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THE SUN ALSO RISES AND AS YOU LIKE IT: A STUDY IN INTERTEXTUALITY

The Sun Also Rises and As You like It: A Study in Intertextuality

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Abstract: *The Sun Also Rises (1926) and As You Like It (1599) are very similar to each other in more ways than one. The two heroines represent in the respective ways the new woman of their times. Just as Hamlet is meant to represent the new man of the Renaissance, radically different from the Medieval man, so is Rosalind meant to represent the new woman of the Renaissance as against the Medieval woman. In the same vein, if Jake Barnes represents the post-war generation of men, so does Brett Ashley represent the post-war generation of women. Here, the modern equivalent of the Medieval era is the Victorian period in England and the puritan period in America. Both the heroines carry new confined, showing self-reliance, and fresh outlook free from the chains of orthodoxy and constraints of tradition. Both, heroines become the touchstone for measuring different characters of man. The fundamental similarity between As You Like It and The Sun Also Rises is the juxtaposition, both thematic and structural, between the city and the country, including the values associated with the two. While in Shakespeare's comedy, the opposition is set up between those in exile from the court and the natives of the Forest of Arden, in Hemingway's comedy it is those hailing from Paris and the natives of Pamplona, a modern counterparts of the Elizabethan pastoral. Intertextual studies reveals the dynamics of juxtaposition in the two text is, above all, a sense of the impermanence of life that lurks behind the mortal human life both at the court as well as the country in As You Like It and equally in Paris as well as Pamplona in The Sun Also Rises. In Shakespeare's comedy, Jacques's song on the seven stages of man remains un-erasable from the reader's memory; it provides the back drop to all the activities sequenced in the play that life is a stage, and man a mere player, acting out his role through the seven-scenes dividing earthly life becomes an unforgettable lessons, very much like "Ripeness is all" in King Lear, "Readiness is all" in Hamlet, and "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow" in Macbeth. It is in this view of life that both the comic, as well as the tragic, vision of Shakespeare come together in Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises. As can be seen intertextual study of two similar writers or texts can be rewarding in that the effort leads to illuminating the historical conditions that created them as much as elucidating the texts or writers themselves.*

The Sun Also Rises (1926) and As You Like It (1599) are very similar to each other in more ways than one. As we shall see, these two great works of art have not similar titles – each comprising four words expresses vision of a varied universe, full of diversity, and yet not without beginning and end – but also similar constructions, juxtaposing town and country. Even more important than formal similarities is the central idea of the balanced or moderate human personality that takes life as it comes and does not get overwhelmed by the winds of change that keep coming like the seasons, maintain its composure, growing through assimilation and absorption. This ideal is embodied in the central figures of these great works, in the person of Jake Barnes in The Sun Also Rises and Rosalind in As you Like It.

It is against the historical Background – of Shakespeare setting scores with the neoclassical dramatists like Ben Jonson and Hemingway hammering his way amidst the new classicists like James Joyce – that As You Like It and The Sun Also Rises are to be read and interpreted. Intertextual study between two texts reveals their individual merit as multilayered artistic creations, as aesthetic statements of their authors, and as landmarks in the history of Anglo-American tradition of literary writing. We can

take up the first one that relates to the similarities between As You Like It and The Sun Also Rises as popular yet penetrating comedies, woven around a set of juxtapositions principally involving the antithesis of nature and civilization, self and society, openness and orthodoxy.

When one attempts a comparison between As You Like It and The Sun Also Rises, one is, first of all, struck by the very likeness of the two titles. Although derived from Ecclesiastes, emphasizing the phenomenon of rising in the chain of rise and fall of individuals, societies, civilization etc. The Sun Also Rises squarely represents the nature of Hemingway's art, just as As You Like It represents the nature of Shakespeare's. For the kind of art Hemingway developed for himself, the art "of straight statement, without moralizing elaboration or rococo interior decorating" is termed by John Ruskin as the "Make-What-You-Will-Of-It" (Baker, 61). Thus the two titles, so similar in tone and tenor, are also emblematic of the similar natures of the dramatic art of Shakespeare and the narrative art of Hemingway. Hemingway's heavy reliance on dialogue and reduction of description to an uninterpreted account make his narrative as superbly dramatic as the

dramas of Shakespeare. Hence, As You Like It and Make-What-You-Will method of The Sun Also Rises signify a common poetics and a common view of life.

Working out the true implications in the content of war throws a new light on the character of the Jake. It is surprising that many critics view Jake Barnes as a disheartingly passive protagonist. They feel that he after getting physically incapacitated by the cruelty of war, wanders purposelessly amid the lives and fortunes of other and finally seeks repose in a stoical resignation accepting the limitations of his own disabilities. They find him achieving no other initiation into life except of meekly getting adjusted to the unpleasant reality of his physical infirmity, James T. Farrell, John S. Rouch and Richard Hovey view him as a passive figure. Kaplan also sees Jake Barnes as "a man interrupted in life and spoiled by his wound," and whose "striking dimension in the novel is actually his passivity" (99).

In the like manner, W.M. Frohock feels that Jake's stoicism is a necessary consequence of his passivity (193). Earl Rovit also assumes that Jake has the "self discipline, the honesty, and the driving need to achieve a thin sleeve of freedom in recognizing and accepting the limitation of his condition." He perhaps, even goes to extent of finding the meaning of the book in passivity, when he states:

"And the concentrated passion which gives this novel its tautness of structure and its authority of statement is its exploration of that diminished measured dignity and endurance..." (347)

Perhaps because Jake Barnes is a writer rather than a soldier, hunter or fisherman, and because he has a philosophical and perceptual nature, critics wrongly perceive his heroism as a matter of subdued quality. Spilka goes to the extent of doubting whether Jake is the hero of the novel at all. He finds him lacking even in integrity and moral force. (25)

These assessment by various seem to miss the real essence of Jakes character. They simply ignore the spirit in which Jake's figure is conceived by Hemingway. Jake is, obviously, surrounded by a whole generation of men and women crippled by a historical tragedy of epic dimension. They are the people who were once intelligent and sentiment, but are shattered by the horrors of war to which they went "with a sense of high adventure, perhaps, to receive a sabre wound. The millions like them were "blown to bits by the previously unimaginable horrors of modern war." (Kemper, 37)

The two heroines represent in the respective ways the new woman of their times. Just as Hamlet is meant to represent the new man of the Renaissance, radically different from the Medieval man, so is Rosalind meant to represent the new woman of the Renaissance as against the Medieval woman. In the same vien, if Jake Barnes represents the post-war generation of men, so does Brett Ashley represent the post-war generation of

women. Here, the modern equivalent of the Medieval era is the Victorian period in England and the puritan period in America, Both the heroines carry new confined, showing self-reliance, and fresh outlook free from the chains of orthodoxy and constraints of tradition. Both, heroines become the touchstone for measuring different characters of man.

In a novel, war has deprived Jake of his masculinity. He was seriously wounded and as a result he is left a mere eunuch. Brett suffers a psychological casualty. Her finace died of dysentery during the war and her husband an officer at British Navy, returned from the war suffering from dangerous shock. Brett is a perfect epitome of what Hawthorne, summing up the tragedy of women whose husbands and beloved were killed, in the battle, wrote:

"The girls that would have loved them, will pine and wither, and tread along many sour and discontented years and atleast go out of life without knowing what life is every shot that takes effect kills one and worse than kill the other." (198)

As a result of that, she becomes a nymphomaniac and falls a prey to alcoholism. Cohn and others are also the tragic victims of war as their lives have been permanently unsettled by it. Name of the characters, with the exception of Pedro Romero, the bullfighter, is completely normal because what has happened to them in war. The society of Brett, Mike, Cohn, the Count and the others may be characterized as the society of the dilapidated and disoriented. They are as Edwin B. Burgum remarks, "typically, self-defeating and project their perversity upon their friends. Their bonhommie conceals a surely dislike of the very persons they pretend or desire to have as friends." (284). There is no doubt that this society is disjuncted and unintegrated. Taken individually the characters themselves are as fragmented as the society they inhabit, Harold Kaplan looks at the characters as "images of defacement" which donot project clearly because of self-contradiction. As he puts it:

The image of defacement are defiant and sharp in the early scene in The Sun Also Rises, as Jake wanders about his life's milieu in Paris... Brett is the ikon for all male adores, but she give herself away continuously in desecrating situations, most particularly when she goes away with the Forlorn outsider, Robert Cohn. Expressing romantic protest, the actors further their own hurt and help destroy themselves, as Mike, the bankrupt does in his drunkenness as Brett, the spoiled heroine, does in her careless affairs. They demonstrated too the world an inverted revenge against the worlds injury. (95)

Viewed from the perspective of American literary history, Brett Ashley is a dramatically new character who is radical like these New woman figures. She has indomitable will and strength of character that allows her to explore her own prerogatives, to forge

her own relationships, and to attempt to find explore her own prerogatives, to forge her own relationships, and to attempt to find pleasure and satisfaction in tragic circumstances not of her making. For example, Brett appears in the novel with a group of male homosexual at the balmusette on the Rue de la Montague Sainte Genevieve, a street named for a French nun, the patron saint of Paris:

A Crowd of young men, some in jerseys and some in their shirt-sleeves, got out. I could see their hands and newly washed wavy hair in the light from the door... With them was Brett. She looked very lovely, and she was very much with them. (SAR, 18)

Brett Ashley, changes her boyfriends as she change her clothes. From the very beginning of the novel, the world is out of sexual order, the social evening is a parody of erotic potential and the deeper irony is that this pathology is at the very heart of Jake and Brett's relationship. Their conversation in taxi reveals the central problem of novel:

The taxi went up the hills, passed... we were sitting apart and we jolted close together going down the old street.... Brett's face was white and the long line of her neck showed in the bright light of the flares. The street was dark again and I kissed her. Our lips were tight and then she turned away and pressed against the corner of the seat, as far away as she could get.

'Don't touch me,' she said. 'Please don't touch me.'

'What is the matter?'

'I can't stand it.'

'Oh Brett.'

You mustn't you must know. I can't stand it, that's all. Oh, darling, please understand!

'Don't You love me?'

'Love You?' I simply turn to jelly when you touch me.'

'Isn't there anything we can do about?' (SAR, 22)

In indicates that they love each other, they feel there is nothing they can do about it and it is painful and destructive for them to be together. The problem for Brett is that she needs the companionships of man who can fulfill her physical and psychological needs. But Jake can't offer her fleeting sexual pleasure. Both know that Jake and limitations in this regard due to his wartime injuries, therefore, they arrived on the conclusion:

'There's not a damn thing we could , ' I said.

'I don't know.' she said. 'I don't want to go through the hell again'.

'We better keep away from each other.' (SAR, 23)

The depth of the delimma continues even after this conversation. When Brett comes to Jake's apartment with Count Mippipopolous and reveals that the count offered her money to spend a weekend with him, Jake's anguish gets renewed because of his inability to fulfil her libido.

The sexuality and promiscuity of a new women is compassioned through the character of Brett in the scene at the Dingo Bar, the next day when Brett confesses to Jake that she went to San Sebastian with Robert?

"She said, 'is Robert Cohn going on this trip?'"

'Yes, Why?'

'Don't you think it would be a bit rough on him?'"

'Why should it?'

'Who do you think I went down to San Sebastian with?'"

'Congratulations,' I said. We walked along." (SAR, 68)

His anger and her lack of contrition reveals the difficulty they are having in working out a strategy for personal interaction.

The fundamental similarity between *As You Like It* and *The Sun Also Rises* is the juxtaposition, both thematic and structural, between the city and the country, including the values associated with the two. While in Shakespeare's comedy, the opposition is set up between those in exile from the court and the natives of the Forest of Arden, in Hemingway's comedy it is those hailing from Paris and the natives of Pamplona, a modern counterparts of the Elizabethan pastoral. While the opposing parties counter each other values in both the texts, there are those that remain detached from both and offer their criticism of each exposing the untenability of their values as universals or absolutes. Touchstone and Jacques from this third party in *As You Like It*, whereas Wilson-Harris and Bill Constitute this detached observes group in *The Sun Also Rises*.

Jake's and Brett's journey from Paris to Pamplona and back in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* Parallel to Rosalind's and Orlando's journey from court to country and back in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. As Dahiya rightly asserts:

'In both cases, the strategy behind the juxtaposition is same" to exposes the virtues and deficiencies of the two ways of life and to suggest a new possibility in the reintegration is achieved in the central figures who have the capacity to combine the virtues of the juxtaposed ways of the life. While Shakespeare

(Central Characters) as persons of consequence on whom depends the destruction or reconstruction of order in the whole society Hemingway's characters are modern isolates destroy or restore their own houses that are their personalities (83).

Contrasted with Jake's developing relation with Brett are the static relations with her of four other characters who at one time or another act as her lovers – the count Mippipolous, Cohn, Mike and Romero. Brett is a kind of challenge to the lovers, whose weak and strong points are revealed by their respective encounters with her. As Jakson Benson rightly observes:

'In response to her negative challenge, Jake, Mike and Cohn (as well as Romero) all come to measure their manhood against her as a kind of catalyst. And their manhood is not measured by cojones... but on the basis of the strength to see themselves clearly and the strength to bind themselves to an ideal worth living by.' (37)

Like the variety of lovers in *As You Like It*, the four lovers of Brett bring four different kinds of love, which are placed in significant juxtaposition to each other. Cohn is a naïve and 'Adolescent' lover, who first fails to understand Brett and is proud of having had a fling with her; then, when deserted by her, he goes crazy and beats up his friends as well as enemies. Finally, when he comes to understand her the hard way, he disappears from the scene altogether. The count's love is an involved sexual affair, in which fun with Brett is a little serious; he minds Brett's affairs with other people, which the count does not, but unable to bear her inconstancy he seeks continuous escape in liquor. Romero's love for Brett is a traditional one, he offers to marry her, but would do so only if she adapts herself to his traditional image of womanhood.

Another dimension in the dynamics of discord between city and country in both *The Sun Also Rises* and *As You Like It* is that neither Hemingway nor Shakespeare offers rejection of one in favour of the other. The relationship between the opposing places, people and their ways of life or values is not, to borrow Leo Marx's distinction, a case of 'simple' or 'sentimental' pastoralism, where one wished to withdraw from the civilized city into the primitive or natural country; rather, it is the case of, what Marx calls, "complex or imaginative" pastoralism, in which both the civilized as well as the natural world are placed in a proper perspective" (Marx, 1-20). Both *Rosalind* in *As You Like It* and Jake in *The Sun Also Rises* absorb the best of both the worlds and acquire a normative perspective on life, comparative the detached view of life of those who, in Mathew Arnold's words, "see life steadily and see it whole." (Arnold, 25)

Intertextual studies reveals the dynamics of juxtaposition in the two text is, above all, a sense of the impermanence of life that Lurks behind the mortal human life both at the court as well as the country in *As You Like It* and equally in Paris as well as Pamplona in *The Sun Also Rises*. In Shakespeare's

comedy, Jacque's song on the seven stages of man remains un-erasable from the reader's memory; it provides the back drop to all the activities sequenced in the play that life is a stage, and man a mere player, acting out his role through the seven-scenes dividing earthly life becomes an unforgettable lessons, very much like "Ripeness is all" in *King Lear*, "Readiness is all" in *Hamlet*, and "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow" in *Macbeth*. It is in this view of life that both the comic, as well as the tragic, vision of Shakespeare come together in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*.

In Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, too, there is a similar feeling around about the impermanence of life. Just as Shakespeare's uses of feast imagery in *Macbeth* and elsewhere to describe life that always ends with the last course, which is death, Hemingway uses the image of fiesta (the Spanish word for feast) in *The Sun Also Rises* to describe the impermanent nature of life on earth. Incidentally, Hemingway titled his book on Paris *A Moveable Feast*, reinforcing his idea of life as feast. Note, for instance, Jake's feeling after the fiesta in Pamplona comes to an end, calling for his return to Paris:

In the morning it was all over. The fiesta was finished.... The square was empty and there were no people on the streets.... I sat in one of the wicker chairs and leaned back comfortably...

The white-paper announcements of the unloading of the bulls and the big schedules of special trains were still up of the pillars of the arcade. A waiter wearing a blue apron came out with a bucket of water and a cloth, and commenced to tear down the notices, pulling the paper off in striped and washing and rubbing away the paper that stuck to the stone. The fiesta was over. (SAR, 237)

The fiesta emerges traditionally from the rural ways and the lives of those who in their devotion and gaiety flock to participate in the rites of death. It is symbolic of the-Chaos and dissipation the simmers at the heart of existence. Hemingway writes:

The thing that happened could only have happened during a fiesta. Everything became quite unreal finally and it seemed as though nothing could have any consequence. It seemed out of place to think of consequences during the fiesta. (SAR, 154)

Cohn, who finally recognizes Brett as a 'Circe' and it is he again who shares with Jake his awareness of the impermanence of life:

"Listen, Jake," he leaned forward on the bar. "Don't you ever get the feeling that all you life is going by and you're not taking advantage of it. Do you realize you've lived nearly half the time you have to live already?"

"Yes, every once in a while."

"Do you know that in about thirty-five years more we'll be dead."

"What the hell, Robert." I said. "What the hell." (11)

But Cohn, instead of facing this hard fact of life, wants to escape it. Which Cohn is aware of the impermanence of life but lacks the inner resources to live with his consciousness and, instead seeks escape from it, Pedro Romero is placidly unaware of the whole problem. He is a primitive character who has never stepped out of the walls of tradition within which he had developed.

And yet, despite this lurking awareness of the transitoriness of life, of its being only a play in seven acts, or a fiesta for seven days, both Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. And Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* do not project a tragic view of life. Both the work have at their centres, like the sun cosmos, lighting the surrounding lands, making the business of living an act of going ahead, encountering impediments, even going down like the sun, but always rising thereafter, very much like the morning sun. Rosalind and Orlando go through the darker days only to emerge in the brighter future, Brett and Jake face depressing moments but only to come out with greater confidence. The sustaining power behind both the pairs, the regenerating force of life, is the human feeling of love.

Brett has broken her affair with Romero and has freed the boy from her fair clutches. In a hotel in Madrid she is left alone and is in trouble. Jake realize the humiliation involved in it and feels quite embarrassed and disgusted about the whole thing. As he bitterly remark: '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.' (237). Still even at the cost of his self respect and nagging ego, he decides to go and rescue Brett. As a Lover, Jake has come to understand his limitations and behaves within the limits. But on the larger human level, he achieves greater success by discovering and adhering to the pattern of the heroism in the values of sympathy and compassionate understanding. He realizes that it is through love and altruistic commitment to others that the road to man's salvation lies.

By his final act, Jake gains sublimity in our eyes. His heroism is more complex. It may look self contradictory but it is highly authentic. In a war torn world, over burdened by the aridity, disbelief and animalism that prevail all around him; he upholds the value of sincerity, friendship and empathy and there by grows as a man.

The significance of love in Shakespeare comedies, as well as in Hemingway's comic novels, in *As You Like It* and *The Sun Also Rises* more than in any other work by the two writers, is too obvious to be missed by any sensitive reader. What Lionell Trilling has said about

the love scenes in Keat's "The Eve of St. Agnes" could as well be said about the love scenes in *As You Like It* and *The Sun Also Rises*: they "glow into an island of bliss with the ultimate dramatic purpose of making fully apparent the cold surrounding darkness; it is the moment of life in the infinitude of not being" (Trilling, 18). The scenes of treachery, and ill-will at the court combined with Touchstone's and Jacques's exposition of this world of darkness in *As You Like It* and the post-war spectacle of futility and waste constitute the background to the fore grounded theme of love. In both cases, love is projected as the life-sustaining force that steers the protagonists through the 'sea of troubled' they encounter in their life journeys.

Also common to both *As You Like It* and *The Sun Also Rises* is multiple satire on contemporary rival theorists of comedy and art in general. If Shakespeare uses for the purpose Touchstone and Jacques as "strategic reduction" of Ben Jonson's work, transforming his rival into "self-dramatizing characters," acting out "unhealthy literary forms" (Watson, 1-2), Hemingway uses Wilson-Harris and Bill to accomplish a similar revenge on his rival modern – the moral power of an art that Shakespeare supposedly lacked, while *As You Like It* meditates on the primal opposition between the intellectual categories of nature and art that Jonson comical satire presupposes. The play is an encomium to nature that questions its own entanglement in the artistic and the artificial. The bathetic figure of William the prototype of Shakespeare in love – epitomizes this dialectical engagement" (Bloom, 253). Through Touchstone, in the fifth act, Shakespeare also plays upon "Small Latin and less Greek" idea Jonson later uses against him. Jonson, to justify comical satire, uses Cicero in Latin. Shakespeare makes "learned" Touchstone use this same tactic to claim Audrey before he translates his threat into "the boorish" to heat William. Thus, Shakespeare pays back Jonson by ridiculing his theory-blind satirical comedy.

In very much the same vein, Hemingway ridicules the predominantly fashionable mode of writing represented by the New York or London based modernists who decried Hemingway's pastoralism and primitivism. Bill Gorton's satire on the New Yorkers' craze for irony and pity parallels Touchstone's satire on "learning". When Bill Gordon keeps singing about irony and pity, Jake asks,

"What's all this irony and pity?"

"What? Don't you know about irony and pity?"

"No. Who got it up?"

"Everybody. They're made about it in New York.

It's just like the Fratellinis used to be." (S.A.R., 113-114)

As Daniel Fuchs has rightly observed, "The passage spoofs a well-known Anatolian phrase, the source of which would have been much more familiar to literary men of the twenties than it is to us today" (Wagner, 51). Hemingway, like Shakespeare, by satirizing the satirists (Joyce, Eliot, etc.), indirectly asserts the greater authenticity of his simpler but sincere muse. Just as Shakespeare asserted against the predominant classicism of his contemporaries his own mix of romanticism and classicism, the same way Hemingway affirms against the anti-romantic and anti-humanist modernists his own combination of rationalism with romanticism. Thus, both Shakespeare and Hemingway contended against conservative forces of their times, more tradition and theory bound, and asserted their progressive outlooks, not so much by discarding tradition, as by modifying it, making it more flexible, bringing it closer to reality and making it more humanistic.

The anguish of Paris, the reverie of Burguete, the intensity of Pamplona are all harmonized in Jake's final recognition of the time human values. R.W. Stallman wrongly perceived that Jake "ends where he began – at the dead end." (184) and so does Young who feels that he returns to Brett "as before and we discover that we have come full circle.... to the place where we began. (55)

In this is true, it appears difficult to make full artistic sense out of the controlled pleasure of the meal in Botin which is in sharp contrast to the unordered drinking of fiesta. The taxi ride which ends the in the novel is different from the taxi ride of Book I and projects his renewed attitude towards Brett.

Critics often try to find identification between Jake and The Fisher King of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. Carlos Baker feels that Brett is the reigning queen of a paganized wasteland with a wounded fisher king as her half cynical squire." (90) Young also asserts that *The Sun Also Rises* is still Hemingway's Wasteland, and Jake is Hemingway's Fisher King... once again here is the protagonist gone impotent, and his land gone sterile (59).

One comes to realize how Jake is quite unlike any fisher king if the latter stands for impotent hope and ineffectuality. Jake is a fighter, in the manner of true soldier, he wrestles with life. There is nothing passive action, he defines and dignified himself. Infact, man has a lot to learn and life has much to teach. Jake's involvement with life has taught him the value of courageous rationality.

As can be seen intertextual study of two similar writers or texts can be rewarding in that the effort leads to illuminating the historical conditions that created them as much as elucidating the texts or writers themselves. The methodology of comparison here is very much like bringing reflector to the objects of comparison in such a way that two throw light upon each other imparting greater understanding to the reader about each other. Of course, this is not the only method of making

comparative studies, there being several more of equal or more usefulness. But this remains a more reliable one than any other as also more useful in seeking common substance in different literature produced by various culture and nationalities.

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