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剑桥美国小说新论·13
(英文影印版)

New Essays on

*The Sun
Also Rises*

《太阳照样升起》新论

Linda Wagner-Martin 编



北京大学出版社
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著作责任者: Linda Wagner-Martin 编

组稿编辑: 张 冰

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举报电话: (010)62752024 电子信箱: fd@pup.pku.edu.cn

导 读

北京大学英语系教授 陶洁

近年来,美国文学在我国很受欢迎。大专院校英语系纷纷开设美国文学选读和专题课,学生从中学到的大部分内容是美国小说。不仅如此,在本科毕业论文、硕士论文或博士论文方面,学生所选题材也大多为关于某部美国小说或某个美国小说家。然而,我们的学生往往热衷理论而对作品或作家缺乏深入细致的了解和分析。他们往往先大谈理论规则,然后罗列一些例证,不能很好地把理论和文本融会贯通,恰如其分地结合在一起。在这种情况下,我们需要一些好的参考资料来帮助学生更好地认识和理解他们在阅读或研究的作品和作家。《剑桥美国小说新论》正是这样一套优秀的参考书。

这套丛书的负责人是曾经主编过《哥伦比亚美国文学史》的艾默里·埃利奥特教授,并且由英国剑桥大学出版社在上世纪80年代中期开始陆续出书,至今仍在发行并出版新书,目前已有五十多种,不仅出平装本还有精装本。一套书发行二十多年还有生命力,估计还会继续发行,主要因为它确实从学生的需要出发,深受他们和教师的喜爱。

《剑桥美国小说新论》的编排方式比较统一。根据主编制定的原则,每本书针对一部美国文学历史上有名望的大作家的一本经典小说,论述者都是研究这位作家的知名学者。开篇是一位权威专家的论述,主要论及作品的创作过程、出版历史、当年的评价以及小说发表以来不同时期的主要评论和阅读倾向。随后是四到五篇论述从不同角度用不同的批评方法对作品进行分析和阐释。这些文章并非信手拈来,而是专门为这套丛书撰写的,运用的理论都比较新,其中不乏颇有



新意的真知灼见。书的最后是为学生进一步学习和研究而提供的参考书目。由此可见,编书的学者们为了帮助学生确实煞费苦心,努力做到尽善尽美。

这五十多种书有早期美国文学家库珀的《最后的莫希干人》,也有当代试验小说大师品钦的《拍卖第49号》和厄普代克那曾被《时代》杂志评为1923年以来100部最佳小说之一的《兔子,跑吧!》;有我们比较熟悉的麦尔维尔的《白鲸》,也有我们还不太了解的他的《漂亮水手》;有中国学生很喜欢的海明威的长篇小说《永别了,武器》,令人想不到的是还有一本论述他所有的短篇小说的集子。有些大作家如亨利·詹姆斯、威廉·福克纳等都有两三本作品入选,但它们都分别有专门的集子。丛书当然涉及已有定论的大作家,包括黑人和白人作家(可惜还没有华裔作家的作品),但也包括20世纪70年代妇女运动中发掘出来的如凯特·肖邦的《觉醒》和佐拉·尼尔·赫斯顿的《他们眼望上苍》,甚至还有我国读者很熟悉的斯托夫人的《汤姆叔叔的小屋》。当年这部小说曾经风靡美国,在全世界都有一定的影响,后来被贬为“政治宣传”作品,从此在美国文学史上销声匿迹。70年代后随着要求扩大文学经典中女性和少数族裔作家的呼声日益高涨,人们才开始重新评价这部作品,分析它对日后妇女作家的影响、对黑人形象的塑造,甚至它在美国文学的哥特式传统中的地位等等。

这样的例子还有很多,例如威廉·迪恩·豪威尔斯和他的《赛拉斯·拉帕姆的发迹》。以前人们只肯定他在发展现实主义文学和理论方面的贡献,对他的作品除了《赛拉斯·拉帕姆的发迹史》评价都不太高。但在这本新论文集子里编者对已有定论进行挑战,强调豪威尔斯的小说、他的现实主义跟当时的社会经济文化现状有很大的关系。他的小说既有其文学形式,又是一种社会力量。另外一位19世纪新英格兰作家萨拉·奥尼·裘威特过去一向被看成是乡土作家,现在学者们用女性主义观点强调她的《尖枞树之乡》对美国文学的贡献,分析当年的种族、民族主义和文学市场对她写作的影响。用封底宣传语言来说,这本集子对美国文学研究、女性主义批评理论和美国研究等方面都会引起很大的兴趣。

还有一本书似乎在我们国家很少有人提起过——亨利·罗思的《就说是睡着了》。此书在 20 世纪 30 年代曾经风靡一时,此后长期销声匿迹,60 年代又再度受到推崇。现在这部小说则是上面提到的《时代》杂志 100 部优秀小说中的一部,被认为是上个世纪头 50 年里最为出色的美国犹太小说、最优秀的现代主义小说之一。评论家认为集子里的文章采用心理分析、社会历史主义等批评方法探讨了有关移民、族裔和文化归属等多方面的问题。

这套集子里还出现了令人信服的新论点。很长时间内海明威一直被认为是讨厌女人的大男子主义者。但在关于他的短篇小说的集子里,作者通过分析《在密执安北部》,令人信服地证明海明威其实对妇女充满同情。不仅如此,这一论断还瓦解了海明威在《太阳照样升起》中充分暴露他的厌女症的定论。

然而,作者们并不侈谈理论或玩弄理论名词,所有的论断都是既以一定的理论为基础,又对文本进行深入的分析;既把理论阐述得深入浅出,又把作品分析得丝丝入扣,让人不由得不服。他们能够做到这一点完全是因为他们了解学生的水平和需要。

我认为《剑桥美国小说新论》是一套很好的参考书。北京大学出版社购买版权,出版这套书是个有益于外国文学研究教学的决定。

Series Editor's Preface

In literary criticism the last twenty-five years have been particularly fruitful. Since the rise of the New Criticism in the 1950s, which focused attention of critics and readers upon the text itself – apart from history, biography, and society – there has emerged a wide variety of critical methods which have brought to literary works a rich diversity of perspectives: social, historical, political, psychological, economic, ideological, and philosophical. While attention to the text itself, as taught by the New Critics, remains at the core of contemporary interpretation, the widely shared assumption that works of art generate many different kinds of interpretation has opened up possibilities for new readings and new meanings.

Before this critical revolution, many American novels had come to be taken for granted by earlier generations of readers as having an established set of recognized interpretations. There was a sense among many students that the canon was established and that the larger thematic and interpretative issues had been decided. The task of the new reader was to examine the ways in which elements such as structure, style, and imagery contributed to each novel's acknowledged purpose. But recent criticism has brought these old assumptions into question and has thereby generated a wide variety of original, and often quite surprising, interpretations of the classics, as well as of rediscovered novels such as Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*, which has only recently entered the canon of works that scholars and critics study and that teachers assign their students.

The aim of The American Novel Series is to provide students of American literature and culture with introductory critical guides to

American novels now widely read and studied. Each volume is devoted to a single novel and begins with an introduction by the volume editor, a distinguished authority on the text. The introduction presents details of the novel's composition, publication history, and contemporary reception, as well as a survey of the major critical trends and readings from first publication to the present. This overview is followed by four or five original essays, specifically commissioned from senior scholars of established reputation and from outstanding younger critics. Each essay presents a distinct point of view, and together they constitute a forum of interpretative methods and of the best contemporary ideas on each text.

It is our hope that these volumes will convey the vitality of current critical work in American literature, generate new insights and excitement for students of the American novel, and inspire new respect for and new perspectives upon these major literary texts.

Emory Elliott
Princeton University

Contents

Series Editor's Preface
page vii

1
Introduction
LINDA WAGNER-MARTIN
page 1

2
Humor in *The Sun Also Rises*
SCOTT DONALDSON
page 19

3
The *Sun* in Its Time:
Recovering the Historical Context
MICHAEL S. REYNOLDS
page 43

4
Brett Ashley as New Woman in *The Sun Also Rises*
WENDY MARTIN
page 65



5

Decoding the Hemingway Hero
in *The Sun Also Rises*

ARNOLD E. AND CATHY N. DAVIDSON

page 83

6

Afterthoughts on the Twenties
and *The Sun Also Rises*

JOHN W. ALDRIDGE

page 109

Notes on Contributors

page 131

Selected Bibliography

page 133

Introduction

LINDA WAGNER-MARTIN

MOST writers' first novels do not turn out to be their most important work. In Ernest Hemingway's case, *The Sun Also Rises* has gradually come to have just that reputation. After an intense four-year writing apprenticeship (to Gertrude Stein, Sherwood Anderson, Ezra Pound, Ford Madox Ford, and others), Hemingway wrote his 1926 novel with a sense of surety, a knowledge of craft, and a belief that literature could create morality. He produced a document of the chaotic postwar 1920s and a testament to the writer's ability to create characters, mood, situation, and happenings that were as real as life.

Readers reacted to the novel explosively. "Here is a book which, like its characters, begins nowhere and ends in nothing"; "a most unpleasant book"; "raw satire"; "entirely out of focus." Whether critics saw Hemingway's style as the flaw or, more commonly, his characters and their rootless, sensual ways, they were ready to condemn his choices of both method and subject. As the reviewer of the *Chicago Daily Tribune* exclaimed, "*The Sun Also Rises* is the kind of book that makes this reviewer at least almost plain angry." *The Dial* reviewer called Hemingway's characters "vapid," as shallow "as the saucers in which they stack their daily emotion."¹ Even Hemingway's mother agreed that his characters were "utterly degraded people" and that the novel might better have never been written.² Edwin Muir, writing in *Nation & Athenaeum*, stated that the novel was skillfully written but lacked "artistic significance. We see the lives of a group of people laid bare, and we feel that it does not matter to us."³

But there were also the avid Hemingway readers, those trained to appreciate his subtle efforts, his omitted details, through experi-



ence with his earlier short stories (*Three Stories and Ten Poems*, 1923; in *our time*, 1924; and *In Our Time*, the longer version, 1925). Cleveland B. Chase praised *The Sun Also Rises* for “some of the finest dialogue yet written in this country,” Hemingway’s “truly Shakespearian absoluteness”; Herbert S. Gorman, his creation of people “who live with an almost painful reality”; and Burton Rascoe, his impeccable style: “Every sentence that he writes is fresh and alive. There is no one writing whose prose has more of the force and vibrancy of good, direct, natural, colloquial speech. His dialogue is so natural that it hardly seems as if it is written at all — one hears it.”⁴ Ford Madox Ford as well championed what he called Hemingway’s “extremely delicate” prose. Edmund Wilson found his style as well as his subject matter “rather subtle and complicated,” and Hugh Walpole referred to Hemingway as “the most interesting figure in American letters in the last ten years.”⁵ Some of this critical attention was based on the sense that Hemingway was just at the beginning of his artistic promise. N. L. Rothman described his effective use of understatement to mask an inexpressible anguish, claiming that “there is a good deal in the writing of Ernest Hemingway that is being overlooked,” and H. L. Mencken warned the young writer that he had achieved his huge success through “technical virtuosity,” but that style alone could not maintain such a reputation.⁶

The most excited comments focus primarily on *style*. Hemingway burst on the modernist scene well acquainted with the current passion for innovation (we think of Ezra Pound, wearing his flamboyant scarf embroidered with the phrase “Make It New”). The modernist method was understatement, a seemingly objective way of presenting the hard scene or image, allowing readers to find the meaning for themselves. “Hard-boiled” was not exactly the right phrase, but it came close. No “sentiment,” no didacticism, no leading the reader: The modernist work would stand on its own words, would reflect unflinchingly its own world, and would smash through the facade of “polite literature” that had dominated the Victorian era and turn-of-the-century American literature.

Hemingway, born in 1899, had been practicing his art ever since high school, when he wrote shrewd and quasi-humorous pieces

for the school paper. After graduation he chose not to go to college but began working instead on the *Kansas City Star*, where his notions about true sentences and clear writing had their birth. After less than a year, in May 1918, he volunteered for the American Red Cross ambulance corps in Italy. His World War I experience ended with his being severely wounded near Fossalta (over 250 shrapnel wounds in his legs and thighs). He returned home after hospitalization in Italy, and the following winter he convalesced in Petosky, Michigan, spending his time writing. Michigan was beloved territory to him: He had spent every summer since his first birthday at the family cottage on Walloon Lake, near Charlevoix, and his love of the lakes and forests was to be indelible.

Several years passed. Hemingway was working in Chicago, writing for himself (imitating Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*, which had been published in 1919) and for *The Cooperative Commonwealth* (for a salary). After his marriage to Hadley Richardson in 1921, he went with his wife to Paris, partly to write for the *Toronto Star* but, more importantly, to live the life of the expatriate writer and to learn all he could about writing. His first published work was poetry. Then he wrote the tirelessly polished vignettes of *in our time*, which became the one-page interchapters of the 1925 *In Our Time*. Ezra Pound had praised these for their "clean hard paragraphs" and had gone on to link Hemingway with James Joyce and Ford Madox Ford.⁷ The young writer's accomplishment, even before publishing a novel, was considerable.

Pressure on Hemingway grew; he wanted to become more widely known and to leave his apprenticeship status behind. During July 1925, when he and Hadley had returned from a second trip to Pamplona, Spain, for the bullfights and the running of the bulls, he began his first novel. The Hemingways, along with Duff Twysden, Pat Guthrie, Don Stewart, Harold Loeb, and Bill Smith, had tried to recapture the good feeling of their first visit to Pamplona in 1924, which they had made alone; but the relationships in the 1925 group were so divisive that the resulting tensions lasted for years. *The Sun Also Rises* is sometimes called a roman à clef because many of its characters are identifiable as real people: Brett Ashley is modeled on Duff (and was called Duff in the early

drafts of the book); Robert Cohn on Loeb; Jake Barnes on Hemingway (and was called Hem); Romero on the bullfighter Cayetano Ordoñez. The work of fiction, however, far surpasses this somewhat limiting description of it as “gossip.”

Determined to write a masterpiece, Hemingway set out to write a first novel that he himself called “moral.” And *The Sun Also Rises* – despite all of its seemingly loose living – moves toward a highly moral, even noble, ending. In Brett’s relinquishing of Pedro Romero, a man she sincerely could have loved, comes her moment of truth. Its chilly truthfulness is emphasized in her abrupt phrasing, almost shocking in its terseness: “I’m not going to be one of these bitches that ruins children” (243). Jake, too, comes to realize how improbable his love for Brett has been; and even when she makes overtures to him after Romero has gone, he treats her wryly and sidesteps any further involvement. The concluding scene of the novel is famous for its understatement:

“Oh, Jake,” Brett said, “we could have had such a damned good time together.”

Ahead was a mounted policeman in khaki directing traffic. He raised his baton. The car slowed suddenly pressing Brett against me.

“Yes,” I said. “Isn’t it pretty to think so?” (p. 247)

For the first time in the novel, Jake’s great love for the mysterious, forthright “new woman,” Brett, begins to diminish. What that lessening finally indicates is left open, however. Will Jake and Brett remain friends? Will they ever again play at being lovers? Will the group re-form back in Paris? Will they ever return to Pamplona? Most important, how will the future lives of these characters develop? And will they ever escape the brutalizing effects of the war?

Like most of Hemingway’s fiction, *The Sun Also Rises* steers clear of giving the reader the “meaning” of the book, neatly wrapped and summarized. The ideal modern novel was to involve the reader, to suggest myriad possible interpretations. The novel shares with many other great fictions this “open” ending, in which the reader is left to think about what the closing scene or scenes might indicate. Hemingway wants the reader to sense Jake’s new realism even while he remains helplessly caught in his love for Brett. He is not suggesting that Jake’s feeling for Brett has changed, that Jake

dislikes her, or that the powerful chemistry that has led Brett to wire Jake, asking him to rescue her from Madrid, has ended. What has ended is Jake's belief that he and Brett will work through their problems and come to live happily, simply, together.

The Sun Also Rises is more than just a romance. If the whole plot were dependent on Jake's getting or losing Brett, the novel would hardly have kept readers coming back to it for sixty years. In the complications of the Jake-Brett romance lies Hemingway's remarkable ability to catch the temper of the era. Starved for affection, victimized by her former husband, Brett is a product of war-ravaged Europe. She must have physical affection, in quantity, for reassurance. And just as Brett is maimed by her experiences of World War I, so is Jake. His wound, however, is a physical one. As he looks in the mirror of his apartment, he thinks, "Of all the ways to be wounded. I suppose it was funny" (30). Even though Jake manages to feel sexual desire, the act of intercourse is physically impossible. In his dramatic staging of Jake's conflict, Hemingway succeeds in giving the reader an image of war damage that is inescapable and poignant. Whenever Jake is on stage, which is most of the time, his wound permeates everyone's awareness. And since the ostensible action of the book usually involves Brett's amours, Jake's injury is omnipresent.

If the mood of postwar America was disillusion and frustration, then Jake's physical incapacity is a striking image of many kinds of disability. The loss of promise after World War I was one of the chief reasons for the expatriation of America's writers and artists. Failure of belief in all of the traditional panaceas (religion, politics, economics, romance) led to the bleak "waste land" atmosphere so evident in T. S. Eliot's poem of that name (1922) or Theodore Dreiser's 1925 novel *An American Tragedy*. The mood of American and British literature alike was tentative, more subdued in tone than it had been for fifty years. The brilliance of Hemingway's novel was that it appeared to fit into that mood while actually contradicting it.

Hemingway worked carefully to achieve this ambivalent effect. He began with an epigraph that he attributed to Gertrude Stein: "You are all a lost generation." (By the time of his writing *The Sun Also Rises*, he was less enthusiastic about Stein's writing, and her

friendship, than he had been during the previous four years, so there may be some malice in his linking her with this line.) His notebooks record that the phrase was in reality spoken to Stein by a garage mechanic, using the French (“c’est un generation perdu”). According to the mechanic, the lost generation was that between the ages of twenty-two and thirty: “No one wants them. They are no good. They were spoiled.” There is no question that war has damaged the lives and psyches of Hemingway’s characters, but Hemingway intends that there be some recognition of the value of that “lost” group who have survived the war, even if imperfectly.⁸

The quotation attributed to Stein comes first on the epigraph page and is immediately followed by the passage from Ecclesiastes from which the title is taken. *The Sun Also Rises* is as affirmative as the biblical passage and is in strange contrast to the idea of the lost generation. It is as if Hemingway were contradicting Stein, her friends, and the pervasive tenor of their comments about those people affected by the war. Characteristic of the way poets use fragments of conversation, scenes, and images in a poem, Hemingway is building the structure of the novel so that the reader is led through these juxtapositions to a full comprehension of the total grid of meaning.

The passage from Ecclesiastes begins with a calm, simple statement: “One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever.” (Hemingway was later to say that the hero of the novel was the earth, and his emphasis on the Spanish land, especially in the Burguete scene, sharpens that focus.) “The sun also ariseth” comes next and is followed by another list of harmonious natural elements: winds, rivers, the cyclic and returning patterns of seasonal movement. Considering the two epigraphs in tandem, no reader could stay focused for long on the “lost generation” image. The tone of the second epigraph is clearly positive; it comes second; it is much longer; it maintains its dominance.

During this period of his writing life, Hemingway was much interested in the *sound* of prose. He and John Dos Passos, a close friend who was also a novelist and travel writer, read aloud to each other from the Bible, particularly the Old Testament. The

resonance, the incantatory rhythms, the sheer drama of the language in the King James version were in some ways a model for Hemingway's own writing. Though he was not rhetorical in the same ways, he understood the value of an incremental style. He consistently built his paragraphs, and his chapters, to achieve one overwhelming effect. Short sentences accenting longer ones, a vowel sound repeated subtly as well as obviously – in many ways Hemingway was conscious of the overall impact of his writing at every stage in a story or novel. The reader was at least partly led through a text by elements so carefully designed that their effect was unobtrusive.

So, Hemingway has worked hard to establish a contradiction from the very beginning of the novel. Is this a book about wastrels, the dregs of the postwar “meaninglessness,” or is it about the eternally seeking person who wants to carve out a set of values and a notion of integrity on his or her own terms? Some critics saw only the former in *The Sun Also Rises*. For the author, however, changing the title of the book from *Fiesta* (which it had been called in draft and in its first published version in England) to its final form emphasized its positive characteristics. Jake Barnes and his friends – all of them – are a group because they share the same beliefs and experiences. Except for Robert Cohn, whose differences are less heinous than Jake sometimes thinks them to be, the displaced Americans and Britons are moving through a festival period in their lives, punctuating their aimless existence abroad with an organized visit to Spain for the bullfights. For Jake Barnes, who is a journalist in Paris, this trip is his vacation. The fiesta atmosphere, then, and the unusual behavior of the characters are not the everyday canvas of their lives. It is as if Hemingway is suggesting that even on vacation, even far from the social coercions and normal contexts for their behavior, these characters manage to stay in control – even if sometimes on the ragged edge of control.

The organization of the novel shows how central Jake Barnes is to his community of friends. A key theme is the notion of community: These are people who understand each other, the rules they live by, and the reasons for their choices. Only someone outside that community will have difficulty with the social code. Count