The paper concerns the analysis of Hemingway's short story “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” in Auerbachian and biblical terms as both representation and fulfillment of the literary history of pathos and expansive solitude. The events in the story may not be caused or determined by a literary tradition directly, but are undoubtedly a part of a metaphorical devise of exploration, imagining of a rhetorical literary figure, and working out of the ironic possibilities inherent in the tragic mode. Obviously there is an expectant catharsis in the story which is tempered by a playful irony, spoof on western culture and grand notions of individualism. The master narratives in the story—such as the conflict between man and nature, social norms, role-playing, the African animistic beliefs and the great white hunter—remain partially unresolved in the zero-ending denouement. The protagonist repeats the literary motifs of a failed relationship, melancholia, megalomania, temperamental pathos and loneliness prefiguring his own end. Hemingway is using a kind of historical realism that constitutes a regressive fulfillment within a realistic representative tradition available to him from the Gospels to the literary moderns.
The German philologist and thinker Erich Auerbach (1892-1957) developed a genealogical model in his work *Mimesis* that could be employed to connect different aspects of literary history within the conceptual framework of representation and fulfillment. Auerbach argued that it was possible to understand the various literary genres from the short story to the epic from the point of view of figural representation that has been made available to us from Homer and the Gospels to the literary moderns. Both literary critics and historians have attempted to use Auerbach’s model of figural realism to understand literary history and find an organic, historicist connection between works of art written in different centuries. Now in a changed academic environment of genealogical representation, it is possible to use the Auerbachian model not only to understand the short stories of Hemingway but also the works of other writers from Mark Twain to Saul Bellow. It is possible to see Hemingway’s short story “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” within the literary narrative of representation and fulfillment. Though Hemingway rejected various forms of organized Christian thought and belief, he was unable to escape the stylistic aspects of Homeric representation and biblical fulfillment. Even while developing a highly singular prose style Hemingway employed the Homeric matter-of-fact descriptive technique in both narration and dialogue to give us the semblance of reality in his fiction. Furthermore fusing his personal life with his writing, Hemingway fulfilled many of the possibilities presented through his rhetorical figures.

The influence of Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961) on American literature, especially upon the short story, has been tremendous. His short stories are invariably simple in style but full of pathos and expansive solitude. He is a master of compressed prose and understated emotions, searching for a perfect psychological place to represent the pathos of human life. Most of his stories, such as “A Clean, Well-lighted Place,” “A Very Short Story,” “Hills Like White Elephants,” and “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” are brief vignettes of some violent emotion that finds expression in negation, anxiety or fear; his stories are rhetorical devices to find a place and imbue it with ironic possibilities. He forces his protagonists through a process of intense emotional struggle to find a spiritual locus standi in a bewildering world of symbols and philosophies. Hemingway felt that one could come to terms with oneself and realize a spiritual and literary equilibrium by finding a right place, an exact milieu. His stoic sensibility and literary representation are therefore intricately woven in the highly realistic drama of life that can be metaphorical, pathetic or prophetic.

**The Aristotelian Rhetoric**

Hemingway seeks a metaphor to represent a literary pathos through a place (ethos) and find a suitable style (logos) to evolve a denouement. The three rhetorical devices of persuasion—pathos, ethos and logos—mentioned by Aristotle can be found in Hemingway’s short stories creating a satisfying literary world. He realizes that pathos, one of the three essential ingredients of Aristotelian rhetoric, can be employed in a number of ways that could include ingenious metaphors, narrative sequence, simple style and highly emotional content. Invariably Hemingway uses pathos quite cleverly to alter the judgment of the reader and win them over to his side. Though he rejects propaganda and espouses anti-propagandist sentiments, he often becomes propagandist in his enthusiasm to justify his narrative structure. His stories lead to excessive pathos whenever he becomes overemotional in representing a place. His metaphors are interesting as they represent seemingly unrelated objects, like the uninviting snow and the dead leopard or the café, an aging customer and differing perspective of the waiters.
The Lost Generation and the Beat Generation

Obviously Hemingway’s literary presence and his experience of a traumatic world of the two wars sought ideal fulfillment in his fiction. His social and literary philosophy was assimilated by the lost and beat generations in particular and became their response to a chaotic, unpredictable world. In America, a general reaction to these two global conflicts released anger and resentment. As most people watched the spreading conflict in Europe, Africa and Asia somewhat helplessly they became both discontented and disillusioned. They sought escape routes in alternate life styles, adventure and safari. Young people who came of age in the years following World War I were alienated from society and suffered from a disjointed perspective of the world. They found the values of pre- and post-war American society deceptive and somewhat perverted. Rejecting standardized American values they became social exiles. Through their despair and loneliness they tried to redefine the world and reinvent their beliefs, dreams and hopes. These people, called the Lost Generation, saw in the writings of Hemingway a literary message, a synecdoche of the savage world of war and a fulfillment, a resolution of their world.4

Literature in America tried to answer the needs of the Lost Generation and the Beat Generation.5 For some young Americans it became possible through literature to search for a new identity and restructure a violated individualism. American writers, who themselves have suffered during the two World Wars, wrote from personal experience, attempted to recover their lost humanity and created a new world view against a battered Christian one. Their semi-autobiographical novels had a ring of authenticity that immediately appealed to people disillusioned and abandoned by society. Ernest Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) captured the alienation and detachment of the Lost Generation, while Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road* (1957) highlighted the spiritual disorder of the

Beat Generation.

Rejecting the American milieu of Thoreau and the American transcendentalists, Hemingway created his own Waldenesque sensations of the body through involvement with nature in Africa.6 The relationship of the short story “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” with Thoreau is not farfetched. In fact the story was given a provisional title “A Budding Friendship” and the protagonist was earlier called Henry Walden before Hemingway changed the name to the simple Harry. Carlos Baker writes about the formative stages of the story thus,

> During the months when it had languished untouched in his desk drawer, he had thought of it under the provisional title, “A Budding Friendship.” Its new name was infinitely better: “Snows of Kilimanjaro.” Fortunately, also, he had chosen to call his protagonist by the simple name of Harry instead of Henry Walden, his earlier choice, with its Thoreauvian overtones.7

Both the “budding friendship” and “Thoreauvian overtones” are hard to miss in the relationship of Harry and Helen and that of man and nature.

Auerbach’s Figural Realism: *Odyssey and the Bible*

The Auerbachian notion of creating or extending a literary history through personal experience embodied in literary texts was something that can be most appropriately applied to Hemingway and his writings. Auerbach had shown us in his now famous work *Mimesis* the ways in which the world had been represented in Homer’s *Odyssey* in the 8th century B.C. and the way it was signified in the *Bible* in the late second millennium. Through these two texts that have exerted a profound influence over the human imagination, especially on the western imagination, Auerbach developed his theory of representation of the world. It
was a kind of figural representation in literature that possessed both literal and figurative dimensions. Auerbach’s literary idea proved to be popular across disciplines, especially the writing of historical narrative. In recent years American historian Hayden White has popularized Auerbach’s idea of *figuralstruktur* in his book *Figural Realism*.8

White believes that Auerbach was not just interested in presenting “a verbal mirror image of some extraverbal reality” available in Western literary discourse, but “the development of a specific kind of figuration” from “the Evangelists to the middle of the twentieth century” that possessed both “literal and figurative” dimensions.9 The Gospels provided Auerbach with a genealogical model of real and revealed literary history that could be used to understand the unique relationship between historical events.10 In recent times Auerbach’s model of literary representation has developed into a theory of historical representation.

Auerbach analyses the heroic world of Odysseus and the way it is represented by Homer as part of a day-to-day affair. In book 19 Odysseus returns home incognito and while his old housekeeper and nurse, Euryclea, customarily washes his feet she discovers the scar on his thigh that once was caused by a wild boar tusk during a hunt. Odysseus stops her from revealing her discovery by putting his hand on her throat and drawing her closer with his other hand. The Homeric procedure does not create suspense but presents the incident in a mater-of-fact way. The digressions in Homer are not meant to keep the reader in suspense but to relax him. Auerbach approvingly mentioned that Goethe and Schiller called this procedure the “retarding element” the very opposite of the element of suspense. However he disagreed with them about their explanation. They felt that the retarding element constituted the elements of epic poetry, while Auerbach felt it was realistic representation in a literary text. Auerbach stated,

But the true cause of the impression of “retardation” appears to me to lie elsewhere—namely, in the need of the Homeric style to leave nothing which it mentions half in darkness and unexternalized.”

Auerbach argued that the phenomenon of retardation in Homer had to do with realistic representation that left nothing in half-darkness but instead presented it clearly and realistically.

In a detailed chapter of *Mimesis* entitled “Odysseus’ Scar” Auerbach explains the Homeric worldview represented as figural realism:

To be sure, the aesthetic effect thus produced was soon noticed and thereafter consciously sought; but the more original cause must have lain in the basic impulse of the Homeric style: to represent phenomena in a fully externalized form, visible and palpable in all their parts, and completely fixed in their spatial and temporal relations. Nor do psychological processes receive any other treatment: here too nothing must remain hidden and unexpressed. With the utmost fullness, with an orderliness which even passion does not disturb, Homer’s personages vent their inmost hearts in speech; what they do not say to others, they speak in their own minds, so that the reader is informed of it. Much that is terrible takes place in the Homeric poems, but it seldom takes place wordlessly. Polyphemus talks to Odysseus; Odysseus talks to the suitors when he begins to kill them; Hector and Achilles talk at length, before battle and after; and no speech is so filled with anger or scorn that the particles which express logical grammatical connections are lacking or out of place. This last observation is true, of course, not only of speeches but of the presentation in general. The separate elements of a phenomenon are most
clearly placed in relation to one another; a large number of conjunctions, adverbs, particle, and other syntactical tools, all clearly circumscribed and delicately differentiated in meaning, delimits persons, things, and portions of incidents in respect to one another, and at the same time bring them together in a continuous and ever flexible connection; like the separate phenomena themselves, their relationships—their temporal, local, causal, final, consecutive, comparative, concessive, antithetical, and conditional limitations—are brought to light in perfect fullness; so that a continuous rhythmic procession of phenomena passes by, and never is there a form left fragmentary or half-illuminated, never a lacuna, never a gap, never glimpse of unplumbed depths….And this procession of phenomena takes place in the foreground—that is, in a local and temporal present which is absolute. One might think that the many interpolations, the frequent moving back and forth, would create assort of perspective in time and place; but the Homeric style never gives any such impression of perspective is avoided can be clearly observed in the procedure for introducing episodes, a syntactical construction with which every reader of Homer is familiar….12

Hemingway’s zero-ending denouements and the emotive content of his style are both part of the literary history of the “continuous rhythmic procession of phenomena” passing by.13 There is always a “local and temporal present” that is very much part of the external surrounding of the Kilimanjaro mountain in which the American couple participate. The dispassionate eye for detail and the dialogical passion can be understood in Auerbachian figural realism. The landscape of Tanzania maps the psychological paradigm, emotional deformation and ideological tension in the story.

The Iceberg Theory

Hemingway was a master of the understatement in fiction, leaving out most of the details. In an interview in The Paris Review after the publication of The Old Man and the Sea he called his theory of aesthetics, the iceberg theory. He stated:

If it is any use to know it, I always try to write on the principle of the iceberg. There is seven-eighths of it underwater for every part that shows. Anything you know you can eliminate and it only strengthens your iceberg. It is the part that doesn’t show. If a writer omits something because he does not know it then there is a hole in the story.14

Hemingway believed that deliberately omitting details in a story “strengthens [the] iceberg,” but by and large he felt it was bad luck to talk about writing. Writing was “whatever butterflies have on their wings” or the way a “hawk’s feathers” were arranged. The same sentiment was expressed in Mary Hemingway’s autobiography, How it Was; Mary wrote,

Nobody really knows or understands and nobody has ever said the secret. The secret is that it is poetry written into prose and it is the hardest of all things to do…15

Hemingway always felt that a work of art should be reduced to the bones and there should be no “cheating.” This is the sentiment he expressed about Mark Twain’s novel Huckleberry Finn, which he appreciated most:

All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called Huckleberry Finn. If you read it you must stop where the Nigger Jim is stolen from the boys. That is the real end. The rest is just cheating.
But it’s the best book we’ve had. All American writing comes from that. There was nothing before. There has been nothing as good since.\textsuperscript{16}

It is always in pursuit of “the real end” that has been Hemingway’s ideal. He felt a writer must write with honesty, stay true to experience and cut out the verbiage.

**Hemingway’s Life**

Born in Oak Park, Illinois, Hemingway spent most of his life as a Caucasian American expatriate. Living in a period of bewildering social change, he served as an ambulance crew volunteer in Italy during World War I where he was wounded. He used this experience to write *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), a tragic love-story of a young American deserter Fredric Henry and a British nurse Catherine Barkley who dies in childbirth in Switzerland. War, bull fighting, fishing and big game hunting in Africa were some of his common themes used by Hemingway; and generally speaking they symbolize honor, primitivism, endurance and dignity.

Hemingway’s disgust for war is writ large in his prose and fictional writings. His biographer Michael Reynolds tells us that though Hemingway loved military history he hated the war. As early as 1935 he warned his European readers of *Esquire* about the war brewing in Europe:

Five years earlier, as a lover of military history and a hater of war, Hemingway laid it out as bluntly as possible, telling his *Esquire* readers that a European war was brewing in which America should play no part. Never again,” he write, “should this country be put into a European war through mistaken idealism, through propaganda, through the desire to back our creditors.” That was the disillusioned Hemingway speaking, the young man sucked in by propaganda during World War I. Spain changed his point of view. After ten years of following Spanish politics more closely than what was happening in the United States, Hemingway believed in the Spanish earth, its working class, and its rituals, without ever embracing the politics of socialism or its radical left, the Communist Party. Seventeen years after idealism died in the muddy trenches of the Somme, Passchendaele, and Verdun, it resurrected in the Spanish conflict only to die a different death when fascism triumphed while democracies refused to help.\textsuperscript{17}

Hemingway was not only disillusioned by political democracies but also by politicians who were always serving their own interests. Here is what Reynolds writes,

Now with the German troops marching the Champs-Elysses, German U-boats once again shutting down the British island, and the Luftwaffe bombing London, Hemingway’s warning to America seemed far away and long ago. If the war came to him, he would fight to save his homeland and his people, but never to save the politicians who started the war. Soon, he know, there would be no choice, but on this day his mind was completely absorbed in the story of Robert Jordan’s last few hours on earth. As he told his editor, Max Perkins, after living for Jordan for seventeen months, he hated like hell to kill him off. With Jordan’s death, of course, Hemingway killed off, once more, a piece of himself. That’s how he felt about his writing: each book a little death, another story he could never write again. All that was left him to do were tedious revisions of the galley and page proofs, arguments with his editor over certain words, and then the reviews that his clipping agent collected for him, reviews he always read and never
liked.18

He therefore saw himself as a “gypsy” who was always anti-establishment taking from everyone and leaving behind a common property. He felt that, “A true work of art endures forever; no matter what its politics.”19

Africa dominated Hemingway’s consciousness from the early 1930s to the late 1950s, as he gradually became the quintessential great white hunter with a vengeance. It is often said that his fascination with a life of adventure in Africa made him popularize the Swahili word ‘safari’ in the English language. He was able to understand the thought and culture of the Kenyans without any formal linguistic training in their language, Kiswahili. His African fiction was carved out of his safari experiences in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Out of his safari experiences in Kenya and Tanzania in 1933 with his second wife Pauline emerged his book The Green Hills of Africa. To his disappointment the book proved to be a major failure, but then he wrote The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber and The Snows of Kilimanjaro, both in 1933. It was during this time he became sick with dysentery. His second visit to Africa was in 1953-54 with his fourth wife Mary. Now he was older, drinking a lot and had near-death skirmishes in Tanganyika and a plane crash in Entebbe, Uganda. During his second safari he had a fling with a young Wakamba girl, named Debba, and then wrote a fictional memoir about it in True at First Light, later compiled and edited by his son Patrick Hemingway and published posthumously in 1999.20

Ernest Hemingway was forever trying to distance himself from the strongly middle-class, church going, and Caucasian Christian background that he inherited as an American. Rejecting Christian salvation, Hemingway introduced individual endurance in the face of hardships and the reality of death. Once you reject the dominant Christian world view you soon realize that human beings are not only vulnerable but also insignificant creatures. If they cannot play out their lives in a mythological landscape then they must create an actual place through symbols and imitate an Auerbachian dénouement of their salvation. In order to find sanity in an insane world one needs a private, clean well-lit place or the pure snows of one’s own unconscious where he can be resurrected or die in peace. The protagonists are therefore not symbolic of individual virtue or uniqueness but representative of an actual place. The place exercises a positive or a negative influence on the characters. Most of his short stories deal with individuals trying to confront their fears and anxieties activated by old age, accident or abortion. He spent the last few years of his life in Cuba and then committed suicide. Hemingway received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954.

The Snows of Kilimanjaro

The short story, “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” exposes the façade of love a middle-aged American couple, Harry and Helen, have created. Hemingway mixes his real life concerns in Africa and realizes the most effective way to convey an intense life in a matter-of-fact style. Michael Reynolds, Hemingway’s biographer, tells us that Hemingway went to Kenya in the fall of 1953 with his wife Mary and stayed there until March 1954 perhaps observing the same picturesque landscape he had represented twenty years ago in the short story “The Snows of Kilimanjaro”.

A Personal Kilimanjaro

The story to Hemingway was always “a piece of himself,” a literal representation in fiction of his macho assertiveness and also a prophesy of the things to come. The all too real prose style with its powerful immediacy also prophesies Hemingway’s own transformation decades later into the failed artist that he so
succinctly portrayed in the story. The story captures both the literal and figurative aspects of life in a literary form. The story also releases “hidden demonic forces” that function as the author’s temperament and a “romantic way of life.” Hemingway like Balzac was able to unite the melodrama with the content, the *figura* with the milieu, the *imago* to the *veritas.*

The text establishes a strong connection between the protagonist and the author and prefigures the morbid and melancholic aspects of Hemingway’s own life, which he tried desperately to hide. According to Carlos Baker Hemingway got into a row with Scott Fitzgerald referring to him in a negative light in the story:

The story also reached out to involve Fitzgerald. The dying writer was made to remember “poor Scott Fitzgerald” and “his romantic awe” of that “special glamorous race” who had money. When Scott had discovered that they were not so glamorous as he had supposed, the realization “wrecked him just as much as any other thing that wrecked him.” Ernest was determined not to follow Fitzgerald into the wreckage of a crack-up. As he had long ago told him, wreckage was made to be used by writers, even if it was the wreckage of one’s whole damned life. If the rich were indeed the enemy, Ernest would use them as such in his fiction.

Ill and depressed among the green mountains of North Carolina, Fitzgerald was angered to see his name used in Ernest story. He got off a curt note on the stationery of the Grove Park Inn in Asheville.

Dear Ernest: Please lay off me in print. If I choose to write de profundis sometimes it doesn’t mean I want friends praying aloud over my corpse. No doubt you meant it kindly, but it cost me a night’s sleep. And when you incorporate it [the story] in a book would you mind cutting my name? It’s a fine story—one of your best—even though ‘Poor Scott Fitzgerald, etc.’

Hemingway was insolent and felt that he would not be a “gentleman” anymore but a “novelist” and use “whatever material he damned well chose.” Fitzgerald felt that Hemingway’s reply was both “crazy and conceited,” a reaction of a “nervously broken down” man. In fact Fitzgerald wrote that “His inclination is toward megalomania and mine toward melancholy.” Hemingway hid the pendulous swing of his moods from “megalomy to megalomania” which was defined by Ivan Kashkeen as “mens morbid in corpora sano.” Baker explains that,

One of the morbid aspects of Ernest’s mind was the recurrent conviction that he might soon die without having completed his work or fulfilled his unwritten promise to his talents. At the time when he wrote the story of the dying writer on the plains of Africa, he knew very well that he had climbed no farther than the lower slopes of his personal Kilimanjaro.

A safari accident in Africa activates the hidden anxieties of the vacationing couple about the past and present and reveals their rather predatory relationship hitherto hidden behind a façade of civility and deception. Both are on an African safari to the 4600 meters high, snow-covered Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. Hemingway describes in his dispassionate prose that the couple have come here looking for happiness: “Africa was where he was happiest in the good time of his life, so he had come out here to start again” (FFNS: SOK, p. 60). The author finds it quite easy to let the reader know that the protagonist Harry intends to
“get back into training” here so that he could “work the fat off his soul” and become a real “fighter” (FFNS: SOK, p. 60). Hemingway too was probably doing the same with his wife Mary two decades later.

The story tells us that not everything about Harry has gone bad. He makes a new determination to succeed. But while trying to photograph a herd of water bucks a thorn scratches his knee which, due to lack of proper medical attention, becomes gangrenous. The representation of reality through a camera and a short story prefiguring an actual future can be used to compare genealogically not only Odysseus’s scar on his thigh while hunting wild boar but also the apocalyptic vision of the Bible. Harry’s latent regret as writer and lover surfaces when he faces imminent death. Hemingway’s representation of the protagonist’s confrontation with death has its own denouement, just as the figural structure of the short story has its own fulfillment.

Harry fears that now that he is dying he will not be able to write about twenty excellent stories that he has been imagining. His dialogues with his physically attractive but aging wife Helen reveal his own emotional compromises, dreamy idealism and destructive ego. As he sees his approaching death he becomes nasty to her. He blames her wealth for his inadequacy, failure and decadence. She is saddened by his cruel criticism of their relationship, but keeps up the pretense of loving him. Her love for him had just been self-sacrifice. Now she is pained to hear that he never loved her. But she seems optimistic that everything will turn out to be all right in the end.

Harry becomes self-destructive. He loses all interest in things except drinking so that he can forget his immediate situation. He feels as if he has turned into a dying snake “biting itself because its back is broken.” He also wants to own up to the responsibility of creating a make-believe world of lies and pretenses. The writer is convinced that Harry must become responsible for his life and not blame others: “If he lived by a lie he should try to die by it” (FFNS: SOK, p. 60). When the long-awaited plane finally arrives Harry’s struggles are over. As Harry flies in the Puss Moth monoplane to a hospital he dies. You may read any kind of existential meaning in it, but it makes more sense to see the denouement as a representation of a chosen reality where death stalks both man and beast. The mountain of Kilimanjaro seems to be the ideal place to confront the reality of death and prefigure its arrival as a metaphor later into other safaris and beyond. The epigraph itself tells us of this reality.

**Epigraphic Metaphysics, Masai “Ngaje Ngai”**

Right from the beginning the impact of the epigraph upon the dialogical narrative and the self-reflexive prose becomes apparent to the reader. The innocent impersonality of the epigraph is part of the “metaphysics” of the story as Hemingway suggested to Carlos Baker. The epigraph places certain facts before the reader as an innocent and literal representation of an enactment, but these facts are more than innocent. The ironic implication of the epigraphic impersonality prefigures both a literary denouement and a biographical imitation. The epigraph reads:

*Kilimanjaro is a snow-covered mountain 19,710 feet high, and is said to be the highest mountain in Africa. Its western summit is called the Masai “Ngaje Ngai,” the House of God. Close to the western summit there is the dried and frozen carcass of a leopard. No one has explained what the leopard was seeking at that altitude (FFNS: SOK, p. 53)*

The epigraph tends to suggest three different levels of powers—cosmic, natural
and elemental—to which human being must submit, once they are able to access them. The epigraphic power of the text imitates a non-Christian reality, an environmental reality and an elemental reality. First, the Africans call the western summit of Mount Kilimanjaro the house of gods, perhaps implying that every living being must submit to its power. Second, the epigraph tells us that a mystery surrounds the carcass of a dead leopard discovered at the summit of the mountain. And last, the magnetic majesty of the snow-covered peak itself is placed before us. The epigraph pursues a dialogical narrative that takes place at the base of the mountain exemplifying these three representations. The author hopes that the story would be read against the backdrop of the epitaph.

In the story a temporary shelter comes up where African servants and a woman are taking care of a dying man. This temporary shelter is a part of an uncivilized world inhabited by game animals. Here the dying man has to come to terms with himself. The self-reflexive prose in italics helps us to understand the stories Harry wants to write, his childhood and adult life experiences and his ultimate regret at not having written anything in particular. The five italicized sections integrated in the story intensify the emotive quality of the narrative. However the third section from pages 67 to 69 in the first person protagonist voice carried a greater retrospective intensity. The details here are sharp as Harry remembers his childhood, trout fishing in the Black Forest, Paris drunkards and sportifs and Marie, his femme de menage. The epigraph, the dialogue and the italicized prose together create a richer complexity of thought and emotion that are figuratively represented as reality of the environment.

It is hard to understand “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” without analyzing the literary representation employed in the story. Hemingway uses literary devices to enlarge the meaning of his vision and make it psychologically complex. Even the names of the protagonist and his female companion are carefully chosen making the etymological meaning fit the character portrayed. Harry’s (or Henry’s) name implies a person who is the “ruler of an enclosure.” He wants to reach the summit of his ambition but is entrapped in the enclosure of his egotism and sloth. Helen is his torch as her name suggests. She shows the way for him to struggle and realize his destiny by providing him a congenial atmosphere and sexual satisfaction. An immediate connection is established between the frozen carcass of a leopard on the western summit of Kilimanjaro and the predatory instinct of the hero moving away from his habitat.

Helen regrets having come to Africa. She feels that if they had stayed on in Paris things would have been fine:

'I wish we’d never come,’ the woman said. She was looking at him holding the glass and biting her lip. ‘You never would have gotten anything like this in Paris. You always said you loved Paris. We could have stayed in Paris or gone anywhere. I’d have gone anywhere. I said I’d go anywhere you wanted. If you wanted to shoot we could have gone shooting in Hungary and been comfortable (FFNS: SOK, p. 55).’

But Africa is the dark mysterious continent, representing the primordial and mysterious consciousness of man. Here man must confront his darkest fears and his deepest anxieties. Incapacitated by illness, isolated at the foot of Kilimanjaro and away from Western civilization, Harry and Helen must confront their fears and come to terms with them. Africa also signifies the untapped creative potential of a writer. The untapped creative potential and the imminence of death that would cut short the realization of the creative potential generate anxiety in Harry. Both Hemingway and Harry pursue the writer’s craft. And therefore the
death of the hero in the story prefigures the death of the author.

**Hemingway's Treatment of Female Characters**

The strong identification between the author and the hero helps Hemingway to create Harry’s character from the inside. Hemingway enters the consciousness of the hero and reveals the latter’s darkest thoughts and compromises. Hemingway’s minute observation of nature helps him to develop a mood of sadness and show Harry’s regret in life. Hemingway’s self-absorbed, intense prose used to describe Harry’s subtle shift in moods changes when it comes to Helen. The prose becomes simpler. Hemingway feels greater empathy for Helen but does not reveal her complexity. We only see her as a self-sacrificing, emotionally dependent middle-aged woman—a provider of money and sex. Helen’s portrayal could also reflect Hemingway’s incomplete perception about women and his inability to understand them completely.

Helen was a “good-looking woman”, with a “pleasant body” and “a great talent and appreciation for the bed” (FFNS: SOK, p. 61). After her husband’s death she devoted herself to her “two just-grown children” but felt quite “frightened” and “alone” (FFNS: SOK, p. 61). In order to escape loneliness she began to drink a lot, read books, shoot game and reared horses. Then she took lovers but they bored her. She confessed that her husband “never bored her.” She was looking for someone who she could respect together with herself. Then she met Harry who she thought “did exactly what he wanted to” (FFNS: SOK, p. 61). She respected his independence and fell in love with him building a “new life” with him. She saw him as “the most complete man” she had ever known (FFNS: SOK, p. 72). She “loved him dearly as a writer, as a man, as a companion and as a proud possession. But theirs was a somewhat mercenary relationship. Harry “did not love her at all” but lied about his feelings in order to gain her wealth and love.

Harry knows he had never done anything in life. He has always lived as a parasite on women. He admits that each successive woman he had fallen in love with was richer than the previous one till he came to Helen who was the richest. His entire life was summed up in the following sentence: “It was never what he had done, but always what he could do” (FFNS: SOK, p. 60). Inaction, compromises and a dreamy idealism had made him thoroughly incompetent. Though he blamed Helen’s money and affection for destroying his creative impulse, he knew that his own decadent life style had destroyed his creativity:

He had destroyed his talent by himself. Why should he blame this woman because she kept him well? He had destroyed his talent by not using it, by betrayals of himself and what he believed in, by drinking so much that he blunted the edge of his perceptions, by laziness, by sloth, and by snobbery, by pride and by prejudice, by hook and by crook (FFNS: SOK, p. 60).

He had become a mercenary. He had traded his talents and vitality for money and in doing so lost his creativity. Whatever little talent was left was lost in excessive drinking. Now that he was dying he became bitter about love and this saddened Helen:

‘Love is a dunghill,’ said Harry. ‘And I’m the cock that gets on it to crow’
‘If you have to go away,’ she said, ‘is it absolutely necessary to kill off everything you leave behind? I mean do you have to take away everything? Do you have to kill your horse, and your wife and burn your saddle and your armour?’
‘Yes,’ he said. ‘Your damned money was my armour. My Swift and my Armour.’
‘Don’t.’
‘All right. I’ll stop that. I don’t want to hurt you.’
‘It’s a little bit late now.’

(FFNS: SOK, p. 58).

Harry has always been frightened of physical pain. This fear has forced him to make both physical and emotional compromises and in some ways conditioned his attitudes to love and death. “One thing he had always dreaded was the pain. He could stand pain as well as any man, until it went on too long, and wore him out … (FFNS: SOK, p. 71). Since he felt he loved intensely and demanded too much and suffered because of it he gave up loving altogether. “He had loved too much, demanded too much, and he wore it all out … (FFNS: SOK, p. 64). His pretense of love was born out of a fear of pain arising out of unrequited love. “He had sold vitality, in one form or another, all his life, and when your affections are not too involved you give much better value for the money” (FFNS: SOK, p. 61).

**Obsession with Death**

Harry was obsessed with death. But now that it was coming he felt tired and “angry” (FFNS: SOK, p. 55). He found a slow death boring. He wanted it to be quick and painless. He was full of exasperation as he waited to die:

‘I’m getting as bored with dying as with everything else, he thought.’
‘It’s a bore,’ he said out aloud.
‘What is, my dear?’
‘Anything you do too bloody long ’(FFNS: SOK, p. 72).

Harry sees death through four sharp images—as a bad smell, as a puff of wind, as a shapeless weight and as a slinking hyena. These images reflect his fear of death. He becomes conscious of death three times. Each time his awareness of death is preceded by his sexual desire for Helen and appreciation of her sensuous beauty. The first time Harry senses the approach of death he is indulging in an erotic sexual fantasy about Helen. During this fantasy he realizes the immediacy of death. “It came with a rush; not as a rush of water nor of wind; but of a sudden evil-smelling emptiness and the odd thing was that the hyena slipped lightly along the edge of it” (FFNS: SOK, p. 63). The “evil-smelling emptiness” comes with “a rush,” overwhelming him. Immediately it is linked to the slinking hyena. The second time it happens he is once more admiring her “good breasts,” her “useful thighs,” sensuous hands and pleasant smile. “This time there was no rush. It was a puff, as of a wind that makes a candle flicker and the flame go tall (FFNS: SOK, p. 66). Harry senses death as an evil wind that snuffs out life. The image of the flames going tall obviously has an evil connotation—the presence of an evil spirit. The third time Harry senses death he is once more watching Helen’s sleepy and “pleasantly lined face” (FFNS: SOK, p. 72). She is sitting in a chair by the fire and presents a sensuous image of an aging though still desirable woman. Just then he smells death—“death had come and rested on the foot of the cot hand he could smell its breath” (FFNS: SOK, p. 72). It has “no shape,” it “simply occupied space” (FFNS: SOK, p. 72). It has a bad smell and sits as a heavy weight on his chest. Sex without love is an extreme form of narcissism that Harry suffers from. Wanting her without loving her is a narcissistic self-gratification.

Harry does not realize that beneath any erotic alterity lies the responsibility for the other. Eros never precedes responsibility. Before he can reach the summit, the House of Gods, he has to understand the dignity of the house of man—his own marriage. Before he can realize his own dignity he must accept the dignity of others, especially Helen and all the other women he had betrayed. Images of
sex and death bring out the conflict between his self-gratifying ego and the erotic other.

When the plane climbs higher taking Harry, together with Helen, for medical treatment, Harry sees the “square top” of Mt. Kilimanjaro—“great, high and unbelievably white in the sun” (FFNS: SOK, p. 74.). Harry understands that that’s “where he was going” (FFNS: SOK, p. 74). An immediate connection is established between Harry, the leopard and the square top of Kilimanjaro. Both died pursuing some kind of physical gratification. Once Harry accepts death and love he can reach the “House of God,” become one with his great vitality symbolized in the leopard and purify the darkness in his soul in the whiteness of the snow. The epigraph tells us that it is impossible to find out what the leopard was “seeking at that altitude” (FFNS: SOK, p. 53). Harry too is “seeking” something—seeking love, creativity and purity. In confronting himself, facing death, overcoming his fears and inhibitions he has finally triumphed over the “catalogue” of his weaknesses, or has he? (FFNS: SOK, p. 60). He has left behind the obscene vultures and foul-smelling hyenas of his life and made friends with the leopard, the vital principle of his life. In dying does he become fully alive?

The First Forty-Nine Stories of which The Snows of Kilimanjaro was a representative made Hemingway sometimes wonder whether “he really wrote them.” However he admitted that finally real life experience mattered most, even if while pursuing experience writing became blunted. In the Preface to the 1944 edition Hemingway wrote:

In going where you have to go, and doing what you have to do, and seeing what you have to see, you dull and blunt the instrument you write with. But I would rather have it bent and dulled and know I had to put it on the grindstone again and hammer it into shape and put a whetstone to it, and know that I had something to write about, than to have it bright and shining and nothing to say, or smooth and well oiled in the closet, but unused.”

Only when a writer chooses to confront reality and become one with it he could create genuine art. This was real Auerbachian representation and fulfillment. Reynolds points out that in some ways Hemingway became Harry, the failed writer.

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The present paper is a summary of a more elaborate paper on Erich Auerbach that I am presently engaged in writing. I received some insightful comments from Professor Bruce Carrick of Soka University, Japan regarding the chronology and dating of the Bible. I gratefully acknowledge his help and contribution, though he bears no responsibility whatsoever for the views expressed here or errors made.

REFERENCES

2 Hemingway did not think much about Saul Bellow. In a letter to Malcolm Cowley dated 11th October 1949 Hemingway criticizes Bellow together with other writers. He wrote, “Your present job sounds quite difficult since you are dealing with people who can write only at times. You could put Lionel Trilling, Saul Bellow, Truman Capote, Jean Stafford and ... Robert Lowry into one cage and jack them up good and you would find that you have nothing. Eudora Welty can write. The others I think you waste your time discussing unless we want to discuss who is playing for Dallas, Texas.” Quoted in Carlos Baker ed., *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters 1917-1961*, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1981), p. 681.

3 Obviously Hemingway can be seen in the great American tradition beginning from Mark Twain and extending into Sherwood Anderson and Gertrude Stein, to whom he owes a great deal.

The term Lost Generation was a term coined in 1920 in Paris by Gertrude Stein who was a member of the expatriate circle in Paris. Initially the term meant nothing at all but gradually acquired meaning. It became a term of identification for U.S. and British expatriates who summarily rejected American and English conventions and readily adopted the more open and appealing life style of Left Bank Paris. Sitting in cafes along the Boulevard Montparnasse, Paris these people would talk, eat and watch crowds milling outside. The Lost Generation could not accept the pre-war belief in love, romanticism and prosperity. The war had destroyed both optimism and hope. Even the Great Boom of the 1920’s promising economic prosperity did not attract these people who saw it in corruption and insincerity. Unable to accept pre-war American values, distrusting postwar values, the Lost Generation became spiritually bankrupt and emotionally sterile. In order to escape the spiritual vacuum they sought refuge in pleasures of the body—alcohol and sex. Alcoholism and sexual promiscuity became two rampant diseases amongst bohemian expatriate American writers who reacted strongly against American consumerism. Since they could not believe in love or religion they chose sexual freedom and cynicism or moral indifference. Young people who came of age after World War II also underwent a similar process of disillusionment and reinvention. They were called the Beat Generation.

Joseph Wood Krutch, ed., *Walden and Other Writings by Henry David Thoreau*, (London: Bantam Books, 1982). Thoreau writes in chapter five entitled “Solitude” the excitement of the senses vis-à-vis nature: “This is a delicious evening, when the whole body is one sense, and imbibles delight through every pore. I go and come with a strange liberty in Nature, a part of herself. As I walk along the stony shore of the pond in my shirt-sleeves, though it is cool as well as cloudy and windy, and I see nothing special to attract me, all the elements are unusually congenial to me. The bullfrogs trump to usher in the night, and the note of the whip-poor-will is borne on the rippling wind from over the water. Sympathy with what is question are of the kind that, since Nietzsche, have come to be called genealogical” (pp.94-95).

Hemingway’s singular contribution in the area of prose style, and his zero ending denouements, the very opposite of the traditional well made plots. He builds his story elliptically without bothering to tie all the loose ends in the conclusion. Even the Nobel Prize committee acknowledged Hemingway’s singular contribution in the area of prose style, and his zero ending denouements, the very opposite of the traditional well made plots. He builds his story elliptically without bothering to tie all the loose ends in the conclusion.


Baker, *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story*, ibid., p. 277. Baker writes, “A writer,” he continued, “is an outlaw like a Gypsy…. If he is a good writer he will never like the government he lives under. His hand should be against it…. He can be class conscious only if his talent is limited. If he has enough talent, all classes are his province. He takes from them all and what he gives is everybody’s property…. A true work of art endures forever; no matter what its politics.”

Baker, *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story*, ibid., Baker writes, “Ernest had been showing signs of wanting to go native. At dinner one night he told Mary that she was ‘depriving him of his new wife’—a Wakamba girl named Debba from a shamba near the village of Laitoktok.
Mary, who had long since elected to believe that boys will be boys, observed helpfully that the problem could easily be met, though Debbi ought first to have a much-needed bath,” p. 517.

21 White, *Figural Realism*, ibid., p. 93. White writes, “The tendency ‘to sense hidden demonic forces everywhere and to exaggerate expression to the point of melodrama’ is taken to be ‘in conformity with’ (es entsprach) the temperament of the author, on the one side, and ‘the Romantic way of life,’ on the other. That is to say, Balzac’s style—which unites a specific generic form or mode (melodrama) with a distinct content (‘demonic forces’)—is itself a figure that unites his milieu with his work as an imago to a veritas.”


25 Actually there was no mystery about the dead leopard. Carlos Baker writes that, “Although Ernest said that no one seemed to know what the leopard was doing there, in fact he had been chasing a goat.” See Baker, *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story*, ibid., p 253. In fact Hemingway deliberately went about creating the mystery as “part of the metaphysics” of the story. Baker writes, “The epigraph at the head of the story mentioned the dried carcass of the leopard, about which Ernest had heard from Philip Percival. He later called it ‘part of the metaphysics’ of his story. He know well enough what it meant, he said, but he was under no obligation to explain,” p. 289.

26 Alphonso Lingis, trans., Immanuel Levinas, *Otherwise Than Being or Beyond Essence*, 1974; (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1998), p. 192. Levinas writes, “The sense of this alteration must indeed be clarified in its turn. But it was here important to underline the possibility of the libido in the more elementary and more rich signification of proximity, a possibility included in the unity of the face and the skin, even if only in the extreme turnings about of a face. Beneath the erotic alterity there is the alterity of the-one-for-the-other, responsibility before Eros.”