

Reinventing Gender: Masculinity and Gender Issues in
The Sun Also Rises (Novel and Film)

JOSÉ LUIS CASCAJO MENDEZ

TUTOR: JUÁN JOSE CRUZ

FACULTAD DE HUMANIDADES | SECCIÓN DE FILOLOGÍA

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The cinema is not an art which films life: the cinema is something between art and life. Unlike painting and literature, the cinema both gives to life and takes from it, and I try to render this concept in my films. Literature and painting both exist as art from the very start; the cinema doesn't

Jean-Luc Godard

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1. Abstract:

This work does not focus on the topic of literary adaptation itself as this subject has been largely discussed¹. I do not attempt to establish two artistic works separately, my intention with my interpretation of *The Sun Also Rises*, Hemingway's first novel, published in 1926 and the film directed by Henry King in 1957 is to give a complete view of their connection in relation with the topics analysed. My main concern will be to examine the themes of masculinity and gender issues in the novel and the movie. This essay will be divided into three different sections: the introduction, which consists of an overview of some different approaches to literary adaptation. I will also deal with Hemingway's contribution to the filming industry and the problems that his distinctive style had in order to translate his works into a movie. In the main body I will analyse the deconstruction of masculinity and gender issues in *The Sun Also Rises*; it will be divided into four different sections; each of them dealing with a different character and their relevance with the topics studied. First, I will analyse Robert Cohn as the representation of the prototypical Victorian man. Next, I will study Brett Ashley's subversion of the Victorian model of womanhood and her representation of the modern woman. I will continue with Jake Barnes' troubled masculinity and his role as the personification of the spirit of the 1920's. Finally, I will analyse Pedro Romero's model of masculinity and the importance of bullfighting in Hemingway's narrative in order to portray his views of manhood and the "code hero". As a conclusion, I make a brief summary of the different parts of the essay. From this moment, in order to avoid any confusion, when I mention any excerpt of *The Sun Also Rises* referring to the novel by Ernest Hemingway, I will cite the page of the novel.

¹ For further information, consult George Bluestone's *Novels into Film* (1957), Neil Sinyard's *Filming Literature* (1986) or Christine Geraghty's *Now a Major Motion Picture: Film Adaptations of Literature and Drama* (2007).

Instead, when I mention *The Sun Also Rises*, the movie directed by Henry King I will include the minute of the scene mentioned.

2. Introduction:

'My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the powers of the written word, to make you hear, to
make you feel-it is, before all, to make you see'.

Joseph Conrad, foreword to *the Nigger of the Narcissus*

The art of literary adaptation is as old as the fine art of filming itself, the relation between literature and cinema can be traced since the birth of the industry². About a 30 percent of the films made in Hollywood's classic period³ were adapted from novels (Ellis, 3-5). Catherine Kerr asserts that "it is not the novel that is adapted, it is the illusion of reality that the novel claims to produce" (qtd. in McFarlane, 9). This idea can be connected with George Bluestone's notion that "between the percept of the visual image and the concept of the mental image lies the root difference between the two media" (qtd. in McFarlane, 2). This essential difference between the way images are produced in each medium and how they are received has been used by many other critics in the field in order to establish a relation between a novel and the novel-based film.

One of the most important aspects in the field of literary adaption is the issue of fidelity criticism: Is the film loyal to the novel? Or it is rather a free interpretation? As Brian McFarlane suggests:

Fidelity criticism depends on a notion of the text as having and rendering up to the (intelligent) reader a single, correct 'meaning' which the filmmaker has either adhered to or in some sense violated or tampered with. There will often be a distinction between being faithful to the 'letter', an approach which the more sophisticated writer may suggest is no way to ensure a 'successful' adaptation, and to the 'spirit' or 'essence' of the work. The latter is of course very much more difficult to determine since it involves not merely a parallelism between novel and film but between two or more readings of a novel, since any given film version is able only to aim at reproducing the film-maker's reading of the original and to hope that it will coincide with that of many other readers/viewers. (McFarlane, 8)

² For instance, Georges Méliès' *Le voyage dans la Lune* (A trip to the Moon) from 1902, was mainly based on two novels of the time: Jules Verne's *From the Earth to the Moon* and H. G. Wells' *The First Man on the Moon*.

³ Hollywood's classic period lasted from the end of the silent era in American cinema in the late 1920s to the early 1960s. For further information consult Michael Goldberg's Classical *Hollywood Cinema*.

Many of the ideas and interpretations of the filmmaker will be predominant in the film, as Jean-Luc Godard affirms “a filmmaker's fidelity to the literary source is based on a false assumption” (qtd. in Cahir, 15). It can be assumed that a film is a reinterpretation of a novel from the filmmaker's eyes. This idea is also explored by Gianfranco Bettetini, in his work he avows that the differences produced in a literary adaptation are caused by the process of translation into a new semiotic scheme, you reconstruct the text into a new system, creating a new text, different from the original.

According to Cahir's interpretation, there is a difference between "adaptation" and "translation": “to adapt” means to move the same entity into a new environment, so it fits to survive in a new setting. Instead, the term “to translate” is to move a text from one language to another. Through a process of translation, a fully new text which has a strong relationship with its original source is adjusted into a new language. Literature-based films are often considered translations of a source material, the filmmaker needs to be able to translate a novel, made from a language of words to a language of images (14). Both compositions must be perceived as independent works unquestionably interrelated. As Cahir affirms “studying the novel and the novel-based film hinged together, one to the other, allows for an illumination the sort of which occurs in a diptych.” (98). The interaction present in the two “pictures” (novel and film) helps us to see new ideas, motifs within each work separately. When we place together the two works and study their complex relationship, this connection helps to produce new observations.

Considering Cahir's taxonomy, *The Sun Also Rises* would be a “traditional translation” as it maintains the most important characteristics of the novel (plot, settings, and characters) (16). This definition fits perfectly with Henry King's attempt with his translation of *The Sun Also Rises*. The most remarkable aspects of Hemingway's novel are still present in the film. Nonetheless, the filmmaker's endeavour introduces some modifications that do not respond to technical reasons. For example, *The Sun Also Rises* (1957) starts in the late 1950's, this alteration in the opening of the film serves as a tactic to make the viewer aware that the Paris that Hemingway wrote about is gone. King tries to make clear to the viewers that society was different in the 1920's and therefore, some aspects of the story will appear odd for the 1950's spectator ;for example, Brett's promiscuity or Cohn's romantic ideals. As Michael S. Reynolds asserts:

The places and weather may look the same, but all else has changed. The music has changed. The clothes have changed. The prices, the moods, the values – all irrevocably changed. Brett Ashley and Jake Barnes are no longer our contemporaries. As Hemingway once said of Henry James “is as dead as he will ever be”; to continue to read his first novel as if it were written for our age is to be a hopeless romantic (Reynolds, 43)

One of the most challenging aspects when translating a novel into a film is to represent the inner life of the characters. A novel is able to transmit the character’s inner thoughts and feelings in a way that a camera cannot capture. In this process of translation the filmmaker needs to find an equivalent technique to attain the same meaning. Cahir mentions that “prose is not limited to the outside view of a character in the way that a camera is. The camera must find its own methods of communicating the inner workings of character” (99). These difficulties are increased when we are dealing with a Modernist novel. Modernism, which first appeared in England in the works of Oscar Wilde, Joseph Conrad and the early compositions of William Butler Yeats was blooming in the 1920’s. It is a literary movement that focuses more on experimentation. In most Modernist novels, the structure of external events is diminished and there is more room for analysis, introspection and reflection, as McFarlane states:

The comparisons with cinematic technique are clear but, paradoxically, the modern novel has not shown itself very adaptable to film. However persuasively it may be demonstrated that the likes of Joyce, Faulkner, and Hemingway have drawn on cinematic techniques, the fact is that the cinema has been more at home with novels from--or descended from--an earlier period. (McFarlane, 6)

Despite Hemingway’s straightforwardness in his narrative technique, there is an added difficulty in order to be able to translate his works; it is important to know that Hemingway frequently omitted some things he considered obvious, things that he knew and the reader must be able to recognize, in his own words “If a writer of prose knows enough of what he is writing about he may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those things as strongly as though the writer had stated them” (*Death in The Afternoon*, 192). This notion reinforces the idea I have been examining: a novel-based film is a filmmaker’s interpretation, especially in Hemingway’s narratives as he “en-

gages a proactive audience in that everyone has their own interpretation about his works. The reader has to apply his or her own life experiences in an attempt to deconstruct Hemingway's writings" (Zabala, 6).

The themes that Hemingway explores in *The Sun Also Rises* (e.g. the masculinity issues, the consequences of war, the aimlessness of the youth during an epoch of prosperity, the rise of the modern woman, the decline of Victorian values) gives the impression to be overlooked in the film.

There is no doubt that all through the 1930's until 1950's, Hemingway's name became a marketable brand for Hollywood (Laurence). He became one of the foremost national characters. His narrative technique (e.g. character's representation and dialogue skills) shaped the literature that came after him. His influence can even be found in the filmic arts, for instance the *film noirs* of the 1940's and 1950's (Gordon). The readers were not only attracted by his writings. But also by his temperament and personal life, his passion for hunting and fishing, his adoration of women, always seeking for new romantic experiences and his enthusiasm for new adventures. Charles Oliver declares that "he was more than a famous writer-- he was an American hero"(Oliver, 141).

Throughout the first decades of the 20th century, adaptations such as *A Farewell to Arms* (dir. Frank Borzage, 1932), *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (dir. Sam Wood, 1943); as well as films based in Hemingway's works such as *To Have and Have Not* (dir. Howard Hawks, 1944), *The Killers* (dir. Zoltan Korda, 1947), *Under my Skin* (dir. Jean Negulesco, 1950) and *The Breaking Point* (dir. Michael Curtiz, 1950) were box-office hits, despite their incapability to portray Hemingway's themes and style. As Hemingway declared "Hollywood only made the kind of pictures that people wanted to see and the public had a bad taste" (Wells-Lasagne, Hudelet, 53). Films based in well-known novels have always intended to be economically successful; in other words, they use the novel's prestige in order to catch the attention of the audience. Movies carrying Hemingway's name would not be an exception.

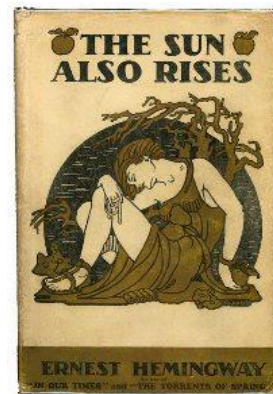
We must admit that Twentieth Century Fox poured tones of effort and money in *The Sun Also Rises*⁴. Undoubtedly, producer Darryl F. Zanuck sought *The Sun Also Rises* to be successful by hiring stars such as Tyrone Power, Ava Gardner, Mel Ferrer and Errol Flynn. It was filmed using the latest techniques (i.e. Cinemascope photography) and with an original soundtrack composed by the renowned Hugo Friedhofer (composer of *Casablanca*'s film

⁴ The bought the rights from RKO for 2,000\$ more information in <http://dkarpeles.com/authors/hemingway/the-sun-also-rises-film-rights/>

score among others). However, the movie seemed to fail in translating some of the transcendental themes that presumably made the novel a modern classic. Hemingway expressed his contempt for the adaptation of his work and he considered it “a splashy Cook’s tour ... of bistros, bullfights, and more bistros” (McFarland, 191).



Poster of *The Sun Also Rises* (1957)



Cover of *The Sun Also Rises* (1st edition)

This essay is based on the novel *The Sun Also Rises*, which captures the essence of the epoch and the most important issues during the decade. Brett and Jake represents the transformation of gender binary classification in the 1920’s and the direction of gender issues took throughout the decade. It is essential for this essay to understand that, during the post-World War I era, young men and women challenged the Victorian classifications of gender. As Kabala states in her work “in the 20s young men and women were testing gender binaries by transgressing their gender spheres: men began to take on behaviors typically gendered female while women began to take on behaviors typically gendered male” (Zabala, 9).

Jake’s impotence and Brett’s promiscuity captures the mood of the *Roaring Twenties*; Hemingway’s tendency to write about effeminate men and boyish women is seen in the novel, contrasting the motion picture, in which many of this ideas were omitted due to the strong emphasis on censorship during the 1950’s.

3. Reinventing Gender: a deconstruction of masculinity and gender issues in *The Sun Also Rises*

Now, I will analyse how all these ideas which were essential in the book are portrayed in the film. I will focus on the depiction of some important characters and an exploration of some scenes in the movie. I will focus on some modifications that these scenes have undergone.

3.1 Robert Cohn.

An important concern in this research will be the subversion of Victorian sexual identity. Robert Cohn perfectly represents the set of values of the prototypical Victorian man in the same way that in Brett Ashley's depiction there is a subversion of the Victorian woman.

Robert Cohn is a portrayal of the Victorian ideals of manhood that faded after the 1880's. Gail Bederman affirms that "By the 1880s [...] both manliness and middle-class identity seemed to falter" (12)

Cohn is the outsider, the unwelcome intruder. Actually, he is never part of the group as his set of moral values made him unable to participate in the *fiesta*. Unlike the rest, he never submits himself to the effects of alcohol. As it can be seen in this quotation, "Mike was a bad drunk. Brett was a good drunk. Bill was a good drunk. Cohn was never drunk." (*The Sun Also Rises*, 78). The rest of the group considers him "superior and Jewish" (*The Sun Also Rises*, 50). Cohn is treated with contempt, especially by Mike and Bill, who dislike him for his Jewishness and his arrogant, defiant behaviour. Additionally, Jake hates him because he slept with Brett. The clash of values produced by his old-fashioned ideas of love and chivalry that no man of the group believed in is one of the major sources of conflict between the male characters. Cohn suffers much of the anguish of the emotionally displaced. This dislocation is caused by his remarks; for instance when he declares that bullfighting bores him "I'm not worried about how I'll stand it. I'm only afraid I may be bored" (*The Sun Also Rises*, 84), his criticism of something the group enjoys makes him more of an outsider.

But even though various critics (e.g. Wolfgang Iser and Michael S. Reynolds) have used Robert Cohn's portrayal to depict Hemingway's anti-Semitism, some other experts (e.g. Jeremy Kaye or Arthur L. Scott) have studied Cohn's subversive potential, "reimagining him not as an object of anti-Semitism but as an agent of Jewish manhood" and Cohn as a "sad but heroic person." (Kaye, 2)

All these ideas are represented in Mel Ferrer's interpretation, he is capable of transposing the same ideas and notions that Hemingway wrote and make an authentic representation of Robert Cohn. He shows the idea of Cohn as "the other", "the stranger" and the tensions between the two sets of masculinity (pre and post war) are portrayed as well.

This idea of Cohn as being distressing for the whole group can be seen in numerous scenes in the movie. He is especially annoying for Mike Campbell, interpreted by Errol Flynn (Brett Ashley's fiancée), the conflict between them is very well illustrated in the film and there are many examples of Cohn being mistreated and insulted by the rest of the males of the group, for example:

"It's no life being a steer," Robert Cohn said.

"Don't you think so?" Mike said. "I would have thought you'd loved being a steer, Robert." "What do you mean, Mike?"

"They lead such a quiet life. They never say anything and they're always hanging about so." [...] "Is Robert Cohn going to follow Brett around like a steer all the time?"

The Sun Also Rises, 104

Figure 1: m. 61:10-61:20



Mike acknowledges that Brett has had affairs before but her affair with Cohn is much worse since he is a Jew, "What if Brett did sleep with you? She's slept with lots of better peo-

ple than you" (*The Sun Also Rises*, 75). Mike feels threatened that someone from outside their group had an affair with Brett and Cohn's presence only increases this menace (Figure 1)

Another example takes place during the bullfight, when Jake asks Bill if he thinks Cohn is bored. Bill even calls Cohn a kike, which is a derogatory term for Jew. "Let me take the glasses," Bill said. "Does Cohn look bored?" I asked. "That kike!" (*The Sun Also Rises*, 86). Instead, in the film Bill says "No, neither does Brett" (Figure 2), this change reinforces my point: in the film the idea of Antisemitism is diminished.

Figure 2, m. 80:23-80:25



Josephine Knopf has it that Hemingway wanted to depict Cohn as a *Schlemiel*, a Yiddish word used to name an unlucky or long-suffering person. However Ruth Wisse's idea is that Cohn does not embody the *Schlemiel*'s characteristics. As she argues, the "Schlemiel's misfortune is his character. It is not accidental, but essential [...] the *Schlemiel*'s comedy is existential, deriving his very nature in its confrontation with reality" (Wisse, 15). Still, despite Wisse's arguments, Knopf's view is based on one of the *Schlemiel*'s most relevant characteristics, his incapability to adapt to new circumstances. For Knopf, Cohn symbolises the idea of the *Schlemiel* due to the fact that his misfortune derives from his inability to adjust his moral standards to a new decade.

The male comradeship between Jake, Mike and Bill is distressed by the sexual control that Cohn imposes upon Brett. Cohn believes that he is better than the rest of men because he had an affair with Brett. This behaviour responds to David Leverenz observation that "the ideologies of manhood have functioned primarily in relation to the gaze of male peers and male au-

thorities” (qtd, in *Masculinity and Homophobia: Fear*, 214). In other words, men need other men’s approval. Michael S. Kimmel has explored this idea as well:

Manhood is equated with power over women, over other men, women become a kind of currency that men use to improve their ranking on the masculine social scale, we constantly parade the markers of manhood, wealth, power, status, sexy women in front of other men, desperate for their approval. (*Masculinity and Homophobia*, 215)

Cohn considers that he is a better man because he has slept with Brett and tries to demonstrate that superiority to the rest of the group. Yet Mike, Bill and Jake do not like the idea that a Jew could be higher than them in their group.

Unlike Jake, Cohn has a sense of chivalry that does not fit in the 1920’s. Jake personifies the spirit of the time. After World War I, a new generation of men emerged. Men who found the ideas of honour, chivalry and courage a joke and tried to find a new set of values totally different to the values that had led Europe to war (Bradbury, Temperley). As an ideal Victorian man, Cohn always tries to protect his honour and his lady from insults as we can see in this excerpt:

You asked me what I knew about Brett Ashley.”

“I didn’t ask you to insult her.”

“Oh, go to hell.”

He stood up from the table his face white, and stood there white and angry behind the little plates of hors d’œuvres.

“Sit down,” I said. “Don’t be a fool.”

“You’ve got to take that back.”

“Oh, cut out the prep-school stuff.”

“Take it back.”

“Sure. Anything. I never heard of Brett Ashley. How’s that?”

“No. Not that. About me going to hell.”

“Oh, don’t go to hell,” I said. “Stick around. We’re just starting lunch.”

The Sun Also Rises, 28

Figure 3: m. 28:20-28:45



This scene can be seen in the movie too (Figure 3). Cohn is more concerned about his honour than about Brett being insulted. For him, his reputation is crucial. In both media we can see how Cohn is always eager to save his damsel in distress. Cohn tries to keep Brett after he realises that she has an affair with Pedro Romero. Consequently, Cohn beats Jake and Pedro to prove his manliness. Cohn represents the pre-war society ideals, his old fashioned set of values is unable to coexist with the age; he is incapable to comprehend casual sex and compensates this incredulousness with violent reactions. This emphasis on violence against situations he cannot understand, as Kimmel asserts “the single most evident marker of manhood” (*Masculinity and Homophobia*, 215). This idea fits with Krin Gabbard’s statement that “violence is such an important part of the American masculinity [...] I think that violence is the result of the culture indulging the castration anxiety of men” (Gabbard, 55)

The fact that Cohn is a middleweight boxer champion is crucial to understand the development of the Victorian ideal of manhood in *The Sun Also Rises*. Since the irruption of women in the public sphere ever since the 1880’s, sports were used as a method to reconstruct manhood: activities like boxing, football or baseball were central against the constraints of masculine expression (*The History of Men*).

3.2 Brett Ashley

Brett represents the shift of the women role from a domestic confinement to a more unrestricted system. The American middle class that rose in the decades between 1820 and 1860 supported a Victorian ideology, creating medical and legal definitions to determine what was supposed to be the “normal” and “civilized” roles, classifying anyone who did not fit in this classification as an anomaly. According to Byrne Fone:

To define what was “normal” the primary task of the medical study of sexuality was to construct a paradigm of the “abnormal” and place abnormality within a scientific rather than a legal/theological discourse. By the 1880s in both England and America, the Victorian medical theorists and social commentators had participated with social and sexual activities of men and women, assigning to each very different roles. The “true woman” was to be submissive socially and sexually, the manager of domestic life, pious as well as morally “pure.” Men were socially and sexually assertive, benign rulers of the patriarchal family, and active providers of material goods. Victorian theorists argued that these roles were dictated by nature and biology and that their qualities were “naturally” associated with the biological female or male. (Fone, 183)

As Kimmel declares, the irruption of women in the “male” circles “has produced a feminization of American culture and had led to a loss of cultural vitality of national virility” (*The History of Men*, 41). He believes that the feminisation of American culture and business produced a crisis of masculinity. Before women’s irruption in economic matters, manhood meant economic autonomy:

It meant control over one’s own labour. It had meant political patriarchy – the control of domestic and political life by native-born white men whose community spirit and republican virtue was respected in small-town life. It had meant the freedom symbolized by the West – vast, uncivilized, primitive- where men could test and prove their manhood away from the civi-

lizing influence of women. When these avenues of demonstrating manhood were suddenly closed, it touched off a widespread cultural identity crisis. (*The History of Men*, 43)

The new woman was a product of urban life. The strict gender and class roles set by the Victorian era did not apply anymore. Women rejected the traditional ideas of submission and a strong emphasis on purity. Brett is free from patriarchal control, she refuses being controlled by a man; for instance, Romero told her to let his hair grow “as a woman” because her hair was “brushed back like a boy” (*The Sun Also Rises*, 12). With this quote, Hemingway is challenging gender binaries: Jake and Brett, as many men and women did during this period, experiment with gender roles. Their experimentation redefined male-female relationship. In the 1920’s, the Victorian gender hierarchies were disappearing due to the enormous number of military and civilian casualties⁵. War made women take jobs traditionally limited to men, such as factory work. As Zabala affirms:

World War I pushed many women into societal roles traditionally limited to men such as factory work due to the astronomical loss of life [...] Women begin to realize that they cannot retain their traditional lifestyles in a modernizing world. For example, long hair and frocks will impede women from working efficiently in the home and factories underwent, they discarded their long hair and frocks for shapeless, boyish “flapper” styles. (Zabala, 20)

Brett represents the disruption of social purity and civil morality, as Wendy Martin enunciates “Brett’s loose, disordered relationships, reflect the shattered unity and contradictions of the modern world” (60). Brett is confined between two sets of values, between the old and the new woman, between the Victorian conventional woman and the self-capable, modern woman.

All these ideas are seen in the movie by the performance of Ava Gardner. As Brett, Gardner is going through a decline, her addictions are the cause of her self-destruction. Both Brett and Gardner are hedonistic women who love alcohol, bullfighters, and nightlife.

Brett is described as “damned good-looking” by Jake (*The Sun Also Rises*, 12), she always takes control in every sexual relation she has. Men fear her because of her sexual confidence

⁵ It was over 37 million: over 17 million deaths and 20 million wounded, consult Matthew White’s *Source List and Detailed Death Tolls for the Primary Mega deaths of the Twentieth Century* for further information: <http://necrometrics.com/20c5m.htm>

and attractiveness. Even Mike Campbell, describes her as Circe, the goddess of Magic, who turned men into swine (*The Sun Also Rises*, 76), (Figure 4) Brett awakes the savagery and viciousness in her lovers. As a prayer mantis, she is capable of devouring men's rationality and emasculate them.

Figure 4, m. 62:06-62:08



Even though I have been underlining Brett's self-assurance, there are also some indications of insecurity in her actions, for instance, the sequence in which Jake is leaving the bar Brett is waiting at the door. Gardner transmits Brett's sadness with her expression, as if something is falling apart within her (Figure 5). This idea is strengthened by her reaction, she re-enters the pub and dances with the first man that she encounters. Through this scene the film is able to represent a crucial idea in the novel: even if Brett can have any man she wanted, she is in love with Jake mostly due to the fact that he is unreachable, she will never have him, and that frustrates her.

Figure 5, m. 27:10- 27:23



In the scene when they enter Pamplona, there is a passage overlooked in the film, when a group of dancers perform around Brett. The symbolism of this action strengthens the idea of Brett as a Goddess of fertility. We can relate this idea with some primitive tribes and the offerings they made to their Gods. The study of religious manifestations in dance is detailed in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*:

Religious symbolism is significant even in the human interactions of the dance. Men often symbolize phallic, aggressive supernatural beings and rain-bringing deities, whereas women symbolize actual fertility.

Encyclopaedia Britannica, Religious Expression in Dance

Another interesting detail is how Brett reacts at the bullfights, unlike any other woman she feels amazed by them, completely in contrast with the Victorian feeble, weak-minded women.

Censorship in the film also affected the character of Brett Ashley in some parts of the script; for instance she does not say “I’m not going to be one of these *bitches* that ruins children.” Instead she says, “I’m not going to be one of these *women* that ruins children.” (Figure 6).

Figure 6, m.126:06-126:08



3.3 Jake Barnes:

Jake Barnes represents the spirit of disillusionment that marked the psyche of the *Roaring Twenties*. As Zabala states:

Perhaps his [Hemingway's] exposure to the barbarous nature of war as an ambulance driver in the European theater during World War I aided his literary capturing of how the war affected the "Lost Generation," particularly in Europe. The term "Lost Generation" reflects the disillusioned, hopeless attitude the war generated. The youth in World War I fought out of nationalistic pride, yet, in the process, hundreds of thousands of lives were lost, and millions were exposed to the inhumanity of war. The loss of millions of men changed the social and cultural landscapes of countries. (Zabala, 14)

Numerous writers of the Lost Generation came to Europe to help: Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos and Edmund Wilson were enrolled in the ambulance corps, Fitzgerald received officer training and Faulkner enrolled in the Canadian Army Force (Bradbury). For all of them war was seen as a crucial transition, an educational and cultural experience, a contact with Europe, the old continent and foundation of Western civilisation. It was the moment to demonstrate their courage, the old heroic values they had grown up with. What they found in Europe was, however, hopelessness and desolation that presumably defined their written works

Even if Jake was wounded in war, he is not mutilated, as Hemingway declared in 1954 in an interview with George Plimpton, "His testicles are intact [...] He is still a man" (Gordon). Nonetheless, Jake cannot fulfil any sexual intercourse in the same way that he cannot fulfil any specific and productive function in society. The fact that he preserves his testicles is essential to understand the figure of the *macho* in Hemingway's narrative. Even though Jake is unable to have a sexual relationship, he is still a man. Jake is capable of controlling problematic situations. He is able to show courage and prove his manhood to other men. Jake is a man

with strong sexual desires. However, he is incapable of satisfying his needs. This is partially in contrast with Hemingway's convictions. For him, a man must dedicate himself to the fulfilment of his desires. Hemingway's "code hero" was founded on the idea that a man must devote himself to all kinds of physical pleasures because these are the rewards of this life.

For Jake, bullfighting provides a virile distraction, it is a release from his emasculated way of life in Paris. Hemingway states that in Paris every man is somehow impotent, he claims that cities murder men, as Kimmel states "cities have become a feminine theme park" (*The History of Men*, 43). Bullfighting provides the fulfilment of his masculine necessities, a substitute for what he cannot experience. Jake has found a way to cope with his impotence through alcohol and meetings with prostitutes with no intent of any sexual arrangement, but only to amuse them with mysteries and riddles, for instance in Jake's meeting with Georgette she takes the role that Jake is supposed to take (m. 12:00 –13:05). Georgette is also an example of the new woman, she is independent and able to make her own life choices, but unlike Brett, Georgette is just a prostitute, she has completely accepted her role in life. The characterisation of Georgette is shown in the film, being as sardonic, cynical and mordant as in the novel (Figure 7):

"Well, what will you drink?"
I asked. "Pernod."
"That's not good for little girls."
"Little girl yourself. Dites garcon, un pernod."
"A pernod for me, too."
"What's the matter?" she asked.
"Going on a party?"
"Sure. Aren't you?"
"I don't know. You never know in this town."
"Don't you like Paris?"
"No." "Why don't you go somewhere else?"
"Isn't anywhere else?"
"You're happy, all right."
"Happy, hell!"

(*The Sun Also Rises*, 8)

Figure 7, m. 7:42-15:01



An important theme dealing with masculinity issues in *The Sun Also Rises* is the depiction of homosexuality. For instance in the passage when Brett goes into the bar:

And with them was Brett. I was very angry. Somehow they always made me angry. I know they are supposed to be amusing, and you should be tolerant, but I wanted to swing on one, any one, anything to shatter that superior, simpering composure. (*The Sun Also Rises*, 20)

Figure 8, m. 16:33-17:28.



In this quote we can clearly see the antipathy that Jake feels for homosexuals, his portrayal of them as devoid of masculinity somehow responds to Jake's fear of being compared with homosexuals. As them, he is in fact emasculated, a more sensitive, delicate man. Jake is pursued by a model of masculinity he cannot fulfil, he is afraid of other men questioning his manhood. Such as Kimmel portrays that the "American men are socialized into a very rigid

and limiting definition of masculinity [...] men fear being ridiculed as too feminine by other men and this fear perpetuates homophobic and exclusionary masculinity” (*Masculinity as Homophobia*, 214). This scene was not censored, the group homosexuals can be perfectly seen entering in the bar with Brett in the background (Figure 8). This fact is perfectly depicted in the quotation above, and is prominent in the novel and the movie. Hemingway showed some signs of an increasing tolerance and interest about different sexual directions, after his during the war, understanding its importance and how could this different sexualities be used for further works. According to Susan Beegel, “Hemingway’s interest in variant sexual behaviour as a subject that could be exploited in fiction was kindled” (226).

Through the years, Hemingway’s sexuality has been questioned, even if he repeatedly showed a confident conventional masculinity. His interest in hunting, boxing, and women allegedly concealed his latent homosexuality. As Donnell states:

Ernest Hemingway’s fiction, often lionized for its valorous portrayal of the steadfast male exhibiting “grace under pressure” in the face of an increasingly decadent post-World War I society, has come in the last few decades under increasing scrutiny. What was once interpreted as the author’s attempt to uphold the ideal of a “manly” code is now—since the inscription of sexual roles in the 1970s—more often either criticized as misogynist and homophobic, or redressed as a symptomatology of Hemingway’s latent homosexuality. (Donnell)

Homosexuals were seen as a threat for both the individual and the traditional family organisation; as Talcott Parsons declared “homosexuality is a mode of structuring human relationships which is radically in conflict with the place of the nuclear family in the social structure and in the socialization of the child” (qtd. in Gilbert, 77). As the distinctions between different genders and the cultural and social differences between men and women were vanishing, the privileged position of power of the masculine sphere of influence was presumably threatened. The position of homosexuality, combined with the changes in the domestic roles in the 1950’s emphasised the problems of modern masculinity.

In *The Sun Also Rises*, there is a crucial difference between men and women: man’s self-determination is a product of nature and rural life, unlike the new woman’s freedom, which is a product of urban spheres; as Gabbard asserts. “The American hero runs away from home since women were the stabilizing forces” (Gabbard, 55). The resistance against this attempt to

domesticate men and the confrontation against the feminisation of manhood is what Kimmel denominates *Masculinism*. He declares that “Masculinism involves an effort to restore manly vigour and revitalize American men by promoting separate homosocial preserves where men can be men without female interference” (*The History of Men*, 36). This idea has also been explored by the mythopoetic *Men’s Movement* established by Robert Bly, with which he states that men must come together against the domestication of men. Unlike cities, nature has remained frantic and aggressive, “the perfect playground to recreate American manhood” (*The History of Men*, 53). In nature, moral constructions are left aside, it is a new place to exploit the virtues of manhood and explore a deeper connection between men. This homosocial concern was shared by Theodore Roosevelt in the previous century, a man whose obsession with masculinity, influenced the fortune of a nation as Sarah Watts asserts:

Roosevelt longed for an ideal of brotherhood, a “community of interest” composed of an educated, cultured, Anglo-Saxon type who willingly used force to protect both propertied and working men’s interests. Political will for Roosevelt derived from true manhood. Only when “a man endeavours to throw in his lot with those about him, to make his interests theirs, then distinctions of birth or wealth disappear and the principle of ‘virile honesty and robust common sense triumph[s] in our civic life. (Watts, 66)

The scene in which Jake and Bill are fishing symbolises this homosocial establishment. The sense of discussing topics that were not acceptable in Paris is denoted in both media: in the novel the conversation deals with Jake’s impotence, as Bill declares “I couldn't tell you that in New York. It'd mean I was a faggot” (*The Sun Also Rises*, 61). In the film, it is about Jake confessing his love for Brett (Figure 9). In both situations we get the sense of freedom in natural landscapes, away from the social order. In nature they are free to act and talk as they want. Jake’s healing process began with nature. This notion of nature in relation with freedom and happiness can also be seen in the descriptions of the landscape, as Jake gets nearer the country:

We passed some lovely gardens and had a good look back at the town, and then we were out in the country, green and rolling, and the road climbing all the time [...] then the road turned off and commenced to climb and we were going way up close along a hillside, with a valley below and hills stretched off back toward the sea. You couldn't see the sea. It was too

far away. You could see only hills and more hills, and you knew where the sea was. (*The Sun Also Rises*, 48)

Figure 9 (m. 49:28-49:36)



To portray this sense of fulfilment, the film transposes Jake's mood through Tyrone Power's interpretation. He seems somehow happier, sometimes he even smiles and laughs. This enriches the film and strengthens the ideas that I have been dealing with. For instance when Mike Campbell gets into the *corrida* Jake cries of laughter with Brett while he bullfights with his check (Figure 10).

(Figure 10, m. 68:26-68:30).



Following this view, in the movie there is a clear victimisation of Jake, showing him distressed, almost depressive. We can establish a resemblance with the pyjama he is wearing and the striped uniforms used by prisoners in Nazi camps during World War II (Figure 11).

Figure 11, m.29:04



For many viewers, choosing Tyrone Power to interpret Jake Barnes was a bad choice (Gordon). Years of smoking and drinking made him look unwell⁶. He looks excessively old for the role. However, Power's haunted appearance managed to buttress the feelings that Hemingway wrote about in *The Sun Also Rises*, particularly Power's deep and disheartened reactions to surprises, especially by Brett's actions. (Figure 12).

Figure 12, m. 56:05-56:25



The way in which Jake Barnes learns from an army officer he is impotent is different in the novel and the film (Figure 13). However, far more important for the question of fidelity is the way in which Jake behaves about it. In the film he seems troubled, miserable and disheartened:

⁶ In addition he was reportedly taking pills so he could survive with only three hours sleep every night, for further information: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0051028/trivia?ref_=tt_trv_trv

Doctor, don't you think it's about time you stopped lying to me?

What do you want to know, Barnes?

Am I going to be all right?

There'll be certain after effects from your wound, but that's to be expected. The important thing is that the shell fragment that entered your back missed your spine, so you'll be able to walk and move about absolutely normally. However...

Go on.

You're going to be impotent. (*The Sun Also Rises* m.33:23- 33:30)

Figure 13, m.33:23- 33:30 ⁷



Nevertheless in the novel represents Jake's cynic behaviour of defense against his condition:

That was funny. That was about the first funny thing. I was all bandaged up. But they had told him about it. Then he made that wonderful speech: "You, a foreigner, an Englishman" (any foreigner was an Englishman) "have given more than your life." What a speech! I would like to have it illuminated to hang in the office. He never laughed. He was putting himself in my place, I guess. "Che mala fortuna! Che mala fortuna!" (*The Sun Also Rises*, 78)

Still, there is passage that in the film is not portrayed faithfully, when Jake goes to the beach and went into the water, in the film Jake didn't go into the water, instead, he receives

Brett's message:

⁷ As a matter of fact, Darryl F. Zanuck promised the Breen Office (the enforcer of the censorship codes in the Hollywood film industry) that the word "impotent" would not be used, but it was finally

I undressed in one of the bath-cabins, crossed the narrow line of beach and went into the water. I swam out, trying to swim through the rollers, but having to dive sometimes. Then in the quiet water I turned and floated. Floating I saw only the sky and felt the drop and lift of the swells. The water was buoyant and cold. It felt as though you could never sink.

The Sun Also Rises, 178

This scene has a crucial meaning for the final message of the story that is disregarded in the film. Water is a symbol for fertility in relation with femininity, we can relate this idea with Aphrodite as a goddess of the sea and of seafaring; When Jake dives into the sea, he is diving into femininity, marking the most important point in his healing process, Jake will only be able to find a solution for his troubled masculinity through nature and femininity. *The Sun Also Rises* can be described as a drama about the contrast of fecundity and sterility, each theme has a character that embodies it. Fertility is personified by Brett, and the subject of impotence is exemplified by Jake Barnes, a relation between both is impossible.

At the end of the novel, Jake has learned to value and enjoy life for what it is, rather than suffer for what it cannot be. Hemingway uses Jake to show the reader that our lives are irrelevant compared to the eternal cycle of nature. The world endures and as the wounds of the world heal, the pain of Post-World war society will cure too. Instead, the film ends with the iconic repetition of the iconic epigraph which gives us the same sense of hope and room for improvement that the novel transmits. (Figure 14)

Figure 14, m. 120:11-120:14



3.4 Pedro Romero.

Unlike Jake's troubled masculinity, Pedro Romero represents a masculine identity grounded on self-assurance, bravery and uprightness. As I have said earlier in other sections of the essay, Jake is usually victimized during the film. However, Romero maintains the distinctive honour that distinguish the real bullfighter. The portrayal of Romero in the film is very accurate, as Gordon proclaims:

The matador's courtly shyness in front of the Americans, his broken, halting English, and his sudden chemistry with Brett are disarmingly real. He certainly slips easily enough into those toreador pants, the ones that Brett likes so much. (Gordon)

Romero makes clear the parallels Hemingway draws between bullfighting and virility. As Michael Rice asserts, the bull have been a symbol of masculinity since the ancient times:

The bull has been a preeminent male symbol since the ancient times, bullfighting and bull cults have existed for a long time; since the Egyptian cult of Apis, of which the Golden Calf at the giving of the Ten Commandments was part. To the tale of the Minotaur, including Nandi the mount of Shiva. Also some Celtic bull cults and others widespread through the world up to medieval times. Even nowadays, the baptismal font of the Mormons stands upon 12 bulls (derived from Solomon's bronze basin). Bullfighting can be a considered a residue of these adorations, a ceremony of worship or sacrifice where the bull must die for man to win. (Rice)

For Hemingway, bullfighting is a “decadent art in every way, is an art, indeed, if it were permanent it could be one of the major arts.” (*Death in the Afternoon*, 68) Hemingway's depiction of bullfighting is comparable to the gladiators fighting in the arena in Roman times. It is a test of manhood: men can prove courage and fearlessness to death, as he declared:

The only place where you could see life and death, i.e., violent death now that the wars were over, was in the bull ring and I wanted very much to go to Spain where I could study it. I was trying to learn to write, commencing with the simplest things, and one of the simplest things of all and the most fundamental is violent death. (*Death in the Afternoon*, 12)

Hemingway tried to explore his concept of *Grace under Pressure* through bullfighting, he considered that in the presence of death, a man can discover his own potentiality. There-

fore, the character must act in a way that is acceptable when he confronts it. A man must not show that he is afraid in the presence of tragedy. Jake admires Pedro because he fulfills Hemingway's *code hero*. Bullfighters are not only in constant confrontation with death, but they face this conflict with elegance and style. Bullfighting represents man's incessant struggle against evil, the figure of the bull represents evil and the arena symbolizes life. Unlike any male character, Pedro Romero has the courage to fight against evil, he does not avoid the confrontation, as a true hero, he fights against it and wins. In this sense, Romero serves as a foil⁸ for the rest of the characters: he teaches Jake and his friends to confront their problems so they can control their destiny, only if you fight against evil you will be able to enjoy life.

Hemingway uses Romero's last bullfight of the festival of *San Fermín*, to express another theme that is disregarded in the film: pain does not matter to man. Despite the fact that Pedro Romero is hurt by Robert Cohn, he fights against the bull, his moral code forces him to fight. Similarly, due to the audience's susceptibility, we do not see Hemingway's tale of the bull's ear, the ear that Romero throws to Brett, and ends "wrapped in a handkerchief, along with some cigarette butts" (*The Sun Also Rises*, 104). In the film the *corridas* are thrilling, capturing the emotion and the dramatic atmosphere of the bullfights. However, Hemingway's passion for bullfighting and the metaphysical understandings that he tried to portray were overlooked. The film only focused on the action and tragedy of the bullfights leaving all this ideas disregarded

Romero voices an idea that we can see through the novel, especially since the start of the *fiesta*: there is a parallel relationship between the bulls and the relationship between Jake and his friends (Figure 15):

"The bulls are my best friends."

I translated to Brett.

"You kill your friends?" she asked.

"Always," he said in English, and laughed. "So they don't kill me."

(*The Sun Also Rises*, 97)

⁸ In literature, a foil is character who is presented as a contrast to a second character so as to point to or show to advantage some aspect of the second character. An example is the character of Dr. Watson in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories. Watson is a perfect foil for Holmes because his relative obtuseness makes Holmes's deductions seem more brilliant.

Figure 15, m. 89:04-89:13



This relationship of constant tension between the characters due to the opposition between masculine/feminine, the struggle between the two sets of masculinity and the high regard every single male character feels for Brett is important in both media. In the film, just as in the novel, we can see the idea that each male character is, indeed, a bull. This idea can be seen in an observation made by Jake, which is also present in the film (Figure 16)

“It’s pretty good,” I said. “They let the bulls out of the cages one at a time, and they have steers in the corral to receive them and keep them from fighting, and the bulls tear in at the steers and the steers run around like old maids trying to quiet them down.”

“Do they ever gore the steers?”

“Sure. Sometimes they go right after them and kill them.”

“Can’t the steers do anything?”

“No. They’re trying to make friends.”

“What do they have them in for?”

“To quiet down the bulls and keep them from breaking their horns against the stone walls, or goring each other.”

The Sun Also Rises, 98

Figure 16, m. 57:12-57:43



This comment is crucial to understand the male/bull relationship, as the steers are sterilised bulls. There is a strong resemblance between Jake and a steer, not only due to the fact that both are emasculated, but also because both of them act as intermediaries in the fights between the males of the group. However, this idea is clearer in the novel due to changes in the film script. For instance, when they meet Romero in a restaurant, Campbell wants Jake to tell to Romero that “the bulls have no balls” (m. 80:37 – 80:57), indicating that Mike has been castrated by Brett. The screenplay substitutes “horns” for “balls.” Unlike in the novel, in the film we can listen to Mike crying “Tell him the bulls have no horns!” (Figure 17)

Figure 17, m. 80:37 – 80:57



Due to this change in the script the idea that every character personifies a bull is not as strong as in the novel. However, it gives a new interpretation. Now, Mike is saying that against Romero’s talent, it seemed that the bulls had no horns.

4. Conclusion.

This work has shown the way in which the themes of masculinity and gender issues are portrayed in *The Sun Also Rises*, Hemingway's novel, published in 1926 and *The Sun Also Rises*, the film directed by Henry King and written by Peter Viertel in 1957

In the first section of the essay I dealt with the difficulties to adapt a novel into a film. One of the points I wanted to emphasise was that in order to analyse both compositions we must study them as independent works which are interconnected, if we are able to establish this connection, it "helps us to see, perhaps in deeper and more critical ways, ideas, motifs, and aesthetic practices within each of the two, separate, individual works" (Cahir, 99)

Another significant point in this essay is the issue of fidelity. It is important to understand that all films require a translation process, the filmmaker has to be able to translate the source material into a new medium.

In the following sections I dealt with the exploration of masculinity and gender issues in some important characters, focusing in the modifications that some scenes have undergone.

First, I analysed Robert Cohn and his role as the prototypical Victorian man. The clash of values produced by his old-fashioned ideas of love and chivalry that no man of the group believed in is one of the major sources of conflict between the male characters. It is important to remember once again that Cohn never forms part of the group, he is always seen as an outsider. Another central idea is how Cohn behaviour, especially his insolent remarks, his obsession with Brett and his violent reactions towards what he cannot comprehend are vital to understand Hemingway's depiction of Victorian masculinity.

In the next section I studied Brett Ashley's subversive potential, she represents the new model of womanhood that rejected the traditional ideas of submission and a strong emphasis on purity that appeared after World War I. A new model. It is important to remember that Hemingway used Brett in order to portray the destabilisation of gender identity: Brett and Jake arise as the couple who best represents the transformation of gender binary classification in the 1920's and the direction of gender issues during the decade.

Then, I focused on Jake Barnes, whose impotence represents the spirit of disillusionment that marked the psyche of the *Roaring Twenties*. It is essential to remember for the subject of masculinity in Hemingway's narrative that, even though Jake is unable to have a sexual relationship, he preserves his testicles. Hence, he is still a man. Jake tries to fulfil his sexual needs through bullfighting and alcohol, Jake's troubled masculinity represents the feeling of futility that characterised the Lost Generation.

Next, I studied Pedro Romero's masculinity, which was based on heroism and honesty. Besides, I analysed his role as the personification of the Hemingway's code hero. Romero illuminates the parallels Hemingway draws between bullfighting and masculinity. Unlike Jake, he is able to confront death and therefore to control his destiny. It is important to remember Hemingway's interest in bullfighting to study his concept of *Grace under Pressure*.

To conclude, what Hemingway tried to portray was the importance of masculinity and gender issues in the 1920's. In both media, the importance of these topics is intact; the movie is able of transposing the same message, even if some scenes have been modified, these adjustments provide new possible interpretations, in other words, the film help us to understand the novel deeper and guide us to see the book in new ways.

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