secret agent to the Soviet Union’ ties together two central trains of Lewis’s political ideology. In this manner, it is clear that the anti-Semitic portrayal of Wallace is a deliberate undertaking and must be understood in relation to Lewis’s ‘fantasy structure’ of the political game. The merging of these two images marks the clearest political demarcation of *The Revenge for Love*.

#### Isaac Wohl – The Mechanization and Submission of Self

In the forgery factory sequence, Victor Stamp is again pitted against a Jewish male, Isaac Wohl, who serves as his structural and intellectual opposite. The factory owner Freddie Salmon, unhappy with Victor’s productivity and work-ethic, marvels at Wohl, who forges with “exemplary neatness” (254), and for whom everything is “on the quiet, for he was the quietest (who worked quietly, walked quietly and thought quietly)” (ibid).



Moreover, he is described as a “perfect, reliable machine” (ibid). This mechanistic view is recurrent throughout the scene. Even as the conflict between Stamp and Salmon reaches its climax, “the sleek and noiseless manufacture [of Wohl’s forgery is] the only thing that [impinges]...the deathly silence of the place” (265). The docility and relentless work of Wohl is contrasted by Stamp’s continuous attempts at rebellion. Wohl is portrayed as having no will of his own, and is furthermore contrasted to Stamp physically: he is described as little and wearing glasses. Moreover, he is feminized both in the direct sense that he is copying the work of a female artist, Marie Laurencin, and also explicitly through Salmon, who comments that while Wohl is the better artist, he is not “man enough...to be put on the big rough stuff of a Van Gogh portrait” (254). This task is left to the Anglo-Saxon Stamp. The complete lack of character given to Wohl has led Ayers to label him a “victim-Jew...having completely renounced self” (180). This is complicated, however, by the hints at tacit endorsement Wohl gives to Stamp during the latter’s rebellion. This endorsement is tainted by the air of superiority the narrator attributes to Wohl. The narrator focalizes this feeling of superiority by stating that Wohl believes “such outbursts on the stupid side of creation should be encouraged” (256). Wohl casts himself on the opposite side of creation, hence one of intelligence, reinforcing the dichotomy between Jewish intellectualism and Stamp’s intuitive, will-driven creativity. Still, the narrator comments that Wohl has a “sly appetite for massive disrespect” and offers a “discreet salute for rebellion” (ibid). As the conflict ensues, he offers a “smile of secretive appreciation” (263) and, after Stamp has destroyed the forged Van Gogh self-portrait, “peered intently at the debris, as if it might be expected to burst into poisonous flower” (271). These hints could indicate that Wohl is merely caught too deep in the web and secretly wishes he would do the same. However, this is

contrasted by the portrayal of Wohl's love of forgery: "he did not mind whether he did a Marie Laurencin or an Isaac Wohl – unless he might be amused slightly more, intellectually (or, if you like, it bored him less) to be somebody else than to 'be himself'" (254). Having no true self-identity, Stamp's rebellion seems to be merely another 'entertainment' as a shield against boredom. Thus, Wohl is characterized as being completely without individual character.

In terms of the masculine countertype, Wohl is both physically and intellectually opposite to Stamp. As with Wallace, the idea that Wohl, as a Jew, considers himself to be intellectually superior to Stamp permeates the episode. Wohl is a complicit and wilful forger. Structurally, however, it could be argued that Wohl holds the opposite function to that of Wallace. Where Wallace functions as the manipulator who drives Stamp into forgery, Wohl is the complete manifestation of the anti-artist, thereby sparking Stamp's rebellion and rejection of the factory. The scene closes with a simile, told as a joke, that Victor "is very much like Nazi Germany" (273). In this context, it deserves closer attention.

#### National Allegory and the Victimization of the 'Strong Male'

After Victor has left the factory, the remaining forgers, Tristram and Wohl, as well as Abershaw and Salmon, discuss his character. In an attempt to explain Stamp's inner working, Tristram states that "Victor...suffers from an inferiority complex...[he] really *is* like the Third Reich...his nation is Victor...and he suffers from a permanent sense of injury...a rather impoverished, mutilated, but extremely chauvinistic Great Power" (273). The simile, while told as a 'good laugh' in this sequence, holds more sinister implications. As David Ayers points out, the scene structurally provides a three-fold attack on the strong masculine self Victor: by the Jew, the businessman and the

communist (181). In the narrative then, the joke is on them, as they represent the three things against which, according to Lewis, the strong masculine individual must rebel.

Moreover, the simile to Nazi Germany shows that the narrator implicitly sees the Hitler state as the victim of internationalist intervention, the 'permanent injury' here represents the Treaty of Versailles. Ayers links this sequence to Lewis's *Hitler*, stating that the extended essay on Nazi Germany had "identified the interest of self with that of a nationalism seen as defensive, counterposed to the threatened encroachment of communism" (ibid). In this sense, Victor truly *is* the Third Reich. The joking idea, told by Abershaw, that Wohl, in this context, is "brave little Belgium" (*Revenge for Love* 273), both intensifies his role as victim (as Belgium had been overrun by Imperial Germany at the onset of the First World War, triggering the British to enter it) and exacerbates the egregious implication that the Jews (as brothers in arms of communism) again would be overrun. Finally, it is important to recall that earlier in the novel, Margot has stated that Victor has a "slight resemblance" (76) to a Blackshirt. Ayers claims that "Margaret's endorsement of Nazism is akin to Lewis's own: it is *almost*, but not *quite*, as suspect as communism" (ibid). Thus, in *The Revenge for Love*, anti-Semitic portrayals are employed in a two-fold manner. On the one hand, the Jew is the manifestation of corruption, as a stand in for the joint forces of intellectualism, communism and the capitalist economy. On the other hand, the Jew is the supreme victim of these very forces. This duality creates a context whereby the 'Jewish world' is entirely self-referential. Anti-Semitism is here at its highest echelon: the Jew is seen at the propagator and catalyst of a conspiracy against the strong masculine self. Physically, the Jews at both end of the spectrum, Wallace and Wohl, are characterised as physically unattractive, small and unmanly.

Through their intellectual pursuits, they are also feminised, thereby acting as complete physical and intellectual countertypes to Victor Stamp.

### **The Jewish Countertype in Hemingway and Lewis**

In both *The Revenge for Love* and *The Sun Also Rises*, the use of a Jewish counter-type is prominent. The idea that the Jewish man is in some way inauthentic permeates Lewis's as well as Hemingway's text. Where Peter Wallace and Isaac Wohl represent a new technocratic ideology of political dogmatism and classless society, Robert Cohn usurps traditions and customs from a variety of historic contexts, most prominently the idea of Victorian chivalry and romance. In the first case, the entire ideological background is portrayed as false and corrupting, while in the latter it comes across as a pitiful false representation. In both cases, these Jewish characters are represented as unoriginal. In Lewis, this implication is taken to the point where the Jew is seen as an anti-artist, while in the Hemingway text, Cohn may be a failed writer, but a writer nonetheless. Hence, where *The Revenge for Love* refuses its Jewish characters any sense of originality and creativity, *The Sun Also Rises* classifies them as failures.

In both novels, anti-Semitic physiognomic elements are employed to differentiate the Jewish men from a 'strong willed' white masculinity. This is reflected in stereotypical portrayals of physical features, such as the eyes or nose, to represent the inner workings of the character as corrupt or weak. Moreover, the characters are feminized either through their appearance, or through their actions. In Hemingway's text, these stereotypes are negotiated and inverted in order to reflect the complex interchange between Robert Cohn and Jake Barnes, which is one of simultaneous recognition and disavowal. Here, Cohn is physically attributed with the characteristics traditionally associated with white male masculinity: attractiveness and physical

strength. Through his actions, however, they are shown to be a false outer shell, where the inner workings of the character reflect a sensitive, vulnerable and emotional persona, traditionally associated with the feminine. In the Lewis text, the distinction is much more clear-cut. The Jewish men of *The Revenge for Love* stand in full-blown contrast to Victor Stamp; they are physically and intellectually emasculated.

In the narrative structure of both novels, these Jewish men serve as either catalysts or manipulators who throw the stability of the self-image of Victor Stamp and Jake Barnes into disarray. In *The Sun Also Rises*, this occurs through the juxtaposition and challenge that Cohn's masculinity poses to Barnes's own, and Cohn's affair with Brett Ashley is the structural catalyst to Barnes's masculine breakdown. For Victor Stamp, the encounter with Peter Wallace marks the final blow to his already damaged self-image, which leads him to the forgery factory. This structural link is complicated by the different modes of narration in the two novels. Cohn is presented to us through the first person limited perspective of the narrator Barnes: thus, the entirety of Cohn's characterization is presented through the eyes of the narrator, who grows increasingly antagonistic to Cohn as the plot ensues. In *The Revenge for Love*, the aspect of perspective and narrative voice is complex, as it interchanges between in-text focalizers and the observations of the narrative agent. This interchange obfuscates the narrative gaze through which the Jewish characters are seen: is it Margot who sees Wallace as a manipulator, or the Lewisian narrator, and at what times are they in accord with one another? Ayers argues that, through Margot, Lewis focalizes his own political convictions. While the question of perspective could be said to obfuscate the correlation between literary symbolism and political ideology, the antithetical structure of the novel clearly casts Wallace and Wohl as countertypes and corrupters.

The point in which the Jewish countertypes in these novels differ the most is in the question of agency and power. Cohn is comparatively “harmless”. While the alternate masculine role he inhabits offers a challenge to Barnes’s, the question here is one of hierarchy, not corruption. In the Lewis text, on the other hand, Wallace serves as a stand in not only for the *self*-destructive forces of communism and intellectualism, but as their supreme articulation. Here the Jew is understood as a figure with corruptive agency and power. Even though this power is described as a “sham”, and a falsity, it bears upon Stamp as the primary cause of attempted corruption.

In the final analysis, then, both novels employ anti-Semitic stereotypes to differentiate between masculinities, but with different consequences. In Hemingway’s text, the stereotype is employed as a structural tool to differentiate between masculinities, placing them in a hierarchy with white masculinity at the top. The anti-Semitic portrayal of Cohn is a narrative device to mark difference. At this point, it must be repeated that the goal of this analysis is not to stamp either Hemingway or Lewis with the label anti-Semite, but to show how the stereotype is used and functions in these narratives. In Lewis’s text, however, it is clear that the masculine stereotype is employed with explicit political undercurrents, whereby the physical countertype of the Jew becomes a physiognomic marker of a political fantasy structure. Here, the ‘smart-lick’ Jew is on a ‘mission’, as a corruptive ‘agent’ set out to destroy the strong, white masculine self. That very masculine self is furthermore allegorically tied to Nazi Germany. In *The Revenge for Love*, the portrayal of the Jew is linked to organic metaphors of disease and ‘cleansing’, as well as to a full-blown conspiracy. This tripartite structure, the implied connection between the Jew, communism and capitalist power,

reads as a classic anti-Semitic world conspiracy. Thus, in these novels, the image of the Jew as countertype is employed with different motives and to different ends.

## Conclusion

While the central dictum of Modernism was Ezra Pound's imperative of 'making it new', the comparison of these texts reveals an equally extensive preoccupation with 'reasserting the old'. The innovative aesthetics of the surface that Hemingway and Lewis engage with are gendered to link non-emotion, objectivity and the external viewpoint to masculine writing, cast against the psychoanalytical, fumbling and sensual internal style of femininity. This gender distinction is not of biological nature, however. Lewis is equally uncompromising in his attacks on D.H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf, but both are encompassed in a construct of feminization that links gender binaries to epistemology. The narrators of both *The Sun Also Rises* and *The Revenge for Love* establish a gendered profile of epistemological superiority whereby 'masculine objectivity' reveals 'truth' amidst a decadent and decaying society. For the two authors in question, Modernist innovation of style thus serves as a platform for a re-assertive stance on patriarchal power and masculine agency.

The construct of feminization is explicitly politicized in both novels by operating with a binary of the white male as exile and ex-patriarch, cast against the figure of the Jew as the supreme articulation of effeminacy and social success. While Barnes and Stamp are the besieged victims of physical and intellectual dismemberment, Wallace and Cohn are portrayed as assimilated and in tune with their urban surroundings. Cohn is an exile only in the context of the expatriate 'lost generation'. Thus, the novels engage in a role-reversal between the marginalized and the patriarchy. The Jewish male is cast as the primary benefactor of the social reconfigurations following the Great War and the symbol of the 'new man'. However, in this role-reversal, Hemingway and Lewis side with the newly marginalised. The binary encompasses the white male *artist* as the last



outpost of what are perceived to be the intellectual properties of manhood: creativity, free-will, individuality and action. Against this, the Jewish man is cast as effeminate, inauthentic, unoriginal, passive and paradigm-bound, by extension the intellectual properties of feminization. Patriarchy has become Matriarchy in these texts. Anti-Semitic tropes underscore this binary by casting the Jew as the inherent exile, now usurper of power, and employing physiognomic motifs reveal outer markers of inner corruption. Even Cohn's 'assimilated nose' and boxing proficiency, juxtaposed to Barnes's impotence, leave the latter standing as the true expression of masculinity; Cohn, assimilated or not, is 'still a Jew'. While both *The Sun Also Rises* and *The Revenge for Love* operate with this structural schema, only the latter politicises it explicitly, by making the Jew not only the feminized 'Matriarch' corrupting Stamp, but also the head of a conspiratorial plot to destroy the strong male personality. In Barnes's account, Cohn is an intellectual and physical foil to his attempt at regaining a coherent self-identity, but Cohn's social power is limited to the sexual prowess that Barnes lacks. Thus, the comparison of these two texts reveals how the cultural construction of the Jew as the effeminate and powerful 'new man' was not limited to the political right, but reflects a larger context in which the previously marginalized become a scapegoat in accounting for the white male's loss of power.

The expressions of white male victimhood in these novels may appear equivalent, but have contrastive conclusions. In Lewis's text, the 'strong personality' is besieged by the commodification of his physical appearance and the dismembering of his intellectual independence. The ex-patriarch and would-be 'victor' is 'stamp-ed' into commercialism, forgery and finally death by technology. In the same manner, Lewis claims that Hemingway is 'steined': in both fiction and non-fiction then, the Jew holds the central

place in Lewis's conspiracy of corruption. The result is the fatalist impulse whereby death is the only escape for the besieged man. By contrast, Barnes's physical dismemberment is countered by intellectual astuteness, with which he rejects the capitulation that Stamp undergoes. However, even in exiling Cohn and Brett from his company, the outcome of Barnes's masculine reassertion is at best a negative one built around social exile, both against female sexual agency and urban modernity.

Geographical sites hold an important structural place in both novels. The urban milieus of London and Paris are displayed as the decadent epicentres of feminization, both through the faux-intellectualism of Stamp's artistic circle and the homosexual 'posing' of the *bal musette*. By contrast, the Spanish pastoral serves as an antithetical structure where traditional gender boundaries and authenticity abound. In *The Revenge for Love*, while spatially removed from its London-epicentre, Spain is cast as another no man's land, pawn of the international political game and site of Stamp's technocratic death. By contrast, *The Sun Also Rises* sees Spain as a site of redemption, both through bullfighting and fishing as last outposts of masculine agency and the idealisation of the 'men of the soil' as a counterweight to urban feminization. Underlying this façade, however, is the notion that Spain too will be changed. Romero's tryst with Brett Ashley reflects the meeting of these two worlds, and Romero is also a member of the lost generation, though still blind to it. Pastoral Spain is a site of flight from urbanity and feminization, and as such the last outpost for ex-patriarchs. Tellingly, it is the flight instinct that traverses both novels; the attempt to fight back in an urban setting is rendered hopeless through Stamp's forgeries and Barnes's impotence. Both texts thereby reflect a sense of permanence in these changes, as the attempts to regain masculine agency are flights rather than fights. Feminization thereby becomes a fatalist

force to the ex-patriarch, escaped either by exile or death. Urbanity is rendered a no *man's* land of the 'corrupt', 'deviant' and 'feminized'. In 'making it new', Hemingway and Lewis attempt to 'reassert the old'.

The methodological merging of gender studies and political contextualization in this study has revealed that gender normativity and political advocacy are synthesized in these novels. Moreover, the links made between narrative aesthetics and characterization reflects the amalgamation of style and content in Hemingway's and Lewis's writing. By viewing gender as a 'layer of identification', this study has shown how aspects of masculine anxiety inform a broader platform of social critique. Hemingway and Lewis employ depictions of masculine crises to comment on images of decadence, political disillusionment and changing roles of the majority and the marginalized. By engaging with the perspective of the construct of feminization, this thesis reveals two central facets of a crisis of masculinity: first, the centrality that the 'language of male anxiety' had at this time and, more importantly, how masculine identity was synthesized with ideas of national allegiance, class-consciousness and ethnic determinism. The white 'besieged' male becomes a symbol of a lost and 'better' time. In exiling the ex-patriarch, Hemingway and Lewis attempt to enlist their readers in demanding a quest for reassertion.

A number of delimitations were made in this comparative study, principally out of spatial concerns. A greater understanding of the phenomenon of feminization would be attended by extending the scope of inquiry. In his novel on the Spanish Civil War, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), Hemingway approaches the question of masculine agency from another angle. In aestheticizing Robert Jordan's self-sacrificial death for a 'Cause' not truly his own, Hemingway portrays fatalism as a primary attribute of masculine

identity. Moreover, by casting Jordan's death in nature imagery, the novel engages with an aesthetization of war and death that complicates its political advocacy of free-will and democracy. These thematic and structural similarities to the novels studied here would make *For Whom the Bell Tolls* an ideal expansion to this thesis, as its inclusion would highlight and complicate aspects of Hemingway's gendered identity conflicts.

Gertrude Stein has proven to be a recurring writer in this thesis. Both in terms of Hemingway's 'apprenticeship' and the considerable influence she had on his style, and in Lewis's vilification of her 'stein-studder', Stein's aesthetic form and literature prove central to both authors. In studying feminization, masculine struggles and its political connotations, bringing Stein in to a comparative project, both as a Jewish, lesbian and woman writer, would complicate these concepts by stepping outside of the dichotomies the texts studied here introduce. The juxtaposition of Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast* (1964) and Stein's *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933) would reveal important aspects of the depictions of urban change and the charge of decadence from a gendered perspective. The urban site as a place of social decay also features centrally in Lewis's *Hitler*, where the Berlin of the Weimar Republic comes across as decaying and in need of redemption. In *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939), Christopher Isherwood also employs Berlin as a site of decadence, here in relation to the rise of the Nazi movement. The comparison of these four works would reveal interesting similarities and points of departure in the link between the notion of a feminized urbanity and the specific political advocacies it induces.

A final question this thesis has implicitly raised is that of a "crisis of femininity" (Allen 194). While male identity is understood as besieged, changes in female sexual agency are portrayed as a threat to social cohesion (Lewis's assertion that feminism will cause the death

of the family) or in terms of damnation (the Brett as Circe myth). The reactionary responses that Hemingway and Lewis embody are clearly only one part of a larger spectrum. By considering how changes in femininity were depicted, and viewing this in dialogue with both political advocacy, the gendered binaries of literary style and content could be challenged. What remains clear is that Hemingway's and Lewis's attempts at reinvigorating the expatriate patriarch were reactionary and, ultimately, in vain. Barnes's last words to Brett thus also encompass the fatalism of the cause these authors were advocating. To them, patriarchal reassertion wasn't viable, but it was "pretty to think so".

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