

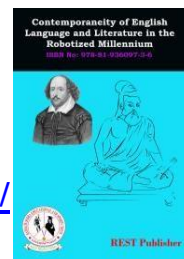


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## The Sun Also Rises: Navigating the Post-War Landscape

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**Abstract:** *The Sun Also Rises* is a novel by Ernest Hemingway that portrays the lives and attitudes of a group of American and British expatriates in the aftermath of World War I. The novel follows the narrator, Jake Barnes, a wounded war veteran and journalist, and his love interest, Lady Brett Ashley, a divorced aristocrat, as they travel from Paris to Pamplona, Spain, with their friends. The novel explores the themes of disillusionment, alienation, identity, and sexuality in the context of the Lost Generation, a term coined by Gertrude Stein to describe the generation that came of age during the war. The novel also reflects Hemingway's own experiences and observations as a participant in the expatriate culture and the bullfighting scene. The novel is considered one of Hemingway's masterpieces and a classic of modern literature.

**Keywords:** *Disillusionment, Alienation, Expatriate, Identity.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Ernest Hemingway's seminal work, "The Sun Also Rises," published in 1926, provides a profound exploration of the post-World War I era and the disillusionment of the Lost Generation. As we embark on an in-depth analysis, this essay will delve into the intricate layers of the plot, the nuanced portrayal of characters, the recurring themes that echo through the narrative, and the enduring legacy of this literary masterpiece. To comprehend the novel's depth, it's essential to contextualize it within the historical and cultural milieu of the time. "The Sun Also Rises" emerges from the aftermath of the Great War, reflecting the pervasive sense of disillusionment and aimlessness that gripped the generation that lived through it. As the Jazz Age unfolded, marked by societal upheaval and a profound questioning of traditional values, Hemingway's narrative captures the zeitgeist of an era in flux. The novel's plot, intricately woven against this backdrop, takes us on a trans-European journey. From the bohemian cafes of Paris to the vibrant streets of Spain during the San Fermín festival, each setting becomes a canvas upon which the characters paint their struggles and aspirations. As readers, we are invited to witness the unfolding drama and immerse ourselves in the existential dilemmas of Jake Barnes, Lady Brett Ashley, and the ensemble of characters who populate this literary landscape.

At the heart of "The Sun Also Rises" are themes that resonate with the human experience. The Lost Generation, a term coined by Hemingway himself, encapsulates the pervasive sense of dislocation and disillusionment experienced by those who lived through the war. It becomes a lens through which we understand the characters' struggles with identity and purpose. Hemingway, in his characteristic style, portrays war's futility, both in its physical and emotional toll. The scars of battle manifest not just on the landscape but on the psyches of the characters, shaping their relationships and perspectives. The theme of the disillusionment of love takes center stage as Lady Brett Ashley, with her captivating charm and independence, becomes a symbol of unattainable desires for Jake Barnes and other male characters. Love becomes a complex tapestry woven with threads of longing, unfulfilled desires, and societal expectations. Through Lady Brett's character, Hemingway explores the evolving dynamics of relationships in a world scarred by war and societal upheaval. Existentialism, as a philosophical underpinning, permeates the narrative. Characters grapple with the existential void left by the war, searching for meaning in a seemingly indifferent world. This theme becomes particularly pronounced in the bullfighting scenes, where the spectacle serves as a metaphor for life's struggles and the inevitable confrontation with mortality.

Love, or rather, the disillusionment of love, is a recurring motif. Lady Brett Ashley, with her captivating charm and independence, becomes a symbol of unattainable desires for Jake Barnes and other male characters. The exploration of love becomes entwined with the characters' existential quest for meaning, mirroring the broader

societal shifts in attitudes towards relationships and traditional values. The characters in "The Sun Also Rises" are not just players in a narrative; they are embodiments of the zeitgeist. Jake Barnes, the war veteran grappling with physical and emotional wounds, serves as the lens through which we view the world. His inability to consummate his love for Lady Brett encapsulates the broader impotence of a generation struggling to find purpose. Lady Brett Ashley, in turn, challenges traditional gender roles, embodying the changing dynamics of women in the post-war era. Robert Cohn, the disillusioned and naive boxer, represents the collective search for meaning. His journey from the boxing ring to the cafés of Paris and ultimately to the chaotic revelry of Pamplona mirrors the broader societal disillusionment and the quest for authentic experiences. Secondary characters, such as Mike Campbell and Bill Gorton, contribute to the rich tapestry of relationships and perspectives, each adding layers to the narrative. Hemingway's writing style is a study in itself. The minimalist prose, characterized by short sentences and stark descriptions, aligns with his iceberg theory—where much is left unsaid, beneath the surface. The dialogue-driven narrative, laden with subtext, allows readers to infer the characters' inner thoughts and emotions. Hemingway's use of symbolism, often subtle and layered, enhances the storytelling. The bullfighting scenes, for instance, serve as a metaphor for the characters' existential struggles, adding a deeper layer of meaning.

## 2. CONCLUSION

The novel's influence on subsequent generations of writers cannot be overstated. Hemingway's impact on American literature reverberates through the decades, with writers like F. Scott Fitzgerald, J.D. Salinger, and later, Raymond Carver, drawing inspiration from his stylistic innovations and thematic explorations. In conclusion, "The Sun Also Rises" stands not merely as a novel but as a profound exploration of an era and its disenchanting denizens. Through its evocative narrative, rich characterizations, and nuanced themes, Hemingway invites readers to grapple with the complexities of the human condition. As we close the pages of this literary classic, its echoes continue to resonate, challenging us to confront our own existential questions and reaffirming its place in the pantheon of great works. Hemingway, through this masterful piece, beckons us to contemplate the enduring legacy of the Lost Generation and the perennial search for meaning in a world forever altered by the ravages of war.

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