



Original Article

Hemingway's Landscape: An Ecocritical Study of Nature in Times of Conflict

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This paper investigates the significance of nature and landscape in Ernest Hemingway's war novels through the lens of ecocriticism, particularly *A Farewell to Arms* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. It examines Hemingway's use of natural settings as active participants in the narrative, not just as backdrops, to reflect human trauma, moral conflict, and the environmental costs of war. The analysis demonstrates how Hemingway's landscapes reflect internal psychological states and emphasize the conflict between human and ecological survival and destruction. The goal of this research is to find out how nature becomes a silent witness during times of war and to consider Hemingway's writings as important contributions to ecocritical literary discourse.

Keywords- War, Landscape, Nature, Human Trauma, Ecology, Iceberg Theory, Environmental Consciousness.

Introduction

Ernest Hemingway is renowned because of his acute writing style, stoic roles and amazing descriptions of war and nature. There are fewer studies that have focused on the ecological approaches to his writing, even though much of the scholarship has been focused on the way he portrays masculinity, war and existential struggle. The mountains, rivers, and forests depicted by Hemingway are vibrant landscapes which in turn replicate, receive, and sometimes even oppose harshness of human confrontation instead of serving as passive surroundings. The Paper adopts an ecocritical approach to the subject of the war novels written by Hemingway, by arguing that nature plays a major role in the interpretation of his tales. The destruction of war and the marvel of nature world represent Hemingway showing the complicated and often conflicting between humans and nature in the times of violence. Based on the main texts *A Farewell to Armed* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, the proposed research explores how the use of landscape by Hemingway can be used to provide insight on the ecological consciousness, trauma of war, and the moral confusion that people undergo when dealing with the issues of war.

A literary theory called ecocriticism looks at how literature and the natural world interact. It questions anthropocentric viewpoints and aims to comprehend how nature, ecological crises, and the relationship between humans and nature are portrayed in literature. Ecocriticism is "the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment," according to Cheryll Glotfelty (Glotfelty, 1996). Nature is a subject in ecocritical studies, not just a setting. Ecological responsibility and environmental ethics exist. The interdependence of human and non-human life as well as the effects of industrialization, conflict, and human activity on the natural world is revealed by this study. Hemingway's natural landscapes are both ecologically significant and symbolically rich, particularly when considering the devastation and displacement caused by war.



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Hemingway's iceberg theory was used in this study along with a close reading and analysis of his writings. Hemingway was seemingly very concerned about people and the environment. He depicts environmentalism in his writing. Environmentalism demonstrates the role nature plays in influencing the lives of man and vice versa. It gives focus on the unity of humans and nature. It shows how the human activity, especially industrialization, exploitation, and war, influence nature. The fact that Henry escapes with Catherine to Switzerland through the snowed mountains symbolizes peace and innocence and goes against anthropocentrism in *A Farewell to Arms*. Robert Jordan notices and appreciates his nature. Scattered occurrences of sensuous indulgence of the forest compares to the havoc of war and imply that there is a strong bond with nature. In *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Jordan reflects on the way nature gives emotional comfort to war out of the ethical perplexities of war. He adores the landscape which shows that the nature is a spiritual power and must be respected instead of exploited.

Nature in *A Farewell to Arms*: Protection and devastation

The contextual and symbolic role of the natural world plays a prominent part in *A Farewell to Arms* overseen by Ernest Hemingway. To understand environmentalism here, it is necessary to not only promote the ecological consciousness or preservation but also examine the way nature expresses the human feeling, the way it is in contrast to war and how it influences the experiences of the characters. Hemingway compares the war with the destruction of the war to the beauty of natural scenes so often. The destruction of the World War I is contrasted by the natural order offered to the world by mountains, rivers, rain and changing seasons. Against these dark, squash-covered battlefields, the escape of Frederic and Catherine to Switzerland through the snow-covered mountains is a symbol of calmness and cleanness. Despite nature being portrayed as being unfeeling, it is also beautiful and comfortable. Frederic is rescued by the river he leaps to escape being penniless to execution but it is merely there doing the business of rivers; it is no moral or emotional savior. This objectivity helps in a more modern attitude to the surroundings: nature is powerful, stubborn and to the human conflicts indifferent. Most of the tone and action in the book is largely due to the topography of Italy, which comprises its mountains, valleys, and rivers. Even though they aren't overtly activist, Hemingway's meticulous, journalistic depictions of the natural world demonstrate a profound regard and awareness of place, which reflects an early form of environmental consciousness. Environmentalism is discussed in the contemporary ecological sense of activism or conservation. The character's emotional states are frequently reflected in nature, which contrasts the cruelty of war with the tranquility and apathy of the natural world. Hemingway explores human vulnerability and the notion that nature exists apart from human suffering through the use of landscapes, weather, and the seasons. Frederic frequently draws a comparison between the peaceful, unspoiled countryside and the destruction brought about by war.

Frederic says, "The town was very nice and our house was very fine. The river ran behind us and the town had been captured very handsomely but the mountains beyond it could not be taken and I was very glad the Austrians seemed to want to come back to the bombard it to destroy it but only a little in a military way (*A Farewell to Arms* 05)". Hemingway's detailed description of the seasonal change reflects the death and decay brought on by war. The setting is the moral and physical barrenness of the soldiers. It is an indication of the world in which human violence disturbs the natural order. The insight that the quote provides is also the valuable contribution to the aspects of environmental imagery and their ties with the topic of war and its impact on people in the novel. This passage shows how the natural and the built environment is experienced, appreciated and aestheticized frequently in opposition to ugly facts of war. Hemingway is playing with environmentalism in its modern, activist sense. The town is described by the words very nice, very fine and captured very handsomely. Those expressions express a detachment of emotions to the war or even romanticism of war physical impacts. The serene and long lasting aspect of nature is brought out through the reference to the river flowing behind the house. The war does not stop it, yet it flows without caring about the changes that are happening on its periphery. This is in accordance to the larger picture of Hemingway on the idea of nature as a neutral, impassive entity that is never responsive to human endeavors, but is always there. This passivity constancy alludes to some underlying environmental sensibility. Nature is immutable even despite the fact that in most instances, people disrespect or are not aware of it. The serenity of the natural world of a river, a town and a house is reckoned with the savagery of war and readers will hardly understand how the war not only conquers human lives, but also physical and natural nature. It is based on this tension that environmentalism more reflective and subtle is constructed. The latter quote contains evidence of the use of environment by Hemingway as the contrast to the war. It shows the way in which war can idealize or even misrepresents the sense of place and nature or its silent presence. The river is flowing, as human arrogance or conquest did not stop it, this is the kind of environmental consciousness, which is slow but still is present in the environment, even when people did not recognize the deeper meaning of it. Hemingway believes in nature as a component of his existential worldview, as it is self-sufficient, more often than not, and often less political than the human institutions of religion or war.

The environmentalism of Hemingway means securing the environment in political terms and acknowledging the power of nature in human existence its capability to console, criticize, or even contradict human stupidity. In *A Farewell to Arm*, environmental features are rather an artistic and emotional setting than an environmental campaigning one. Nature itself represents inner lives of the characters, an antithesis to the war destruction and something that neither cares nor ends. Rather than an ideological environmentalism, the picture of the



natural world created by Hemingway implies a form of environmental consciousness that implies a sense of respect to the truthfulness and permanence of nature.

Nature serves as a refuge and silent observer in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*

For Whom the Bell Tolls was not a novel of environmentalism yet this book demonstrates a strong and spiritual attachment to nature. His description of nature as something that is polluted by the war can be regarded as a silent but strong critique of nature destruction and that is why the novel could be discussed in terms of the ecological readings nowadays. In addition to the fact that For Whom the Bell Tolls is explicitly an environmentalist novel in the contemporary political sense; nature and the natural environment prominently feature symbolically in the story. Hemingway makes the Spanish landscape not only an object, but a breathing organism which relates the feelings, wrestling with moral concepts and the tragedy of war of characters. This way demonstrates a strong ecological awareness in the novel, and as such, it can be considered subtle environmentalism. The setting of the novel is the mountains and forests in Spain where Robert Jordan and the guerrilla fighters harbor and act. These are the natural places that are refuge of the horrors of war. There are shelters of meditation, harmony and rest, and the opposite of the devastating dance of human wars. Robert Jordan can frequently experience the closeness to life when he is out of doors.

The natural world plays a crucial, symbolic and emotional role. The landscape the mountains, forests, rivers serve as a backdrop for reflection, connection, and even reverence, especially through the character of Robert Jordan. His awareness of nature often expresses respect, sensitivity, and emotional connection, aligning with environmentalist values of harmony with nature. There is description of the forest in the novel "He lay flat on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms, and high overhead the wind blew in the tops of the pine trees. There was a stream alongside the road." (*For Whom the Bell Tolls* 03) Right from the beginning, Jordan notices and cherishes the natural world around him. The sensory appreciation of the forest suggests a deep emotional connection with nature, contrasting with the destruction of war.

Being typical of Hemingway and rather of his approach to writing, the given quote is an expression of environmentalism in rather subtle and, therefore, powerful manner that does not imply the modern activism, but the reverence towards nature and the sense of belonging to it. The protagonist known as Robert Jordan is reported to be lying flat on the brown and pine-needled ground of the forest literally becoming one with the ground. His physical closeness to the ground is a symbol of closeness to the nature meaning that he finds comfort, disguise or even spiritual reprieve in natural world. The sensory descriptions of the scene, the pine-needled floor, of the wind in the treetops, the stream by the road, all create the evocation of a living, breathing ecosystem. Besides establishing the mood, this also portrays nature as something which is always present and not something in the background.

Unlike the Spanish civil war that was chaotic, the forest is displayed as very calm and strong. Unlike the everlasting beats of the natural world, such dichotomy uplifts nature as a kind of sanctuary in which the struggle between humans subsides, at least temporarily. The fact that Hemingway makes no obvious appeal to environmentalism does not rule out a subtle suggestion of the same as a result by pointing out the self-evident value, beauty, and psycho-emotional influence of nature. In the natural environment, Hemingway often finds meaning, sanity, or self in his characters. In this excerpt, it is clear that Hemingway is slightly environmentalist, as he makes the portrayal of the forest more like a character in its own right, the natural images are rather intimate and Hemingway sympathizes with nature. Not only in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* but the greater part of what Hemingway wrote, nature offers solace, odds and ends in the face of existential crisis and political violence.

The image of nature that Hemingway provides in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* provokes a certain reverence that reminds us not only of values of the environment but also of a great level of respect, the closeness and the admiration. To a world that is torn apart by conflict, nature is a consistent pure, resilient, and morally pure. By demonstrating that war invades nature to desecrate it, Hemingway will imply that humans are all too young to be ecologically conscious with how human partition of the environment harms it. There are scenes in the book that reveal the negative effects of war on the environment, though rather indirectly: troop movement, deforestation, and explosions are harmful of the landscape. Sheds and betrayal happen in the previously clean mountains. Natural harmony of Spanish countryside is slowly destroyed by violence. This environmental loss can be compared to the moral and human loss that the book centers on.

Conclusion

In the war novels of Hemingway, there is a clear connection between the nature of human and nature. His landscapes are not merely settings but in many cases are overlooked in traditional criticism of war books. They play vital roles in the emotional and thematic effect of the narratives. When critiquing the nature in Hemingway through an ecocritical complaint, we can see how it turns into a strong and persistent presence and a silent victim, able to simultaneously mirror the human trauma and offer nourishment and renewal. This environmental perspective is the advocator of conducting more studies on environmental awareness in war literature, as well as facilitates a better understanding of Hemingway.

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