

HEMINGWAY AND INFLUENCE: THE INFLUENCE OF ROMANCE LANGUAGE
LITERATURE ON THE ENGLISH PROSE OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY FROM A
BLOOMIAN PERSPECTIVE

by

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(Under the Direction of Tim Raser)

ABSTRACT

There has been much analysis of influence in the work of Ernest Hemingway, particularly the influence of European literature. Most studies center on source-hunting, allusion counting, and other characteristics typically associated with literary influence. Harold Bloom's antithetical approach to criticism differs from the traditional concept of literary influence and is profoundly applicable to the work of Hemingway. This study is a comparison of three Hemingway works with three works of authors from the Romance Language tradition: Guy de Maupassant in French, Horacio Quiroga in Spanish, and Alberto Moravia in Italian. The revisionary ratios of Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence* are used to uncover the influence-anxieties hidden in each text and demonstrate the relationship between the texts and authors in question, despite their linguistic and geographic distance. Two Hemingway short stories and one novel are discussed, moving chronologically from earliest to latest, showing him in the role of both *ephebe* and precursor.

INDEX WORDS: Ernest Hemingway, Guy de Maupassant, Horacio Quiroga, Alberto Moravia, Harold Bloom, *Anxiety of Influence*, short story

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 HEMINGWAY AND MAUPASSANT: INFLUENCE ANXIETIES IN “LA MAISON TELLIER” AND “THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD”	13
3 ERNESTO Y HORACIO: MUTUAL INFLUENCES IN THE WORKS OF HEMINGWAY AND QUIROGA.....	36
4 HEMINGWAY AND MORAVIA: <i>L’INFLUENZA IN SENSO INVERSO</i>	74
5 CONCLUSION.....	123
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	129

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

*“You cannot do something someone else has done though you might have done it if they
hadn’t.”*

Ernest Hemingway (*Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters 1917-196*)

The work of Ernest Hemingway has been studied, idolized, copied, and criticized by readers around the world. Much of the critical analysis of his work focuses on *influence*, particularly the influence of the European literature to which he was exposed during his formative years as a writer in Paris in the 1920’s. In the field of French literary study there are comparisons between Hemingway’s short stories and those of French short story writer Guy de Maupassant,¹ analysis of Baudelarian subtext in the Hemingway narrative,² and comparative applications of Hemingway’s “iceberg theory” to *The Sun Also Rises* and Camus’ *L’Etranger*.³ Elsewhere in Romance Language tradition, comparison of theme and motif has been analyzed in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha* by Miguel de Cervantes,⁴ and connections drawn between Hemingway’s short stories and the Italian literary

¹ Jobst, Jack W., and W.J. Williamson. "Hemingway and Maupassant: More Light on 'The Light of the World'." *Hemingway Review* 13.2 (1994) : 52. Print.

² Penas Ibáñez, Beatriz. "Canonical Readings: Baudelaire's Subtext in Hemingway's African Narratives." *Hemingway and Africa*. 151-175. Rochester: Camden House, 2011. *MLA International Bibliography*. Web. 2 Nov. 2012.

³ Stoltzfuz, Ben. "Hemingway's Iceberg: Camus' *L'etranger* And *The Sun Also Rises*." *North Dakota Quarterly* 76.1-2 (2009) : 22-39. *MLA International Bibliography*. Web. 2 Nov. 2012.

⁴ Larson, Kevin S. "Rounds with Mr. Cervantes: *Don Quijote* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*." *Orbis Litterarum: International Review of Literary Studies* 43.2 (1988) : 108-128. Print.

tradition of *commedia dell'arte*.⁵ In Latin American literary criticism there are studies of common themes in the works of Hemingway and Jorge Luis Borges,⁶ of Hemingway's influence in the literature of the "Boom" period,⁷ and many other examples. But such studies of influence center on characteristics typically attributed to the more basic, superficial ideas of literary influence, "the recognition of similarities in style, imagery, and overt... articulations of affiliation" (Allen 17).

Ben Stoltzfus is a primary source of scholarly analysis on the relationship between Hemingway and European literature and he says in *Hemingway and French Writers* that "By appropriating the literary assets of Europe, particularly those of France... Hemingway succeeded in establishing a transatlantic patrimony" (xvi). This "transatlantic patrimony" is an overtly masculine concept, with its allusions to the father/son dichotomy, subconscious oedipal rivalries, and the tensions inherent to familial inheritance. The idea of patriarchal passing down lends itself to the study of Hemingway's work from the theoretical framework that I have chosen for this study, Harold Bloom's "anxiety of influence," an antithetical approach to criticism that moves beyond the study of influence as a hunt for stylistic similarities in order to delve deeper into the influences (both conscious and subconscious) and the acts of rebellion that such influence-anxiety requires as they are revealed in the form of the text.

Bloom's approach to influence, rooted in the Freudian family romance and the give and take that exists between great poets and their literary predecessors, allows a close examination of the "transatlantic patrimony" established by Hemingway, and expands this concept to address

⁵ Knodt, Ellen Andrews. "Hemingway's *Commedia Dell'arte* Story?: 'Out of Season'." *The Hemingway Review* 31.1 (2011) : 107-117. Print.

⁶ Martin, Lawrence H., Jr. "Borges on Hemingway, Hemingway on Hemingway: Craft, Grief, and Sport." *Hemingway in Italy and Other Essays*. Ed. Robert W. Lewis. New York: Praeger, 1990. 77-84. Print.

⁷ Campillo-Fenoll, Marcos. "La ansiedad de la influencia: La renovada presencia de Ernest Hemingway en la escritura de Gabriel García-Márquez." *Revista de estudios colombianos* 41.42 (2013) : 38-48.

and establish the trans-American literary influence also present in his work. It is my intention to go beyond a simple strategy of comparison of similarities to present a Bloomian reading of the short stories and other fictional writings of Ernest Hemingway, examining the influence of Romance Language literature on his English prose in terms of the “anxiety of influence” experienced by the author, eventually turning the tables in order to reflect on the influence-anxieties Hemingway’s work has incurred in writers of the Romance Language tradition.

Bloom’s antithetical approach to literary criticism, an influence-based approach that differs drastically from the more traditional concept of literary influence as source-hunting and allusion counting (Bloom 25), is profoundly applicable to the case of influence in the work of Hemingway. Influence is the heart and soul of Bloomian criticism and the idea of literary influence was also important to Hemingway in his own meditations on reading and writing. Bloom states in the preface to his seminal work, *The Anxiety of Influence*, that “The largest truth of literary influence is that it is an irresistible anxiety” (xii). Likewise Hemingway, in *Green Hills of Africa*, declares that “some writers were born only to help another writer to write one sentence” (*Hemingway’s Reading* 21). For Bloom, influence is inescapable, labyrinthine, and the function of the critic is to help the reader become lost in this maze of literature (*Anxiety of Influence* 31).

As such, Bloom thinks of influence in terms of the anxiety that it produces in the writer, with the work of a certain precursor influencing the *ephebe* (or young writer) to such an extent that his work becomes a manifestation of this anxiety, and the rebellion of the *ephebe* is evidenced throughout the text. This anxiety is described by Graham Allen in *Harold Bloom: A Poetics of Conflict* as “the poet’s defensiveness about his own poetic drives, which stems from the originality and drive he has seen in a previous poet” (25). Influence for Bloom, much like the

act of reading, is a reactive process—something to be recognized, dealt with, and ultimately overcome (if you are one of the strong poets who is able to emerge from beneath the suffocating weight of his precursors). Hemingway's own concept of literary influence (and the anxiety therein) is similarly reactive. Hemingway states:

Every novel which is truly written contributes to the total knowledge which is there at the disposal of the next writer who comes, but the next writer must pay, always, a certain nominal percentage in experience to be able to understand and assimilate what is his birthright [another concept near and dear to Bloom's heart] and what he must in turn, take his departure from. (*On Writing* 10)

The rhetoric of Bloom's brand of literary criticism revolves around the concepts of defensiveness, power struggle, competitiveness—that intellectual conflict referred to by Bloom as *agon* and experienced by every *ephebe* as he struggles to overcome the influence of his precursors and engender his poet-self free from their influence. According to Allen, Bloom as literary critic is not a reconciler, but a quarreler (*Poetics of Conflict* 2). Hemingway uses a similar vocabulary of conflict to describe his own approach to reading and writing. In reference to his reading, he refers to books as his ammunition (*Hemingway's Reading* 20). As for the writing process, he speaks of it in terms of a boxing match in which he battles his precursors, winning against some, losing against others, unwilling even to throw himself into the ring with certain competitors. Bloom's theory finds its basis in a certain "masculine aggression and contestation" (Varadharajan 464) which speaks well to Hemingway's own machismo in the face of literary influence and creates an interesting point of departure for a Bloomian reading of the influence of Romance Language literature in Hemingway's writings, and of Hemingway's works on writers of the Romance Language tradition.

The writers with whom I have chosen to compare Hemingway are Guy de Maupassant, Horacio Quiroga, and Alberto Moravia, all writers for whom the art and craft of writing was essential to their work. Each author was well-versed in multiple literary genres, but excelled above all in the genre of the short story. Although they came from geographically and linguistically diverse backgrounds, it is fascinating to discover the stylistic similarities and mutual influences that provided each of the writers with both inspiration and anxiety, and allowed them, despite both temporal and physical distance, to create deeply interconnected works that are revelatory of the mutual influence-anxieties being experienced by each of them in turn.

An important factor linking Hemingway, Maupassant, Quiroga, and Moravia is their position not only as *writers* but as *craftsman*, each one focused on the development of their writing and on the contribution they would make to the literary genre and movements in which they practiced their art. For each of these writers the act of reading was of central importance as a means of studying their craft and thus it is inevitable and almost purposeful on their part that a certain amount of influence would be derived from such study. Hemingway read Maupassant, as did Quiroga, and likely Moravia as well, and this common precursor alone is an excellent starting point from which to begin linking the authors treated here by means of the overlapping literary influences that run through their work. In my conclusion I will further elaborate the intricate way in which the works in this study interconnect and overlap, revealing common influences (and influence-anxieties) while also showing the different ways that these same influences brought out different responses, reactions, and rebellions as they were experienced by each new *ephebe* both directly and vicariously, through the intermediary of another *ephebe*, whose own manifestation of the precursor now has influenced the new writer by proxy.

In addition to, and going hand-in-hand with, their status as literary craftsmen, another important element shared by each of the writers compared here is a certain technique that was of great importance to the overall effect they sought in their writing and the general style that has been attributed to them all in turn, and this is the effort of *showing* vs. *telling* in their writing. Percy Lubbock in *The Craft of Fiction*, published in 1921, was perhaps the first literary critic to elaborate this distinction, and discuss the effort of the writer to allow his story to be *seen* in a way, rather than simply recounted or *told*. Hemingway spoke often of his desire to show rather than to tell his stories, and the same is true of the other writers studied here, although each man practiced the technique in different ways and showed it to different effect in his writing, as will be seen in the coming chapters.

Their reason for implementing the technique of showing vs. telling in their writing was the desire to lend truth and objectivity to their writing, and to give a certain reportorial, authentic quality even to their prose fiction. Lubbock's *Craft of Writing* promoted just such literary objectivity, and this was achieved by means of the narrator and his placement in the narrative. For Lubbock, a narrator could best give the impression of objectivity when he himself was present within the narrative, and rather than *recounting* events was there in the midst of the action *living* them. This special use of the narrator will be seen again and again in the works treated here, not always precisely to Lubbock's specifications, but very much in an attempt to achieve the same effect that he outlined, the illusion of objectivity. Lubbock felt strongly that the novelist (and I find this equally applicable to the short story writer) must have a working theory as he approaches his writing, an idea of the technical tools and means at his disposal and how he will use them to achieve his desired effect. This is the "craft" of writing of Lubbock's title, and Hemingway, Maupassant, Quiroga, and Moravia, as craftsmen, developed their own such

theories and elaborated on them in their own critical works, perhaps as a means of passing down the tools of their trade to the next generation of writers and securing their own place in literary history.

Other critics who have further elaborated Lubbock's premise and thoughts on *showing* vs. *telling* have found that this concept can be conceived of and put to use in many different ways, and this will be seen in the comparison of Hemingway with the other writers in this study. What unifies the theories and techniques used by various writers as a means of achieving this effect is the imagination of the reader and the reader's response to the impression of *showing* or *telling* in a given narrative (Klauck 28). Thus the impression of a given work on the reader determines whether a writer has ultimately succeeded in achieving their desired effect of *showing* vs. *telling*, much as Bloom's revisionary ratios ultimately become a matter of the reader's response to a given text, where the effects of influence in the work are determined by the way in which the reader perceives them, whether in the end the *ephebe* is seen in light of the precursor, or vice-versa. In this way, Lubbock and Bloom's critical theories merge, and the comparisons that follow will expound upon the different instances of *showing* vs. *telling* as interpreted by each writer in this study, and the impressions that are left on readers as they encounter the influences reflected in each text and determine whether or not this appearance of the precursor impoverishes the work in which such influence-anxieties have been revealed.

Although an obvious statement, it is also important to note that all of the writers treated in this study are men, including Bloom, whose *Anxiety of Influence* provides the theoretical framework for the comparison of Hemingway with these authors of various Romance Language traditions. From Stoltzfus' "transatlantic patrimony" to Bloom's influence-anxiety with its focus on oedipal rivalry and the battle-to-the-death between strong poets (all of whom are male in the

references made in *Anxiety*), this study is by nature overtly masculine, or at least male-centric. Although I certainly do not believe Bloom's theory to be relevant *only* to the study of influence between male writers, it is useful and fitting for the comparison of the writers examined here, whose representations of *masculinity*, both personally (in their self-identities as men) and in the context of their writing, are central to their work and to the manifestation of influence-anxiety within it. In keeping with the rhetoric of *Anxiety* as the basis of my study, and because all authors discussed here are men, I have maintained the use of masculine pronouns throughout the text, in general references to precursors, *ephebes*, etc. I hope that this will provide coherence in the text; it is out of deference to Bloom's choice of pronouns in *Anxiety* and is appropriate in the context of this study, as only male writers have been chosen for my purposes of comparison. I believe that Bloom's theory is equally applicable to women as precursors, *ephebes*, and writers in general, and I would be interested in continuing to use Bloom's theory in order to discover more about its possible applications to women and their writing as well.

Moving from the discussion of masculinity and from the concepts of conflict and power struggle shared by Bloom and Hemingway, another linking factor that makes Bloomian critique particularly relevant to this study of Hemingway is the idea of *absence* as understood by both the critic and the author. Bloom explains the difference between his concepts of "id" and "ego" (terms borrowed from Freud and applied to his theory of influence-anxiety) not as a difference of presences, but of *absences*. He speaks of what is purposefully missing or excluded from a poem, and offers a "strategy of exclusion" (Allen 25) that brings to mind *Death in the Afternoon* and Ernest Hemingway's own theory of omission, or "iceberg theory" of that which is purposefully missing or absent from a story. I will further explore the Bloomian concept of absence and exclusion vis-à-vis Hemingway's writings, looking for influence not only in what is present, but

also in what is *absent* from the text, in those things that he and the other authors studied here chose to withhold from their readers.

The act of reading is also of central importance to both Bloom and Hemingway, as reading is the ultimate source of literary influence. For Bloom, reading is of such primary concern to his theory that he literally formed his own canon, presented in his *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages*. Hemingway was also an avid reader, who did not receive a formal higher education, but instead fed his intellect on a steady diet of literature, a personal literary canon formed by Gertrude Stein, James Joyce, and other members of the Paris literati of the 1920's. In Paris he received a crash-course in great literature, reading Turgenev and Dostoyevsky, Stendhal and Flaubert, Joyce and T.S. Eliot for the first time (*Hemingway: The Paris Years* 6). Hemingway's reputation as a reader has been widely noted and great efforts have been made to reassemble his library and catalogue the vast array of books which were owned, borrowed, lent, moved from country to country, and read by Hemingway (see such works as *Hemingway's Library: A Composite Record* by James Brasch and Joseph Sigman and *Hemingway's Reading, 1910–1940: An Inventory* by Michael S. Reynolds, among others).

Based on what we know of Hemingway's reading and the books and authors who were important to his development as a writer, I will examine from a Bloomian perspective the influence of Romance Language literature on his English prose, seeking to understand the source of the poetic autonomy he ultimately achieved through his agonistic struggle with his literary precursors. Bloom's theory of influence anxiety is made up of six revisionary ratios, which are the steps on the writer's path to free poetic expression: *clinamen*,⁸ *tessera*,⁹ *kenosis*,¹⁰

⁸ *Clinamen*: a "swerve" or corrective movement stemming from the ephebe's misreading or misprision of the precursor text

⁹ *Tessera*: completion and antithesis of the precursor text

¹⁰ *Kenosis*: an "emptying" or "undoing"; an "isolating" movement of the imagination

daemonization,¹¹ *askesis*,¹² and *apophrades*.¹³ I will trace Hemingway's movement through Bloom's revisionary ratios in relation to certain stories and novels, making use of Bloom's terms as a means of avoiding the language of criticism and give preference to the language of influence, "a language in which poetry [or in this case prose] already is written" (Allen 15). Just as the great poets misread, so the critic misinterprets, "and so all criticism is prose poetry" (Fite 11), according to Bloom, a theory in line with Hemingway's own claim concerning the secret to his literary success, that "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" (*On Writing* 4).

"Read, reread, describe, evaluate, appreciate; that is the art of literary criticism for the present time" (*Anxiety* 24). This is how Bloom defines the art of literary criticism and it is the guiding principle of this study of interconnectedness and inter-textual relationships between precursors and *ephebes*. Bloom's method of criticism involves reading "from the point of view of other poets who are themselves the measure of greatness" (Allen 13). This is my inspiration for reading (and *misreading*) along with Hemingway. Either from Hemingway's own mention or from their presence in his library, it is known that the works and authors treated in this study have influenced, inspired, troubled and taunted him, and so I compare the works here in order to illuminate the dynamic relationship between the author, his writing, and his reading.

I have chosen three specific works from French, Spanish, and Italian-language literary tradition with which to compare Hemingway's own writings. I examine the works in chronological order from Hemingway's predecessors to his contemporaries, beginning with Guy de Maupassant (1850-1893), a writer profoundly influential in the historical development of the

¹¹ *Daemonization*: movement towards a personalized Counter-Sublime

¹² *Askesis*: a movement of self-purgation which intends the attainment of a state of solitude

¹³ *Apophrades*: the return of the dead

short story genre, and his story “La Maison Tellier,” which is analyzed in comparison to Hemingway’s short tale, “The Light of the World.” From the French tradition, I move on to a much lesser-studied area by comparing one of Hemingway’s best-known and most celebrated short stories, “Indian Camp,” with a short story from the Uruguayan writer Horacio Quiroga (1878-1937), “Los inmigrantes,” both of which were published in the 1920’s. Although technically contemporaries, it is unlikely that Hemingway and Quiroga would have had the opportunity to read each other’s work, so in this case it is not the influence-anxieties existing between the authors that will be examined, but rather their common literary influences (beginning, importantly, with Maupassant) and distinct literary responses to the anxiety of influence which they shared in relation to their precursors and the earlier literary movements from which they were rebelling. Lastly I move from the treatment of the short story to the novel, comparing Hemingway’s *chef-d’oeuvre* *The Sun Also Rises* with a novel from the Italian short story writer and novelist Alberto Moravia (1907-1990) entitled *Gli Indifferenti*, or *The Time of Indifference*. Moravia, as a contemporary of Hemingway, was both familiar with and outspoken on the subject of Hemingway’s life and work. Moravia’s familiarity with Hemingway’s work and his published opinions on the subject allow the unique opportunity to turn the tables on Hemingway and examine influence-anxieties in reverse, this time considering the anxiety of influence that Hemingway produced in his literary successors.

In the final chapter I conclude with a summary and synthesis of these comparative studies of Hemingway with Maupassant, Quiroga, and Moravia. I continue to trace the common threads of anxiety running throughout their works much as I traced their movement through the revisionary ratios in each individual study, illustrating the anxiety of influence as it exists across the breadth of the Hemingway *oeuvre*, as well as in the case of the specific works treated here.

With Maupassant as precursor, Quiroga as unknown contemporary, and Moravia as contemporary, successor, and outspoken critic, the wheel comes full circle in Bloomian fashion in a final look at literary influence *in* Hemingway's work as well as the influence of Hemingway *on* his contemporaries and literary successors.

The timeline of succession from Maupassant to Quiroga to Moravia leads to the question of the anxiety of influence as experienced by the modern reader/writers in their own encounter with the work of Hemingway. This anxiety of influence is two-fold, derived not only from the reading of the work of Hemingway himself but also in the overwhelming recognition of his influence in the work of others, an influence that in modern literature is inescapable. In recognizing influence-anxiety as experienced by Hemingway in relation to writers of the Romance Language tradition, I hope to build upon Hemingway's "transatlantic patrimony" by expanding it to include writers such as Quiroga from South America and beyond, and opening the work of Hemingway to further comparative analysis bridging the barriers of language, country, continent, and more.

CHAPTER 2

HEMINGWAY AND MAUPASSANT: INFLUENCE ANXIETIES IN “LA MAISON TELLIER” AND “THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD”

I have chosen to approach my comparative study of the influence of Romance Language literature on Ernest Hemingway’s work in a chronological fashion, so I begin with a Bloomian analysis of one of Hemingway’s most celebrated short stories, examining the influence of an earlier French story on Hemingway’s text in terms of the “anxiety of influence.” I examine Hemingway’s “The Light of the World” in relation to “La Maison Tellier” by Guy de Maupassant, who is recognized by literary critics and Hemingway himself as having highly influenced the latter’s craft. Maupassant’s story, published in 1881, is the earliest text treated in this study, published some 50 years before the later Hemingway text, which was written in 1932.

“Light” and “Maison” make an obvious choice for the purposes of this study. Hemingway, who “...combined Twain’s ‘Americanness,’ Flaubert’s proleptic images, [and] Maupassant’s... craft of the short story” (Stoltzfus xvii), has been compared to Maupassant by many Hemingway scholars; the latter’s reading of the former has also been well documented. Over the years, great efforts have been made to reassemble Hemingway’s library, as seen in such works as *Hemingway’s Library: A Composite Record* by James Brasch and Joseph Sigman and *Hemingway’s Reading, 1910–1940: An Inventory* by Michael S. Reynolds. From these records it is known that the author owned a number of collections of Maupassant’s stories. Hemingway most likely had already been introduced to the short fiction of Maupassant in high school through English translations of such stories as “La Parure” and others (Baker 527).

Hemingway also borrowed biographies of Maupassant from Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare & Co. bookshop in Paris (Jobst 53), demonstrating an avid interest not only in the work but also in the life of Maupassant, a life which bears many resemblances to Hemingway's own. Robert Lamb notes that Hemingway "referred to Maupassant as a 'professional writer'" (*Art Matters* 17), the highest form of praise coming from someone so interested in the art of writing and the craft of the short story. Hemingway spoke to Lillian Ross in *Portrait of Hemingway*, employing a boxing analogy in reference to his precursors, and claiming that while he had had two draws with Stendhal and was not even willing to get in the ring with Tolstoy, he had beaten "Mr. de Maupassant" (35).

In addition to these Maupassant-Hemingway connections, Hemingway also made direct reference not only to Maupassant, but to the specific relationship between "Light" and "Maison." Among Hemingway's personal letters, gathered by Carlos Baker, there is a declaration by the author concerning his new story, "Light," stating that it was "a very fine story about whores—as good or better a story about whores as Maison Tellier" (*Selected Letters* 93). Thus Hemingway immediately approached the precursor text and his predecessor from a position of aggression, of rivalry. Hemingway's combative stance when facing Maupassant and other "rival" writers plays directly into Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence*, whose intra-poetic (or in this case, intra-literary) relationships are based on this dynamic of strong vs. weak, young vs. old, where the only way a writer can "clear imaginative space for themselves" is by ultimately defeating their precursor (Bloom 5).

Hemingway's comment towards Maupassant's story brings to mind a similar incident described in his autobiographical work, *A Moveable Feast*, where in an anecdote concerning Hemingway's friend and mentor Gertrude Stein, he speaks of his hesitance to mention Stein's

rivals, in this case Sherwood Anderson and James Joyce, in her presence. He compares great writers (like the “great poets” of Bloomian critique) to military generals, stating:

She [Stein] did not want to talk about Anderson’s works any more than she would talk about Joyce... It was like mentioning one general favorably to another general. You learned not to do it the first time you made the mistake. You could always mention a general, though, that the general you were talking to had beaten. The general you were talking to would praise the beaten general greatly and go happily into detail on how he had beaten him. (28)

The anecdote is also illustrative of Hemingway and Maupassant’s conflicted relationship, with Hemingway seeming to believe that he had bested Maupassant at his own game. Such a bold claim rings of Bloom’s irresistible anxiety of influence, where “‘Influence’ is a metaphor, one that implicates a matrix of relationships—imagistic, temporal, spiritual, psychological—all of them ultimately defensive in their nature” (*Anxiety* xxiii). The defensive nature of Hemingway’s approach to Maupassant will serve well in this Bloomian reading of his text.

Hemingway’s “Light” is one of a series of stories involving Nick Adams as protagonist, a character who is typically thought of as a representation of the author himself. Although these stories are not technically named as autobiographical, “Light” is considered one of the series despite the fact that its narrator remains unnamed throughout the length of the narrative (Benson 6). Based on the story’s setting in rural Michigan and certain other narrative characteristics, it is assumed that the work falls under the umbrella of Nick Adams’ stories and the choice of Nick as narrator/protagonist will later play into my Bloomian reading of the work vis-à-vis Maupassant’s precursor text.

“Maison” is a short story by Guy de Maupassant, which lends its name to the author’s first anthology of short stories (Jobst 53). It is typical of the author, longer than “The Light of the World”, and characterized by Maupassant’s economy of style, one of the foremost stylistic commonalities to have inspired comparison between his work and that of Hemingway. In “Maison,” as is often the case in his other short stories, Maupassant makes use of silences as much as he does dialogue. Yvan Leclerc has noted that “...le terme générique ‘conte’ [a designation typically given to the short stories of Maupassant and also applicable to the Hemingway text] désigne d’ailleurs une performance orale, explicitement mise en situation dans les récits à cadre”¹ (*Lectures de Maupassant* 23). This observation is particularly meaningful to the *contes* of both authors, as Leclerc goes on to note that “Maupassant accorde un soin particulier à la représentation mimétique de la parole, attribuant à ses personnages... le sociolecte de leur condition”² (*Lectures de Maupassant* 24), a stylistic trait that is ascribable to Hemingway as well. In fact, both “Maison” and “Light” end with a line of direct discourse, a revealing similarity between the two works that I examine at the conclusion of this analysis.

The characteristics which the two works share are numerous and have been well examined by other scholars, such as Jack W. Jobst and W. J. Williamson, whose “Hemingway and Maupassant: More Light on ‘The Light of the World’” I have already cited, Bryan Albin Giemza in his article “The French Connection: Some Visual and Literary Sources for the French Connection in Hemingway's 'The Light of the World',” and Robert Lamb in *Art Matters: Hemingway, Craft, and the Creation of the Modern Short Story*, among others. Each of these studies points out the “understatement, brevity, careful word choice (Flaubert’s ‘le mot juste’),

¹ “The generic term ‘conte’ designates an oral performance used specifically in ‘récits à cadre’ [stories in which the narration passes from one narrator to another].” (all translations mine unless otherwise noted)

² “Maupassant takes particular care in his mimetic representation of speech, attributing to his characters... the sociolect appropriate to their position.”

the effaced narrator, and the ironic reversal that drives home the story's effect" (Lamb 16), techniques which Hemingway undoubtedly developed from his reading of Maupassant. They also note similarities specific to "Light" and "Maison," such as the religious element at the heart of each story, and above all the characterization of female prostitutes as figures central to both, the physical similarities between characters, and Hemingway and Maupassant's shared interest in behavior deemed improper according to traditional societal norms (Jobst 54).

However, to enumerate the stylistic and thematic parallels between the work of Hemingway and Maupassant is not the interest of this study. A rehashing of the similarities and differences between the two authors and their stories could continue ad infinitum and would not likely provide any new insight into either work. Instead I focus on a Bloomian reading of the relationship between the two texts, an analysis which first requires a reading (and *misreading*) of the precursor text along with Hemingway. From there, I seek to understand the source of the poetic autonomy ultimately achieved by Hemingway through his agonistic struggle with his literary precursor. I trace Hemingway's movement through Bloom's revisionary ratios, referred to in his seminal work *The Anxiety of Influence* as *clinamen*, *tessera*, *kenosis*, *daemonization*, *askesis*, and *apophrades*, explaining Bloom's somewhat esoteric terminology as I focus on the poetic journey taken by Hemingway through these revisionary ratios in relation to "Maison" and "Light" in order to illuminate the dynamic, reactionary relationship between the author, his writing, and his reading.

"Read, reread, describe, evaluate, appreciate; that is the art of literary criticism for the present time" (*Anxiety* 24). This is how Bloom defines what critics do in *The Anxiety of Influence* and it is the process followed in this analysis. I begin by reading both stories in an attempt to observe the character of each, to consider the narrative perspective, the use of imagery, the

characterization, to highlight the more obvious similarities and differences between the two works, and to contemplate the possible subtext of each work. The next step prescribed by Bloom is simply to *reread*, and this is where the antithetical analysis truly begins. According to Bloom, “the anxiety of influence *comes out of* a complex act of strong misreading, a creative interpretation that I call ‘poetic misprision’” (*Anxiety* xxiii). This “misprision” or misreading is also the first of the revisionary ratios, referred to as *clinamen*, and defined by Bloom as a certain swerve or corrective movement on the part of the young poet (Bloom 14). Essentially, this means that in the initial reading of the precursor text, the young poet must find fault with the author and his work, a fault that he intends to point out and correct in his own work.

Bloom’s method of criticism involves reading “from the point of view of other poets who are themselves the measure of greatness” (Allen 13) and so I reread Maupassant’s text with Hemingway’s unique perspective in mind. Hemingway would presumably have read “Maison” in its original French during his time among the Paris literati of the 1920’s, where his personal literary canon was formed by the likes of Gertrude Stein and James Joyce, among others. So the rereading of Maupassant’s text begins through the eyes of Ernest Hemingway, the young and inexperienced writer in his 20’s, working as foreign correspondent for the Toronto Star.

Considering Maupassant’s status as one of the creators and perfectors of modern short story form, and Hemingway’s age and standing as a fledgling reporter and writer, the author was probably reading from a student’s perspective, deconstructing Maupassant’s text at multiple levels in order to discover the substance of his prose, the architecture of the text. Hemingway says in *Death in the Afternoon*, published in 1932, that “prose is architecture, not interior decoration, and the Baroque is over” (191). His story, “Light” was published in a collection of short stories entitled *Winner Take Nothing* in 1933, and so it is safe to assume that Hemingway’s

opinion of prose as architecture (also a possible allusion to the influence of Victor Hugo) was later manifest in his own prose, namely in such short stories as “Light.”

In *Notre Dame de Paris*, Hugo compares the poet and the architect by the similar artistic freedoms they both seek, but to Hugo the printed word was in direct competition with architecture (as in the case of the cathedral of Notre Dame, after which his novel is named). Ironically, Hugo felt that the much more ephemeral art of the printed text represented an affront and a threat to architecture, despite the often monumental size and strength of the latter artistic medium. Hemingway’s comparison of prose to architecture, as opposed to superficial, ornamental interior decoration, confers on the written word the same characteristics of monumentality and solidity attributed to architecture by Hugo.

The initial impression of any story is probably an aesthetic one, that mental picture the text paints in the mind of the reader. Hemingway would have noted in Maupassant’s story the engaging depiction of the Norman countryside and the careful description of the interior and exterior of the eponymous Maison Tellier. While Maupassant did not wax overly lyrical or lean heavily on description in his narrative, particularly by the standards of other French authors such as Flaubert or Proust, he did take care in describing the physical appearance of Madame Tellier’s abode, of the town of Fécamp, and of the characters residing there. Maupassant provides the reader with a vivid image of the story’s setting and the characters who people it. This type of descriptive narrative, of prose as “interior decoration,” would certainly have stood out to the young Hemingway as a literary flaw, and something to be avoided at all costs. Hemingway learned to apply a certain precision and conciseness in his prose that came from his time spent as a newspaper journalist, and was developing this skill further under the tutelage of Stein. So while “Maison” presents to its readers a detailed and realistic portrait of its setting and characters,

Hemingway's story is impressionistic by comparison, providing the general outline of characters and location, but leaving the details to be filled in at the reader's discretion.

So in a critical examination of Maupassant's work, Hemingway may have "misread" the descriptive quality of "*Maison*," a narrative element considered by others an enhancing feature of the text, with concise yet detailed description serving to characterize place and people in a lyrical and metaphorical way and adding to the depth of meaning of the story. Maupassant carefully describes *Madame* as "grande, charnue, avenante... Invariablement gaie et la figure ouverte," and with "l'âme délicate" (Maupassant 5)³. She is described as pleasant and even pious as the story continues, which could be considered unusual for the image of *Madame* of a house of ill-repute. Minute descriptions of the five ladies employed by Madame Tellier follow later in the story.

Madame's establishment is presented in detail as well. The reader knows, for example, that "La maison avait deux entrées. A l'encoignure, une sorte de café borgne s'ouvrait, le soir, aux gens du peuple et aux matelots" (Maupassant 6), and also that "Le bâtiment, humide et vieux, sentait légèrement le moisi" (7).⁴ Various rooms and levels of the house are further described, such as the "salon de Jupiter, où se réunissaient les bourgeois de l'endroit... tapissé de papier bleu et agrémenté d'un grand dessin représentant Lédè étendue sous un cygne" (Maupassant 7).⁵ Such descriptions are precise without being ornate; they provide the reader with a clear mental image of the *maison* in question as well as subtly revealing insights into place and character through Maupassant's metaphorical use of color and other imagery.

³ "She was tall, stout, and affable... She was always smiling and cheerful, and was fond of a joke, but there was a shade of reserve about her." (Commins 74)

⁴ "The house had two entrances. At the corner there was a sort of low *café*, which sailors and the lower orders frequented at night... The house, which was old and damp, rather smelled of mildew." (Commins 75)

⁵ "The salon of Jupiter, where the tradesmen used to meet, was papered in blue, and embellished with a large drawing representing Leda stretched out under the swan." (Commins 75)

For Hemingway, Maupassant's story had an intriguing central theme, but was also unnecessarily filled with superfluous adornment, which in his own reinterpretation of the story he would later eliminate. This is the beginning of the *clinamen*, the swerve, for "Poetic Influence—when it involves two strong, authentic poets, — always proceeds by a misreading of the prior poet, an act of creative correction that is actually and necessarily a misinterpretation" (*Anxiety* 30). In Hemingway's reinterpretation (or misinterpretation) of "Maison," the highly representative names and physical descriptions of Maupassant's characters and the idyllic rural image of their town in northern France give way to characters named generically, or even left anonymous. The protagonist of "Light" remains unnamed throughout the course of the story, and his friend "Tom" himself is known by a non-descript moniker, unless this name is also a subtle reference to Hemingway's literary idol, Mark Twain, and Twain's own celebrated character of that same name. The action of Hemingway's story takes place in an unnamed town, vaguely identifiable as situated in Michigan on the basis of other locations briefly mentioned in the text and the context of the story in relation to the other Nick Adams stories of the collection. Hemingway describes the town in a single declarative sentence: "It smelled of hides and tan bark and the big piles of sawdust" (*Short Stories* 293).

Physical descriptions of characters are equally succinct in the Hemingway text. The thin white hands of the cook are described early in the story, but pale and delicate hands are a common trope in Hemingway's work, usually an indicator of homosexuality (Jobst 59). His descriptions of the five female prostitutes at the train station are also concise. The women are described as large to varying degrees, in "changeable silk dresses" (*Short Stories* 293), a description that serves less to distinguish a clear picture of each woman than it does to give them all a sort of uniformity of appearance. The women's weight is their primary distinguishing

feature, with those ladies who are not particularly large being painted by the author as “ordinary looking whores, peroxide blondes” (*Short Stories* 293).

As Bloom quotes Georg Christoph Lichtenberg in his definition of poetic influence, “To do just the opposite is also a form of imitation, and the definition of imitation ought by rights to include both” (*Anxiety* 31). However I do not think that Hemingway, by eliminating Maupassant’s descriptive language and writing a much condensed story based around a similar theme, is practicing any sort of mimesis of the precursor text. Sainte-Beuve said of the French fabulist Jean de la Fontaine that his originality was “toute dans la *manière* et non dans la *matière*”⁶ (Merlet 234), and the same can be said of Hemingway’s “Light of the World,” where the *material* may have been borrowed from Maupassant, but the fresh way in which the material was used by the later author demonstrates to great effect the his originality. The distinction we find between the two texts is indicative of what Bloom would call “creative revisionism” (*Anxiety* 42), the beginning of Hemingway’s swerve away from the precursor text.

“The poet confronting his Great Original must find the fault that is not there” (*Anxiety* 31). In “Light,” Hemingway has found the flaw (imagined or otherwise) in “Maison.” He has reduced the precursor text while maintaining certain of the story’s underlying truths, and in so doing, has engendered a new story purely his own, one in which he might effectively conceal the influence of the precursor text. Drawing on Maupassant’s ironic character study, social commentary, and blurring of the line between the sacred and the profane, Hemingway transforms the elementary truths of the earlier writer’s work into his own type of *bildungsroman*, where Nick gains understanding essential to his later experiences. Maupassant’s more decorative language gives way to Hemingway’s sparser prose, in which he privileges the narrative transformation, the pilgrimage from naïveté to understanding, and leaves off superfluous literary ornamentation.

⁶ “all in the *manner* in which it was used, and not in the *material* being used”

In response to his *misprision* of Maupassant's text, Hemingway eliminated what he considered to be extraneous detail unnecessary to the text, but in so doing he also eliminated the very nature or moral of the original story, in which Maupassant presents "whores" as a necessary thread in the fabric of society, even if that society rejects them. Maupassant's challenging of societal norms does not repeat itself in the Hemingway text, or at least not in the same way; there is no happy ending in "Light," and the prostitutes and manual laborers of Hemingway's story are not glorified or exalted in any way (unlike the women of "Maison," who are very much beatified by Maupassant). And so it becomes necessary to replace this missing element, this truth propounded in Maupassant's *conte* but erased from the later Hemingway work, and here I invoke the next of the revisionary ratios, *tessera*, defined by Bloom as the "completion and antithesis" of the precursor text (*Anxiety* 14).

Hemingway's manifestation of *tessera* continues to deal with the reading/misreading of the precursor and is summarized by Bloom as the moment when "A poet antithetically 'completes' his precursor, by so reading the parent-poem as to retain its terms but to mean them in another sense, as though the precursor had failed to go far enough" (*Anxiety* 14). This concept of completion and antithesis, like the misreading of *clinamen*, is also aptly applied to the relationship between Hemingway and Maupassant's short stories. Hemingway, as already noted, proclaimed his story to be "as good or better a story" than "Maison" (Baker 93). Such hubris, according to Bloom, is a necessary effect of the anxiety of influence. Bloom cites "the overwhelming confidence of a Leonardo, who was capable of asserting that 'He is a poor disciple who does not excell [sic] his master'" (*Anxiety* 70). Hemingway, in his own way, made the same assertion. Like the dueling generals of the Stein anecdote, Hemingway, in claiming to have beaten his opponent, also legitimized Maupassant's position as precursor and literary

influence. In his overcoming of Maupassant, he unwittingly solidified the echo of Maupassant in his work.

In following the swerve of misprision through his condensing and reducing of the precursor text, Hemingway brought the earlier work to completion, but he did so antithetically, by retaining the terms of the earlier story but meaning them in another sense (*Anxiety* 14). In many ways he retained the heart of the Maupassant story, most notably through the experiences of pilgrimage and rite of passage common to both texts. According to Jobst:

Maupassant's story offers us a pilgrimage of prostitutes traveling to worship at the shrine of virginity, just as 'The Light of the World' presents the roughly similar movement of a young man traveling from naïveté to knowledge. Maupassant's virgin undergoes a religious rite of passage—confirmation—just as Hemingway's narrator learns from his experiences with the bartender and the people he meets in the depot. ("Hemingway and Maupassant" 57)

This carry-over of themes is Hemingway's means of retaining Maupassant's precursor text, but in the latter's story the meaning of the pilgrimage and the rite of passage have changed. In "Maison" the "pilgrimage of prostitutes to worship at the shrine of virginity" (Jobst 57) is less a linear and more a circular journey, revolving and resolving in the same place where it began. The women of the Maison Tellier make their journey to the confirmation ceremony of Madame Tellier's niece and in the process there comes an ironic meeting of the sacred and the profane, where the two concepts are found not, in fact, to be mutually exclusive. Rather, both the innocent virgin and the prostitutes profoundly affect one another for the good, and with this lesson learned the women, happy and satisfied, return to their former employ. Maupassant simultaneously critiques and celebrates life in rural France, ironically proving the goodness and value of those

often looked down on in society, while also presenting a comforting and warm-hearted picture of French country life.

“Light,” while making use of the same themes, does not tell the same story. It follows a much more linear and a much more conflicted path. Unlike Maupassant’s full-circle narrative, Hemingway’s narrator states “We’d come in that town at one end and we were going out the other” (*Short Stories* 293), and the story ends as the boys prepare to take the train out of town, to a destination ““The other way from you”” (*Short Stories* 297), as Tom says to the cook. In no way do we find the sort of comforting resolution and *dénouement* that is present in Maupassant’s story, where the well intentioned prostitutes make their pilgrimage, shed their light on an unsuspecting group of small town people, and return to bless their own town, where their services and presence have been sorely missed.

The unnamed narrator of “Light” and his companion, Tom, gradually make their way from one conflict to another; from the bar from which they are thrown out due to a misunderstanding and no actual wrongdoing on their part, to the train station where they become complicit in the conflict between the men and the women also waiting there. In Hemingway’s story the protagonists enter stage left, exit stage right, and what will follow after is left ambiguous. There is the pilgrimage, that movement from naïveté to knowledge recognized by Jobst, as the young and innocent protagonists experience what is likely their first encounter with people of this sort, from the prostitutes to the rough working men with whom they are in debate.

However, rather than the pilgrimage complete of Maupassant’s tale, Hemingway’s story offers only a glimpse into a brief episode of a pilgrimage in process. The reader does not know where the protagonists came from or where they are going, and in this sense the only certainty allowed within the story is that of the journey itself. More importantly still, as readers we do not

know what to make of this situation, neither the behavior of the protagonists nor that of their adversaries. For Hemingway's characters the rite of passage, rather than a religious ceremony, is the experience itself, the eye-opening scene in which they've played a part, and which will inevitably influence them as they continue their pilgrimage and, potentially, throughout the rest of their lives.

In Hemingway's story, unlike that of Maupassant, there is a lack of resolution, an absence of judgement, and this *emptiness* is a characteristic of *kenosis* or "Repetition and Discontinuity" (*Anxiety* 77), the next of Bloom's revisionary ratios. It is perhaps the most difficult of Bloom's ratios to apply to this study and one of the limitations inherent to the application of the anxiety of influence in the study of Hemingway. *Kenosis* is defined as an "'emptying,' at once an 'undoing' and an 'isolating' movement of the imagination" (*Anxiety* 87). After the *ephebe*'s recognition that in his *misprision*, his misreading and reinterpreting of the precursor text, he has been thrown "into the outward and downward motion of repetition" (*Anxiety* 83), a humbling and isolating of self must occur. This isolation is yet another defense mechanism of the poet, but Bloom states that unlike *clinamen* and *tessera*, which deal with comparison between two separate poems or literary works, *kenosis* is "more applicable to poets than poems" (*Anxiety* 90).

To analyze the man Hemingway as compared to the man Maupassant, other than a general consideration of their lives for the sake of context and of their individual literary perspectives, is beyond the scope of this study. It is literary influence which is of interest here, not extra-literary influence. There is no overt humbling of self in this or any other of Hemingway's works. The emptying of self in relation to the precursor as a means of achieving a "liberating discontinuity" which in turn empties the precursor of his own literary strength (*Anxiety* 87-88), is not Hemingway's *modus operandi*.

It is difficult to conceive and more difficult yet to apply this concept of self-abnegation to the case of “Maison” and “Light.” Hemingway, in his “The Art of the Short Story” said, “do not be too humble, gentlemen. Be humble after but not during the action” (89). This he spoke ironically, for neither in his writing of “Light,” nor afterwards when he declared it better than the work of his precursor, did Hemingway practice the sort of humbling Bloom describes. For Hemingway, it is better to proudly beat a worthy opponent than to feign humility in hopes of emptying the pride of the precursor in the process of self-humiliation. Thanking Maupassant for putting up a good fight is “be humble after” enough. There is no “ceasing to be a poet” (*Anxiety* 15) for Hemingway.

But perhaps it is this very expression of pride in having beaten his adversary that makes up Hemingway’s *kenosis* in relation to Maupassant, the vain comments and not the written text that serve as Hemingway’s isolating movement away from the precursor. The very vanity of Hemingway’s comments is a type of emptiness in and of itself, and if emptying of self is the definition of Bloom’s *kenosis*, then in his inflammatory statements we find Hemingway’s own manifestation of that same revisionary ratio. Or, alternately, the very brevity of “Light” as compared to “Maison” could be Hemingway’s best attempt at humility and the humbling of self that make up *kenosis*, where his humble “little story” represents the best that the author has to offer.

Hemingway’s need to compare himself to Maupassant and ultimately come out ahead of his precursor *proves* in a way that the two stories should be compared. Despite the natural differences that might lead one to think of the stories as too apples-to-oranges for proper comparison and analysis, particularly considering the succinct nature of the Hemingway text compared to the longer, more elaborate work of Maupassant, Hemingway invites exactly such

scrutiny. In comparing two such distinct works, the simplicity of Hemingway's story draws attention to its deeper meaning and highlights his efforts to say something more than the comforting, yet obvious and expected bromides told by Maupassant. Such comparison brings out the sublime nature of the Hemingway text and leads to the next revisionary ratio, *daemonization*, "a movement towards a personalized Counter-Sublime, in reaction to the precursor's Sublime" (*Anxiety* 15). Hemingway's battle cry against Maupassant is his recognition of the sublimity of Maupassant's work as he moves toward his own counter-sublime in relation to the precursor text.

A complete understanding of *daeomonization* requires a definition of the "Sublime" in literature, a subject elaborated by Bloom in his work *The Sublime*, where he articulates the literary sublime as the sense of awe that is evoked in the presence of great works of art. This particular revisionary ratio, a defense mechanism as are all the revisionary ratios, like *kenosis* seems to be dependent upon external factors, as the *daemonization* or evocation of awe by the work should not refer to the later poet as he faces his own creation, nor the precursor who existed in the past and therefore cannot truly face and experience the sublime in the *ephebe*. Here the experience of the sublime is a reactive reader response; if the present day reader observes the new text and an experience of the Sublime is evoked, not only does such a reaction affirm the sublimity of the newly strong poet, but, according to Bloom, it also suggests "*the relative weakness*" of the precursor (*Anxiety* 100).

This is a game uniquely suited to Hemingway. Bloom says that "*Daemonization* or the Counter-Sublime is a war between Pride and Pride, and momentarily the power of newness wins" (*Anxiety* 101). Humility was difficult to find in the work of Hemingway. Pride, however, is not, and the fact that the newness of his own story might serve to eclipse Maupassant's earlier work seems reasonable, even if the precursor text is arguably more or at least *just as* sublime as

the more recent text. Bloom claims that *daemonization* “is not a struggle against repression but is itself a kind of repression” (*Anxiety* 99), a repression that makes the newness and the Counter-Sublime of the later work so great that the precursor text is lessened even in its status as literary influence and is absorbed more thoroughly into tradition (*Anxiety* 109). This repressive tendency seems almost expressive of Hemingway’s iceberg theory from *Death*, where the truth one wishes to convey and the story one wishes to tell is like the mass of an iceberg, 7/8ths of which is invisible to the eye (*Death* 132). When such theory is practiced consciously and the greater part of the iceberg is hidden purposefully by the author, it is akin to the “intellectual acceptance of what is repressed” acknowledged by Bloom (*Anxiety* 102).

My own experience as a reader can serve in this case as representative of the modern day reader in general and of the *daemonization* of Hemingway’s work in particular. While sublimity can and has been defined, it is also a subjective quality, a reactive response; it is a transcendent effect of a given work of art on the person experiencing it. But can sublimity be proven? In terms of the sublimity of Hemingway’s work, it is undeniable that the author’s writing throughout the course of the 20th and 21st centuries has become entirely ubiquitous. His name is now and for many years has been synonymous with the form of the short story, and his work as is widely read across the world, for pleasure and study alike, as that of any other great author (or “strong poet” in Bloomian terms). The effect is therefore general, even universal, and thus, transcendent.

If the modern reader, like myself, has similarly experienced the Counter-Sublime of Hemingway’s work, then its consequential *daemonization* is proven, at least in my personal experience and that of readers like me, as the strength and relative newness of the Hemingway text has necessarily forced the reading of the precursor to be in relation to the belated text, a textual relationship already encouraged by Hemingway himself in his own comparison of the

two stories. Maupassant's "Maison" appears weaker, distant; it is an earlier step in the development of the short story form, which later would reach levels of the Sublime in Hemingway's "Light." The happy ending of Maupassant's almost farcical tale gives way to Hemingway's darker interpretation, a story whose ending could be categorized as a defeat as easily as it could be called a victory, and this ambiguity leaves the reader unsettled. Hemingway highlights this contrast through the act of drawing attention to the earlier work, inviting the comparison of the two in his confidence that the subtlety and nuance of his own story will outshine Maupassant's similar, yet more one-dimensional tale.

It is just such confidence in his less-is-more strategy and the strength that his work derived from his careful craftsmanship that leads from *daemonization* to *askesis*, the second-to-last of the revisionary ratios. In his synopsis of the ratios, Bloom calls *askesis* "a movement of self-purgation which intends the attainment of a state of solitude" (*Anxiety* 15). *Askesis* is particularly linked to *kenosis* in some ways, as both defense mechanisms seem to involve a certain self-emptying and isolation or solitude, but Bloom specifies that in *askesis* there is not so much "a revisionary movement of emptying, but of curtailing" (*Anxiety* 15); that is to say, the *ephebe* must now offer up a part of himself in sacrifice in order to find his poetic solitude, the place where after achieving the Sublime he can stand alone.

How is such *askesis* manifest in the work of Hemingway and specifically "The Light of the World"? It may be that Hemingway's sacrificial offering, his "sublimation" as Bloom would put it in Freudian terms (*Anxiety* 116), is the curtailing of the impulse to say more, the painful extraction of those parts of the story that Hemingway knows instinctively must be eliminated out of respect for the reader, who will recognize their absence and know what was always meant to be there. "A good writer" says Hemingway in *Death*, "should know as near everything as

possible. Naturally he will not... There are some things which cannot be learned quickly and time, which is all we have, must be paid heavily for their acquiring” (132). The element of time is important to *askesis*. Bloom says that “To revise the precursor is to lie, not against being, but against time, and *Askesis* is peculiarly a lie against the truth of time, the time in which the *ephebe* hoped to attain autonomy” (*Anxiety* 130). As the great writer described by Hemingway works simultaneously with and against the knowledge gained over time, so Bloom’s *ephebe* must lie against time as he strives for poetic eminence.

Hemingway goes on to say that, “If a writer of prose knows enough about what he is writing about he may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have the feeling of those things as though the writer had stated them” (*Death* 132). Hemingway’s concept and application of omniscience is specific to him; for example, it differs from the omniscience for which Balzac is known, an encyclopedic sort of all-knowingness that can be learned through research and verified in books. Hemingway’s “omniscience” is obtained through lived experience and is knowledge that must be verified in life rather than in books, which is what gives it true authenticity, in Hemingway’s opinion. It is the omniscience of the great writer, this complete knowledge that Hemingway chose to curtail sacrificially in order to create a work of art greater than the sum of its parts, which constitutes the author’s *askesis* and leaves him to his solipsism, the “self-sustaining solitude” (*Anxiety* 131-132) where the iceberg for once lays uncovered, wholly visible.

Apophrades, the last phase of the revisionary ratios, is summarized concisely by Bloom as “the return of the dead” (*Anxiety* 15). It is the last step in the poet lifecycle of the revisionary ratios, of which *apophrades* is perhaps the most complex. Bloom himself recognized the absurdity of *apophrades* (*Anxiety* 141), when the poem (or in this case, short story) which due to

the influence-anxieties of the *ephebe* has been open to the precursor text throughout the revisionary process is now “*held* open to the precursor, where once it *was* open, and the uncanny effect is that the new poem’s achievement makes it seem... not as though the precursor were writing it, but as though the later poet himself had written the precursor’s characteristic work” (*Anxiety* 16).

This return of the precursor can be devastating to the *ephebe*, depending on his strength or lack thereof, for as Bloom says of the precursor, if he should return intact, then the return will impoverish the later poet (*Anxiety* 141). However, in exceptional circumstances, as I would say is the case with Hemingway and Maupassant, the “strong poet’s work expiates for the work of a precursor” (*Anxiety* 139), effectively making the influence of the precursor obsolete in the first place. The return of the precursor is clearly present in Hemingway’s “Light,” from the comparisons drawn by Hemingway himself between his story and Maupassant’s, to the multitude of critical writings that force the presence of “La Maison Tellier” into the later Hemingway work, and finally to the evidence of the relationship between the two works that exists within the text itself. In this way, the presence of the precursor text in relation to the later story is hard to ignore and even more difficult to deny.

Since the *apophrades* come even to the greatest poets (*Anxiety* 141), how does the reemergence of the precursor appear in the work of Hemingway and in what way does he overcome this return of the dead, if he does at all? Hemingway’s achievement of priority over the Maupassant text is manifest in the fact that reading “Light” is an utterly Hemingway-specific experience. No part of the text seems as if it could have been written by Maupassant, it does not ring of the precursor’s voice, while in reading the earlier Maupassant text, there arrive moments of terse dialogue, examples of careful wit, ironic description, and bawdy humor that seem

possibly to have come from the pen of Hemingway himself. This is what Bloom describes as *apophrades* and this is the achievement of Hemingway in relation to Maupassant.

The closing lines of “Maison” and “Light” are each exemplary of the antithetical evidence of Hemingway in the work of Maupassant. Both writers end their stories with a line of direct dialogue, and such emphasis on dialogue is a characteristic common to both Maupassant and Hemingway, as was discussed earlier in this chapter. In “Maison,” Madame Tellier, speaking to two of her usual clients, M. Pimpesse and M. Tournevau, declares “Ça n’est pas tous les jours fête” (Maupassant 57)⁷ in response to their surprise at her generosity that evening. In “Light,” Hemingway closes with the words of Tom, companion to the unnamed narrator of the story, who in response to the cook’s question asking which way the boys intend to go, says “The other way from you” (*Short Stories* 297).

These abrupt words on the part of Tom seem an inherently Hemingway-esque response. The line is contradictory, essentially a non-response in the guise of a response. It is also ambiguous, which is yet another Hemingway trait, leaving the future unknown and open-ended both to the other characters inhabiting the narrative and to the reader. This closing line also lends itself to multiple layers of meaning. Superficially, it indicates the direction the boys will travel, albeit an ambiguous indication. It declares the boys movement not in relation to the overall direction and final destination of their journey, but in relation to the movement of their companions, a movement opposite and away from these minor characters as the young men’s pilgrimage into adulthood continues.

Maupassant’s final line in “Maison” does not weave quite as seamlessly into the story itself or into the author’s overall work. Although Madame Tellier does have a tendency towards short, clipped dialogue to express her feelings and give her orders, other examples of dialogue in

⁷ “We don’t have a holiday everyday.” (Commings 103)

“Maison” are generally more extensive and less ambiguous than the enigmatic line she speaks at the story’s conclusion. Maupassant’s story is significantly longer than Hemingway’s work, divided into three parts, and unlike Hemingway’s story, whose setting encompasses only two locations in one unnamed town, Maupassant’s has a much wider extension, allowing the reader a glimpse into the town of Fécamp, the inner workings of the Maison Tellier itself, the home of Madame Tellier’s brother in Virville, and the church and congregation of that same town. Maupassant did not require of himself the same strict self-editing that Hemingway practiced; although his work might be more condensed than that of other French authors, he still did not exercise the restraint of Hemingway, who felt that the omission of descriptive details offered a greater sense of autonomy to the reader, who should be able to fill-in-the-blanks within the text himself.

These tendencies on the part of Maupassant make the final line of “Maison” stand out with a certain otherness compared to the rest of the story. Like Tom’s words in “Light,” Madame Tellier’s declaration “Ça n’est pas tous les jours fête,” (57) although direct, is highly ambiguous. Unlike Tom’s response to the cook, however, Madame Tellier responds positively to her interlocutors, waving off and explaining away her generosity and the general gaiety of the evening as a holiday celebration. Her response is ironic, though, in that she declares the day a holiday when it is not. She and the ladies of the house are in fact working, and another working day is the very opposite of a holiday, even in such a celebratory atmosphere.

But as in the conclusion of the Hemingway story, there are multiple layers of meaning to Madame Tellier’s words. The reader comes to understand that Madame Tellier has arranged that evening to provide for her niece financially, and that the virginal young girl will be supported by the income provided by the Maison Tellier. Maupassant’s surprisingly abrupt, surprisingly

ambiguous ending, concludes an otherwise rather transparent story of the ironic edification of Maupassant's prostitutes, raising them from their lowly position among the ranks of society. Due to the passing of time and the very existence of the Hemingway work, Bloom's *apophrades* come to fruition and like other great poets before him, who achieved "a style that captures and oddly retains priority over their precursors, so that... one can believe... that they are being *imitated by their ancestors*" (*Anxiety* 141), it is possible to see the influence of Hemingway in the work of Maupassant.

Although there are certain limitations to the use of Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence* as a theoretical model in tracing literary influence in the work of Hemingway, by examining his "Light" in relation to Maupassant's "Maison" a greater understanding of each work can be achieved. Bloom says that poetic influence is more than a transmission of ideas and images from earlier to later poets, because ideas and images belong to discursiveness and to history and as such are fair game (*Anxiety* 71). Such a concept of literary influence would be a return to simple source-hunting, which is distinct from the purposes of this study. However, as Bloom states, "a poet's stance, his Word, his imaginative identity, his whole being, *must* be unique to him, or he will perish" (*Anxiety* 71). In a comparative study of "The Light of the World" and "La Maison Tellier," one cannot use Maupassant's story "as a kind of decoder ring for unlocking Hemingway's story" (Giemza 87). "The Light of the World" is no *roman à clef* (or in this case *conte à clef*), but a unique representation of the imaginative identity of Hemingway, a uniqueness which is developed more fully in relation to the work of Maupassant.

CHAPTER 3
ERNESTO Y HORACIO: MUTUAL INFLUENCES IN THE WORKS OF HEMINGWAY
AND QUIROGA

In Chapter 3 will take an approach similar to that in which I compared Hemingway and Guy de Maupassant, this time comparing another of Hemingway's short stories with a piece of short fiction from Horacio Quiroga, an Uruguayan writer of theatre, poetry, and prose. The discussion of influence between Hemingway and Quiroga is particularly interesting and somewhat unconventional since, while the two were technically contemporaries (Quiroga lived from 1878 to 1937 and Hemingway from 1899 to 1961), it is almost impossible that they would have had the opportunity to read each other's work. However, this does not necessarily prevent us from tackling the two authors from a Bloomian critical perspective, since Bloom himself allowed that an *ephebe* might be influenced by a precursor whose poem he never read (*Anxiety* 70).

It is not surprising to detect the influence of Guy de Maupassant in the work of Quiroga because, for him, Maupassant was a writer, and particularly a *short story* writer, of marked influence. The comparison between Maupassant and Quiroga has been clearly drawn by José Manuel Ramos Gonzalez in the essay "Quiroga y Maupassant," where he notes the:

Igual economía y precisión en las descripciones, idéntica actitud de observador, manteniendo una impasibilidad constante a lo largo de los cuentos... [E]sa carencia para no involucrarse en los cuentos y ser un mero narrador de lo acontecido, tan propia de los escritores naturalistas, sin dejar atisbar ninguna

moralina a modo de corolario. Similitudes genéricas propias del perfecto cuentista. (2)¹

Although such comparisons have been drawn between Quiroga and Maupassant as they were between Maupassant and Hemingway, few comparisons have been made as of this writing between the work of Hemingway and Quiroga, despite the two authors' many shared influences, themes, and approach to the craft of short story writing. Their works present a perfect opportunity to put Bloom's enigmatic claim to the test through a comparison of their short fiction. Working with Quiroga's story "Los inmigrantes" and Hemingway's "Indian Camp," I will examine the literary and cinematic influences the writers shared, analyzing their respective responses in relation to their predecessors and establishing the basis for the strong relationship between the two works. I focus most closely on two of their mutual sources of inspiration: firstly, the writings of Edgar Allan Poe and Jack London, and secondly, the popularization of the cinema, both of which greatly influenced their prose writings. As in Chapter 2, I use Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence* as the theoretical framework in which to examine the writers' work, specifically in terms of the revisionary ratios of *clinamen*, *tessera*, and lastly and most importantly *kenosis*, the ratio where influence-anxiety is the most evident.

In *The Age of the American Novel*, Claude-Edmonde Magny examines the influence of positivism and behaviorism in Hemingway's work and establishes a link between his fiction and concurrent developments in cinema, saying that Hemingway and others' "aim is to *show* rather than to *say*, and it is therefore related to the cinema even when it is not in the least influenced by it" (qtd. in Seed 40). This relationship between Hemingway's work and cinema is also an apt

¹"The same economy and precision in their descriptions, an identical observational attitude, maintaining a constant impassivity throughout their stories... [T]his care never to involve themselves in the stories and simply to narrate events, so characteristic of Naturalist writers, without insinuating any sort of moral as a kind of corollary. These same similarities correspond also to "the perfect short story writer."

description of the relationship between the writers Hemingway and Quiroga themselves; although not influenced directly by each other's work, the two are nonetheless *related* in a very real sense. The cinematic dimension in "American" fiction (that is to say, fiction coming out of the United States) examined by Magny is readily extended to the work of Quiroga who, like his American and European contemporaries, "rode the positivist wave" and also incorporated cinematic elements into his narrative (Williams 181). By examining their mutual influences, the inter-relatedness of the two authors and the close relationship between the works they were producing, in spite of the great linguistic and geographic disparity between them, becomes apparent.

Stanley Corkin compares Hemingway's short story collection *In Our Time* (in which "Indian Camp" appears) to D.W. Griffith's film *The Birth of a Nation* in his essay from *A Moving Picture Feast: The Filmgoer's Hemingway*. Corkin says in a statement not unlike Magny's, that while the book and the film may not have influenced each other in a literal sense, "it is reasonable to suggest that both works were the result of the same *cultural impulse*" (149; italics mine). Roger Odin, in his study comparing cinema and literature, similarly speaks of "*les grandes pulsions créatrices*"² which films and novels share in common and which serve as the creative "*point de départ*"³ for both artistic mediums (*Modèle grammatical* 10). I wish to establish the same relationship between Hemingway and Quiroga. Although the two may not have read, analyzed, and assimilated the characteristics of each other's work, as was the case in the relationship examined between Hemingway and Maupassant, they were still contemporaneously writing fiction that was influenced by and drawn from the same cultural impulses, notably the modernist (*el vanguardismo*, in Quiroga's case) movement and the

² "the great creative impulses"

³ "starting point"

cinematic development of the early 20th century, and seeking to reconcile their realist/naturalist tendencies with the technological advances of the period.

“Inmigrantes” and “Camp” are brief but powerful stories set in rural locations. In both stories there is a central couple in crisis who experience life’s journey, from birth to death, as the protagonists confront both of these realities. The idea of the *journey* is repeated in the trajectory of the narrative in the stories; both follow the path of their two central protagonists as they travel together to (or *towards* in the case of Quiroga’s story) a destination, then return to the place where they began. Unlike my treatment of Maupassant’s “La Maison Tellier,” where the earlier text was read from Hemingway’s perspective in order to search out the sources of influence-anxiety he might have encountered within the text, this time I seek to look not at but *through* the text and into the shared influences that informed both authors and inspired these works.

Horacio Quiroga was born in Salto, Uruguay, in 1878, and his work appeared during the liminal period between the conclusion of Latin American *modernismo* and the emergence of *el vanguardismo* in the early 20th century (*el vanguardismo* or “avant-gardism” being more or less the Latin American equivalent of the modernist movement to which Hemingway and so many other American and European writers of the era belonged). Quiroga was a multi-faceted writer working in poetry and prose, writing travel narratives, essays, novels, dramas, and poetry, as well as the short stories that are his most celebrated works. In the early 1890’s Quiroga was acquiring his literary education, discovering the works of the Argentinian poet Leopoldo Lugones, who would become a life-long friend and mentor, among others. He began to publish his poetry during this foundational period in his literary development and in 1899, the year that Ernest Hemingway was born in Oak Park, Illinois, he founded the *Revista de Salto*, a short-lived literary review published in his hometown. The next year, Quiroga made his trip to Paris, a symbolic

journey that would shape his worldview as well as serve as a catalyst propelling him into the experimental world of European modernism and leading him to the forefront of the genre in Latin America.

At this time Quiroga also became acquainted with the work of Edgar Allan Poe, whom he regarded as his greatest literary influence and *maestro* or master. Poe, among other writers of distinct literary backgrounds writing in various languages, is important to note as a mutual influence in the work of both Hemingway and Quiroga, and it is the anxiety-inducing presence of such predecessors as Poe and others that will be examined in this study. Poe's status as a creator and definer of the short story genre, his innovative and captivating stories, his dark themes, and the scientific influence in his work were inspirational to Quiroga (and to Hemingway as well), enough so to stir up Bloom's "disease of self-consciousness" (*Anxiety* 29) that is the anxiety of influence and cause Quiroga to evaluate his own writing in relation to the precursor.

In the *cuento*, or short story, Quiroga found his literary niche and best expression of his artistic talents, publishing many highly acclaimed short story collections, from *El crimen del otro* in 1904 (perhaps the most heavily Poe-influenced work), to *Cuentos de amor, de locura y de muerte* in 1917, *El salvaje* in 1920 (in which we find "Inmigrantes,"), *Anaconda* in 1921, and *Los desterrados*, in 1926, among others. In 1925, Quiroga published an article on the topic of the short story as a genre, called "Manual del perfecto cuentista," a text which is interesting to relate to Hemingway's own pseudo-didactic essay, "The Art of the Short Story," written some 30 years later, and which brings us to Bloom's first revisionary ratios, *clinamen*, as it relates to Hemingway and Quiroga in light of the influence of Edgar Allan Poe in their work.

Clinamen is the *misprision*, or misreading, which is the *ephebe*'s first manifestation of the anxiety of influence; it is simultaneously a swerving away from the precursor and a corrective movement (*Anxiety* 14). Poe, who lived from 1809-1849, stands before Quiroga and Hemingway as their Bloomian "Poetic Father" in that he is a father of the short story genre, celebrated as an author and literary critic, and arguably the first to have coined the term "short story" as a means of defining the tales he was producing and distinguishing them from other literary forms (Greenup 253). In this way, Poe practiced his own sort of *clinamen* in response to his literary contemporaries, destroying their influence by means of his creation and definition of the short story as genre, in an attempt to beget himself and break continuity with his contemporaries as well as those who came before him.

In 1842, Poe reviewed Nathaniel Hawthorne's short story collection *Twice-Told Tales* and it is from his well-known preface to that work that much of Poe's theory of the short story is derived. There are two crucial defining factors that make the short story unique, according to Poe: one being the length of the story, the other the effect of *totality* produced by the story (Lawrence 274). For Poe, the determining factor that qualified the short story as "short" was not the number of words or pages the story contained, but the way in which the story was experienced by the reader; in Poe's understanding, a "short story" was a piece of fiction brief enough to be read in its entirety in one sitting (Greenup 253). The uninterrupted literary experience was of great importance to Poe and led directly into the effect of totality, which is his second distinguishing characteristic of the short story. Poe states:

The ordinary novel is objectionable from its length... As it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself, of course, of the imminent force derivable from *totality*.
Worldly interests intervening during the pauses of perusal modify, annul, or

contract, in a greater or less degree, the impressions of the book. But simply cessation in reading would of itself be sufficient to destroy the true unity. In the brief tale, however, the author is enabled to carry out the fullness of his intention, be it what it may. During the hour of perusal the soul of the reader is at the writer's control. There are no external or extrinsic influences resulting from weariness or interruption. (qtd. in Lawrence 274)

In other literary critiques, reviews, and essays Poe further expounded upon his theory, but it is these two defining characteristics that stand out as his primary definition and defense of the genre. And although he does somewhat disparage the “book” or novel, which because of its greater length is unable to produce the same unifying effect of totality as the short story, Poe's definition is unique in that it does not entirely define the genre in the negative, in terms of what it is *not* (that being a novel). Rather, Poe “offers a positive foundation upon which we can establish a definition of the short story” (Lawrence 275), defined by the work's potential of being read in one sitting and its characteristic effect of totality. Aside from the historical importance of Poe's contribution of a name and definition for the short story genre, Joyce Carol Oates notes that “the true strength of his [Poe's] concepts resides in their power to anticipate the aesthetic of future masters of the genre” (qtd. in Greenup 254).

It is interesting to note that Hemingway and Quiroga, both of whom openly acknowledged Poe's influence in their work, also felt compelled to speak directly to the topic of the short story, its form, and function (despite Hemingway's seeming hesitance to talk about his writing). Their individual essays on the subject of the short story as a genre address the subject in very different ways, but both serve a similar purpose of defining the short story as a narrative form and establishing guidelines for future short story writers. Hemingway's approach to his

didactic text, “The Art of the Short Story,” was ironic to say the least, addressing the subject from the perspective of a teacher condescending to explain the writing process to his students. The work was meant to serve as a preface to a collection of Hemingway stories to be used in the high school classroom, but in fact, the text proved so offensive that it ultimately did not make it to publication (“Art of the Short Story” 85).

Quiroga took a much more sincere approach to his “Manual del perfecto cuentista,” comparing, in terms similar to those of Hemingway, the writing of the short story with the writing of poetry, specifically the sonnet. He states, “Comenzaremos por el final. Me he convencido de que, del mismo modo que en el soneto, el cuento empieza por el fin. Nada en el mundo parecería más fácil que hallar la frase final para una historia que, precisamente, acaba de concluir. Nada, sin embargo, es más difícil”⁴ (“Manual”). Hemingway was also known to speak of the short story in poetic terms, saying of the writing process that “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” (*On Writing* 4).

The link between poetry and the short story drawn by Quiroga and Hemingway is also an interesting connection to Poe, who despite today being recognized primarily for his short stories, during his lifetime was better known as a poet than as a writer of fiction (Amper 37). Even Bloom in his analysis of his own field of literary criticism says that “There are no interpretations but only misinterpretations, and so all criticism is *prose poetry*” (*Anxiety* 95; italics mine). Bloom’s poetic outlook, so similar to Hemingway and Quiroga’s personal writing philosophies, allows a special insight into the writers’ works. In their focus on the process, structure, and function of the genre, one can see that Hemingway and Quiroga, as was true of Hemingway and

⁴ “We begin at the end. I’m convinced that, much like the sonnet, the short story also begins at its end. It would seem that nothing in the world could be easier to do than to find the perfect last line for a story that has just ended. Nothing, however, is more difficult.” “Manual”

Maupassant, are both true craftsmen and important components in the formation of the short story as an independent genre.

In addition to the *manual*, Quiroga also published his “Decálogo del perfecto cuentista,” or “Decalogue of the Perfect Short Story Writer” in which he enumerates the “ten commandments” of the short story writer. The list is revealing, particularly when viewed in light of Hemingway’s statements on the same subject. In commandment 1 of the *Decálogo* Quiroga states, “Cree en un maestro—Poe, Maupassant, Kipling, Chejov—como en Dios mismo,”⁵ (12 *cuentos* 123). Here the parallels with Hemingway are striking, since Hemingway also specifically mentioned these authors as important to the development of his own writing process. Particularly in relation to the influence of Edgar Allan Poe, Hemingway said in *Green Hills of Africa*, “we have had, in America, skillful writers. Poe is a skillful writer. It is skillful, marvelously constructed...” (On Writing 94).

In their own words, Quiroga and Hemingway recognized the importance of Poe to their work and to the short story genre as a whole. But in addition to acknowledging and praising Poe’s work, both writers felt compelled, perhaps by Poe’s example, to create their *own* set of guidelines and standards for the short story genre, allowing themselves to effectively replace the precursor as the creative authority by which the short story is defined and will continue to be defined by future generations of writers. This is where Bloom’s *clinamen* is revealed in their work; like every *ephebe*, “The poet confronting his Great Original must find the fault that is not there,” (Anxiety 31). Hemingway and Quiroga clearly read and studied Poe’s work, and in their reading (or misreading) found something lacking, a place where Poe failed to go far enough, and determined that they must make up for this deficiency on the part of the precursor by correcting it in their own work. Bloom says that the swerve of *clinamen* is “the central working concept of

⁵ “Believe in a master—Poe, Maupassant, Kipling, Chekov—as you would in God himself.”

the theory of Poetic Influence, for what divides each poet from his Poetic Father (and so saves, by division) is an instance of creative revisionism” (*Anxiety* 42).

From a critical perspective, Poe’s work greatly influenced Hemingway and Quiroga, and both were vocal about his impact on their writing. But as Bloom says, “What gives pleasure to the critic in a reader may give anxiety to the poet in him” (*Anxiety* 25) and it is just such anxiety that would induce the two writers to produce their own “revised” theories on the art of the short story. This initial misreading of the precursor is the impetus that compels Quiroga and Hemingway to offer their own definition and treatment of the short story genre, by means of which they can distinguish themselves from their precursor. According to Bloom, “The strong poet fails to beget himself—he must wait for his Son, who will define him even as he has defined his own Poetic Father” (*Anxiety* 37). As *ephebes*, Hemingway and Quiroga are Poe’s Poetic Sons, and through their revisionist definitions of the short story, they define (or *redefine*) not only the genre, but also, belatedly, the parent poet that came before them, finding their freedom in the *clinamen* that exists between themselves and their Poetic Father.

Other commandments of Quiroga’s “Decálogo” are equally revealing of the deeply interconnected way in which Quiroga and Hemingway treated the writing process. Reminiscent of Hemingway’s insistence on eliminating superfluous description is Quiroga’s 6th commandment, which explains, “Si quieres expresar con exactitud esta circunstancia: ‘Desde el río soplaban un viento frío’, no hay en lengua humana más palabras que las apuntadas para expresarla”⁶ (*12 cuentos* 123). And in the 7th commandment, similarly, “No adjetivos sin necesidad. Inútiles serán cuantas colas de color adhieras a un sustantivo débil. Si hallas él que es preciso, él solo

⁶ “If you want to precisely express the following circumstance: ‘A cold wind blew from the river,’ there are no better words in human language than these to express it.”

tendrá un color incomparable. Pero hay que hallarlo,”⁷ (*12 cuentos* 124). Hemingway and Quiroga’s common literary foundation and writing sensibilities are clear from these examples of their personal writings on the subject, and become more pronounced in a deeper examination of the relationship between their works in the search for their common influences and anxieties.

In the third commandment of the *Decálogo* Quiroga explains, importantly, his perception of influence. “Resiste cuanto puedas a la imitación, pero imita si el influjo es demasiado fuerte. Más que ninguna otra cosa, el desarrollo de la personalidad es una larga paciencia,”⁸ (*12 cuentos* 123). This is a paradoxical statement, imploring the short story writer to resist the urge to imitate, only to yield to the imitative impulse if the influence should become too strong. We have already begun to discuss Hemingway’s perspective on influence in the two previous chapters, but it is worth reiterating here that he also presented a fairly paradoxical view of the subject.

On one hand, Hemingway spoke of the influence of other writers (particularly “dead writers” or those whom time has given priority over present-day writers) in combative tones, while simultaneously acknowledging the unavoidability of such influence. He hops into the hypothetical boxing ring with his literary precursors in order to make clear how completely he has beaten “Dr. Tolstoi,” “Mr. Maupassant,” and “Mr. Turgenieff,” who might have influenced him (*On Writing* 98-99). But Hemingway also says, in a letter to F. Scott Fitzgerald from 1925, “I think you should learn about writing from everybody who has ever written that has anything to teach you” (*On Writing* 91). Like Quiroga, Hemingway seems to accept the overwhelming unavoidability of influence, while at the same time both writers attempt to overcome this influence by means of the misprision and corrective movement of *clinamen*.

⁷ “Do not use adjectives unnecessarily. It doesn’t matter how many colorful tails you attach to the word if the noun is weak. If you find the precise word, only it will have just the right color. But you must find it.”

⁸ “Resist imitation as best you can, but imitate if the influence is too strong for you to overcome. More than anything else, the development of personality is a matter of patience.”

From writing style to lifestyle, Quiroga and Hemingway shared much in common. Both were avid outdoorsmen with a passion for nature, and the rural settings which they frequented in life also figured centrally in their work. Hemingway focused on the fields and forests of his childhood in upstate Michigan, the wild, shark-infested waters of the Gulf Stream, the mountainous regions of northern Spain, and the apocalyptic landscapes of the Spanish civil war and war-torn Italy. Quiroga chose often to plant his characters in *la selva* or “jungle” of Misiones, among the great tropical trees and in sight of the Paraná River where he had constructed his home. For both writers, a story’s setting, and the realistic representation of setting, often played a role as integral to the plot as that of any other character appearing in the story. It is the wild rural settings and other themes derived from another of their shared literary precursors that will bring us to treat Bloom’s next revisionary ratio, *tessera*, as it relates to their work.

In the discussion of nature and its central place in the work of Quiroga and Hemingway, it is important to mention another precursor and mutual influence the two authors share: Jack London. The American writer (1876-1916) and his celebrated novels, *The Call of the Wild* (1903) and *White Fang* (1906), were formative works for both Quiroga and Hemingway. London was “a man of action who wrote of action” (Hays 56), and Hemingway and Quiroga were also men of action, doers, who transmitted this action into their narrative by *showing* rather than *telling* their stories. Often they allowed the reader to drop *in media res* into a story without any elaborate scene setting, and they wrote in energetic prose. Hemingway said, “I’m trying in all my stories to get the feeling of the actual life across—not to just depict life—or criticize it—but to actually make it alive” (*On Writing* 33) and Quiroga proclaimed “[L]os hechos se encargan de

demostrarse a sí mismos y por eso no hay mejor expediente que *mostrarlos*”⁹ (García 44: italics mine).

In *The Anxiety of Influence*, Bloom describes *tessera* as “completion and antithesis”; the *tessera* is that tiny piece of evidence existing in the text that shows the way in which the *ephebe* has retained the terms of the precursor text, while giving new meaning to those same borrowed tropes (14). In “Inmigrantes” and “Camp” we find evidence of just such *tesserae* in the techniques, motifs, and themes that Quiroga and Hemingway “borrowed” from London, and the ways that the two writers reinvented these same elements in order to tell their own unique stories. Bloom defines the term “antithetical” in its rhetorical sense, as “the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas in balanced or parallel structures, phrases, words” (*Anxiety* 65). *Tessera* is the antithetical completion of the precursor text by the *ephebe*, and one can see how the London *tesserae* in Quiroga and Hemingway’s short stories make use of “parallel structures” and terms to present modernist ideas, quite contrary to the ideas that London promoted through his use of these same terms.

Evelio Echevarría notes in his study, “Jack London y Horacio Quiroga,” that London’s influence is extremely evident in Quiroga’s work, and yet the author is notably missing from Quiroga’s list of *maestros* that appears in commandment one of the *Decálogo* (635). This may be one of the most telling aspects of the London influence in Quiroga and Hemingway’s work—while both were willing to recognize Edgar Allan Poe as instrumental in their literary development, London does not receive the same appreciation. Echevarría quotes another Quiroga critic, Arnold Chapman, saying that writing “seemed the only way of survival for London and Quiroga” (“London y Quiroga” 636) and Hemingway felt much the same survivalist impulse in

⁹ “The facts are responsible for representing themselves and for this reason there is no better way of documenting them than by *showing* them.”

his own work. “Writing... is a perpetual challenge and it is more difficult than anything else that I have ever done—so I do it,” he said in a letter to the Russian translator Ivan Kashkin in 1935 (*On Writing* 15). Although they may have approached writing in a way similar to London, both Quiroga and Hemingway remained mute on the actual influence that London affected on them personally.

The use of “the wild” as a central element in many of their stories shows the inspiration they derived from London’s work, where the great Klondike territory of the Yukon, with its savage terrain and unforgiving weather, serves as a basis for his most highly acclaimed works. Similarly, in “Inmigrantes” and “Camp,” the rugged terrain in which the stories are situated is central and symbolic, and exemplifies the manifestation of *tessera* in their work. If *tessera* is the retention of the “terms” of the earlier poet, while meaning them in a different way, then both Quiroga and Hemingway reveal such *tesserae* in the stories discussed here; stories drawn from personal experience, the wild and savage settings that recur, the struggle of man against nature, and the realism of their descriptions of the natural environment, all are “terms” we see retained in their work. Yet the social and political undertones of London’s work are removed, and Quiroga and Hemingway, in modernist fashion, make use of these same terms as they seek to re-examine earlier ideologies and prove the ambiguity and uncertainty of life.

“Inmigrantes” is part of Quiroga’s short story collection appropriately entitled *El Salvaje*, published 5 years before Hemingway’s “Camp” appeared in *In Our Time*. *El Salvaje* was quite literally named for the wild and savage landscapes in which its stories take place, making “Inmigrantes” a natural fit for the collection, and the collections title brings to mind similarly named works by London, such as his *The Call of the Wild*. The story is a classic example of the themes of nature and death preferred by Quiroga. It consists of fewer than 1,000 words and

features a central couple, Carlota Phoening, and her husband, whose first name is never mentioned, both immigrants from Silesia (a region of the former Prussia). Over the course of the story, the two are struggling to travel through a dense, humid estuary in “[un] país hostil y salvaje,”¹⁰ (*Todos sus cuentos* 220) heading in the direction of Makallé, which situates the story in the Argentinian province of Chaco. Carlota is pregnant and suffering from eclampsia, whose seizures ultimately take her life as her husband helplessly watches. After Carlota’s death, her husband begins to lose control of his thoughts and senses. He now changes paths, heading back in the direction from which he came while carrying the lifeless body of his wife, powered by the “sola y obstinada idea”¹¹ (*Todos sus cuentos* 220) of removing his wife’s body from this hostile territory. After days of torturous travel he can go no further, and he slips into a delirium where he has returned with his wife, happy and wealthy, to their European homeland and the child they left behind there.

In Hemingway’s “Camp” the two central protagonists are not a married couple, but a father and son, traveling together with the child’s uncle and a group of Native Americans to an Indian camp where a native woman lies in labor. The story is about 3 pages in length and follows the child, Nick Adams, (the protagonist from “The Light of the World”), developing the relationship between Nick and his father, the doctor who will deliver the Indian child. Although the landscape is less savage than that of Quiroga’s “Inmigrantes,” Hemingway describes the story’s rustic setting: the lake that must be crossed to go from the white man’s territory to the Indian lands, the meadows and hills through which they pass, and the logging road they travel to reach the shanty town where the Native Americans live.

¹⁰ “a hostile and savage country”

¹¹ “the singular, obstinate idea”

They arrive at the home of the pregnant woman, where she has been laboring for two days, and where her husband lies injured in the bunk above her. “The room smelled very bad,” (*Complete Short Stories* 68) Hemingway states in characteristically concise fashion. Nick watches, and in a small way assists, as his father performs a primitive Caesarean section on the woman, and in the end the woman and baby are saved. However, the husband, who “took it all pretty quietly,” is discovered dead in his upper bunk with a straight razor, having slit his throat (*Complete Short Stories* 69). This sudden turn of events leads to a conversation on mortality between Nick and his father as they cross back to their own side of the lake. Nick asks the doctor if dying is hard, to which his father replies “No, I think it’s pretty easy, Nick. It all depends,” (*Complete Short Stories* 70). The story closes on the two in the rowboat, crossing the lake in the early morning light.

Hemingway and Quiroga’s stories share a number of similarities: both are set in the wilderness, both feature two main protagonists who travel together, then return to their starting point, in both stories there is new life (although Carlota’s baby is never born) and death, and a character who must come to terms with this loss. The stories are brief but dense with meaning, and in them the relationship between man and nature is highlighted, both in the human struggle through the natural processes of life (birth and death), and in the way that nature reflects human emotion. The ways in which both authors develop this intimate relationship between man and nature and use it as a backdrop to develop the relationship between their protagonists, who either travel together home, as is the case in the Hemingway text, or to their demise, as in Quiroga’s story, is a way in which the two authors retain London’s terms in their own writing by incorporating certain tendencies of Naturalism they derived from his work. Their themes are classically Londonian, and yet the methods used and the messages promoted by Hemingway and

Quiroga differ greatly, providing a “completion and antithesis” (*Anxiety* 14) of the precursor’s work.

Besides situating their stories in exotic locations, where each day means a struggle for survival against the elements of nature, Quiroga and Hemingway also gleaned from London a special use of language meant to lend greater authenticity to stories set in such specific locales. “London, like Twain before him... used dialogue and the vernacular to develop his stories” (Hays 56). Hemingway also had a clever way with colloquial speech and made use of authentic dialect in a way reminiscent of London and Twain, and in fact Mark Twain was one of Hemingway’s greatest influences. “All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*... 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,” Hemingway wrote hyperbolically in *Green Hills of Africa* (*On Writing* 93). What more distinct way to retain the “terms” used by their precursor London than by means of the actual language and terminology they employ in their own work?

Hemingway peppered his stories with “foreign” language, French, Spanish, or Italian, depending on the setting of a given story, and the correspondence between languages intrigued him. In *The Sun Also Rises*, which will be examined in detail in the next chapter of my study, Hemingway’s character Jake Barnes converses with a Spanish bullfighter named Romero:

He [Romero] was very bashful about his English, but he was really very pleased with it... He was anxious to know the English for *Corrida de toros*, the exact translation. Bullfight he was suspicious of. I explained that bullfight in Spanish was the *lidia* of a *toro*. The Spanish word *corrida* means in English the running of

bulls—the French translation is *Course de taureaux*... There is no Spanish word for bullfight. (*Sun Also Rises* 151)

Hemingway was aware of the influence of the Romance Languages in his English prose, as is seen in the above example, and his characters manifested his linguistic interests by drawing attention to the blending of languages occurring in their own intra-textual conversation. Like London, Hemingway used authentic vernacular and natural dialogue in his writing, yet in true modernist fashion, Hemingway's text self-consciously brought his unique use of language to the reader's attention and highlighted his careful literary craftsmanship.

Likewise in "Camp" Hemingway made use of authentic dialogue to enhance his prose. Particularly in the conversation between the protagonist Nick and his father the doctor, which makes up the bulk of the dialogue in the text, we hear the father speaking to his son in careful, simple phrases, explaining the unfolding events in layman's terms, as would be comprehensible to a young boy. An example of such dialogue is found in Nick's father's explanation of the native woman's physical state. The words "breech" and "Caesarian section" make no appearance, but rather the father states, "You see, Nick, babies are supposed to be born head first, but sometimes they're not. When they're not they make a lot of trouble for everybody. Maybe I'll have to operate on this lady. We'll know in a little while" (*Complete Short Stories* 68). Such use of dialogue is true-to-life, and also revealing of the dynamic that exists between Nick and his father, who passes on a watered-down version of the truth to his son through his use of simplified language and trivializing (or at least minimalizing) of the true crisis at hand. This is perhaps in an effort to protect the boy, or perhaps because the father is either unable or unwilling to give himself more fully to his son.

The interracial interaction in the Hemingway text is also telling. In “Indian Camp,” in which interestingly, the Indians do not “speak.” We do not hear the native men who rowed Nick and his father across the lake; they send away the dogs that come out to meet the group upon entering the shanty town, but no direct dialogue is quoted on their part. The native woman giving birth screams, but in no defined way. And Hemingway says that “The woman in the kitchen motioned to the doctor that the water was hot,” (*Complete Short Stories* 68), seeming to indicate that this native woman expresses herself with motions rather than with words in her interaction with the white doctor. In this way, Hemingway uses language, or the lack thereof, to convey his point. Without any explicit mention, the reader recognizes the language barrier that exists between the white characters and the native characters in the text, and the privileged position of English as the primary language of communication and, obviously, as the language in which the text itself was written.

The use of language and the melding of languages were also important to Quiroga. He used words and phrases in *guaraní*, an indigenous South American language, and gave his characters “foreign” surnames (often German, Russian, or Italian) to reflect their immigrant status, blending these disparate elements into short stories written in *Castellano* to create a fascinating fusion of language and cultural influences, representative of the unique cultural climate of the Río de la Plata. Quiroga’s use of *guaraní* to describe the flora and fauna of the jungles of *Misiones* is reminiscent of Hemingway’s own use of highly specialized vocabulary and links them both to Jack London. As critic Peter Hays states, “And like London, he [Hemingway] informs us of arcane material. London tells us about harnessing dogs, sledding, panning for gold; Hemingway teaches us about bullfighting, fishing, making love and war” (“Hemingway and London” 55). The lessons taught to readers by Quiroga have mostly to do with the wildlife, vegetation, and

culture of his homeland, as well as the subjects of love and man's struggle against nature, both of which are inevitably failed endeavors in the Quiroga *oeuvre*.

Echevarría compares London and Quiroga, saying "Ambos, el norteamericano y el sudamericano, trabajaron y lucharon en contacto con una naturaleza salvaje y, a menudo, brutal,"¹² ("London y Quiroga" 642). "Inmigrantes" is no exception, not only in the savage struggle acted out between Carlota and her husband and the "estero venenoso"¹³ (*Todos los cuentos* 123), but also in the brutal way in which the protagonists lose their struggle. Quiroga is precise in the language he uses to describe the nature that surrounds them, the specific vegetation, the insects, and particularly the colors of the estuary in which Carlota's husband wanders carrying the body of his wife. "El pajonal se extendía sin fin en la noche *plateada*, inmóvil y todo zumbante de mosquitos"¹⁴ (*Todos los cuentos* 122; italics mine). He also describes the "banana de filodendro," a native South American plant eaten by the husband, and near the story's conclusion, the "fúnebre mar amarillento"¹⁵ (*Todos los cuentos* 122) over which the husband looks as the fever takes control of his senses.

It is interesting how these naturalistic tendencies were both integrated and averted by Quiroga and Hemingway. Both writers take their cues from London; first, in the rural settings, far from "civilization," where their stories play out like case studies of man's survival in a harsh natural environment. We see Quiroga's couple, neither one of whom is strong enough to withstand the forces of nature, and Hemingway's Nick and his father, the doctor, an example of the "civilized" coming to the aid of the "savage," making do with only their own skill and the resources of a primitive environment, both of which are classic naturalist themes in the London

¹² "Both the North American and the South American worked and fought in contact with a savage and brutal nature."

¹³ "the venomous estuary"

¹⁴ "The scrubland extended without end in the silvery night, motionless and buzzing with mosquitos."

¹⁵ "the mournful yellowish sea"

oeuvre. Also, both stories are presented without authorial intrusion. The critic Echeverría says of literary naturalism, “El naturalismo fue el movimiento que buscaba aplicar teorías y métodos científicos a la literatura. Los naturalistas opinaban que todo lo que hace un ser humano está determinado por... el ambiente,... y mostraban a este ser atrapado por poderosas fuerzas fuera de su control”¹⁶ (“London y Quiroga” 637). In both stories Hemingway and Quiroga’s protagonists are trapped, or at least limited, by the forces of nature.

Echeverría discusses another naturalist theme he calls the *estudio de la agonía* or “study of agony,” articulated by London and Quiroga, and which can be found in Hemingway’s story as well. He discusses what has been considered by some to be a morbid fascination on the part of London and Quiroga, but which he explains, saying “en ambos aquel interés [en el sufrimiento del ser humano] era genuinamente artístico y los dos autores usaron del tema para presentar a sus personajes atrapados por fuerzas que no podían comprender ni controlar”¹⁷ (“London y Quiroga” 639). In the conclusions of both stories, which will be analyzed in detail later in the chapter, there is no real *dénouement*, no closure bringing the agonized characters to either a happy resolution or a tragic finish. In true naturalistic style, the stories simply conclude without fanfare, without moral or authorial explanation. The readers are simply given a glimpse into the characters’ lives and left to draw their own conclusion.

Lastly, both “Inmigrantes” and “Camp” incorporate scientific and medical terminology to lend greater authenticity to their work. There is Quiroga’s protagonist, Carlota, who suffers severe seizures and ultimately dies from eclampsia. And in Hemingway’s work, we see the doctor, who explains in layman’s terms to Nick (and the reader) the process of the Caesarian

¹⁶ “Naturalism was a movement that sought to apply scientific theory and methods to literatura. Naturalists believed that everything done by human beings is determined by their environment, and showed them trapped by powerful forces outside of their control.”

¹⁷ “In both, this interest in human suffering was genuinely artistic and both writers used the theme to present their characters, trapped by forces they could neither understand nor control.”

section that he performs, proclaiming when all is said and done, “That’s one for the medical journal... Doing a Caesarian with a jack-knife and sewing it up with nine-foot, tapered-gut leaders” (*Complete Short Stories* 69). Such specific medical vocabulary lends further authority and greater realism to both works and reinforces the influence of naturalism, yet another manifestation of *tessera* from London. Bloom explains the way that the *tesserae* complete the link between the *ephebe* and the precursor, saying that “the *tessera* represents any later poet’s attempt to persuade himself (and us) that the precursor’s Word would be worn out if not redeemed as a newly fulfilled and enlarged Word of the *ephebe*” (Bloom 67). Hemingway and Quiroga reinvented London’s Naturalist themes and use of language, giving them new life and relevance, and inextricably linked themselves with their precursor’s work through completion on the one hand, and anti-thesis on the other.

In their use of naturalistic themes and literary devices, Quiroga and Hemingway allowed these *tesserae* to manifest in their work as evidence of their ultimate completion and creation of an antithesis of the precursor text. Yet they did not suffer from anxiety in relation to their precursors, but rather openly embraced their influence in stories that in no way masked the influence of earlier writers such as Twain, Poe, London, and others. What differentiates Quiroga and Hemingway from their precursors and the literary genres that preceded them, however, is their technical treatment of the themes that inspired them. The influence of new artistic developments like the cinema and the incorporation of cinematic techniques as literary devices reveal Quiroga and Hemingway’s influence-anxieties vis-à-vis their precursors and bring me to the most important of Bloom’s revisionary ratios in relation to their work, and the last that I treat in this study: *kenosis*, the “movement towards discontinuity with the precursor” (*Anxiety* 14).

According to Keith Cohen in *Film and Fiction*, all artistic creation was affected by one major event which occurred in the year 1895: the advent of the movies (207). Literature, above all, was influenced by this new artistic medium, and Quiroga and Hemingway were not immune to its influences. Quiroga was fascinated by film, writing a number of articles on the topic in the early 1920's, and according to Ana María Hernandez, Quiroga "sucumbe a una temprana y violenta cinefilia que reflejaba el clima general de la Argentina en aquella época"¹⁸ ("Técnicas cinematográficas" 80). Quiroga was passionate about the technological developments of the early 20th century and the artistic possibilities of cinema greatly appealed to him. He praised it for its "lifelikeness" and began writing stories that incorporated not only cinematic technique, but also film itself into the narrative, in such stories as "El Vampiro" (Amato 83-84), published in 1927.

In "El Vampiro" Quiroga treats a variety of scientific and artistic subjects, and references Poe's short story, "The Oval Portrait." The reference, made by Quiroga's character Rosales, "connects this character's fascination with cinema with Quiroga's reflections on the topic, while simultaneously situating film representation in dialogue with other forms of aesthetic representation (literary, pictorial) and the history of debates and paradoxes that surround them" (Amato 84). Such a coming together of artistic forms brings to mind Keith Cohen's idea of *convergence*: the "openness of nearly all the arts during the heyday of relativism which characterizes the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries," a phenomenon consisting of "the formal mimicry and outright borrowing whereby one art will suddenly leap into the mode of another or demonstrate an apparently incongruous yearning for the qualities of that other art"

¹⁸ "succumbed to an early and violent love of cinema that was reflected in the general climate of Argentine at that time"

(*Film and Fiction* 83-84). In this way, Quiroga enmeshes himself in the artistic tendency of the times and establishes himself as an author at the forefront of the *vanguardia* movement.

Hemingway was also intrigued by the cinema, but unlike the Quiroga, he did not write critical analyses or reviews of popular films and movie stars for cinematic journals. However, as Quiroga did in “El Vampiro,” Hemingway also incorporated film into his work and in time, thanks to his literary success, became known as “filmdom’s favorite story source” (Laurence 6) when his books began to be adapted for the screen. But despite his Hollywood connections, Hemingway seemed in many ways to scorn the film industry, maintaining a greater respect for the potential of the documentary film genre (Laurence 20), much as Walter Benjamin was convinced of its importance to the future of cinema in his “Little History of Photography.” Hemingway felt that documentary films were “a standard for cinematic authenticity” and thought of it as more true, more reportorial in nature than other genres (Laurence 20). His interest in documentary film was sparked by his involvement in the production of two Spanish documentary films, *Spain in Flames* and *The Spanish Earth*, during the 1930’s.

The short story genre is particularly relevant to the analysis of the cinematic quality of literature. Quiroga’s short story collection *El Salvaje* and Hemingway’s *In Our Time* create continuity out of discontinuity, each a montage of individual stories that have been carefully and purposefully selected and positioned in the collection to form a complete work, an entity greater than the sum of its parts. A film is much the same: a creative effort that, after its individual scenes have been edited and spliced, becomes a unified whole. The individual pieces, whether short stories or movie scenes, represent only a glimpse into the full picture intended by the writer/director, and to be best understood they should be considered in context and in relation to their position within the work as a whole. The techniques of discontinuity and montage are

common to both cinema and the modern novel, according to Keith Cohen in *Film and Fiction*, and make an examination of cinematic influence in the short stories of Quiroga and Hemingway particularly relevant (Cohen 2).

Cohen explains the technique of montage, its disjunctive nature, and the gap created by the juxtaposition of non-sequential scenes, which he thinks should, by nature, engender a certain conflict within the viewer (*Film and Fiction* 84). However, this is not usually the case in the viewing experience, due to what Cohen explains as “the inevitable continuity imposed on the film at the time of its projection and viewing. When two shots, mutually illogical, unconnected, or even contradictory, are brought together in the film, the automatic and relentless flow of images forces at least the appearance of continuity” (*Film and Fiction* 81). This is the essence of montage, the creation of continuity (even an illusory sort of continuity) out of what is discontinuous. The concept of montage can also be applied to the short fiction collection, where an *imposed* continuity is forced on the work by means of the author’s choice as to the placement of the individual stories in the collection. The discontinuous series of elements in this case are the individual stories that comprise the collection, and they take on new meaning when considered in the context of the work as a whole.

In the case of *El Salvaje*, the discontinuity of the stories that make up the body of the text cannot be ignored. The collection was pieced together entirely of previously printed material, certain stories were combined to create a single story from what had been multiple individual pieces, and the stories chosen for inclusion in the book range in genre from *cuentos de amor* (“love stories”), to fantasies, to stories of foreigners seeking refuge and attempting survival in the *salvaje* of the work’s title (*Todos los cuentos* 177-179). Despite the haphazard way in which its stories were curated, there is nevertheless a unity to Quiroga’s work, a coherence that comes not

from the content but from the experience of the work as a whole. The reader's progression through the book from first page to last creates its own sort of unity, with the reader following the book's linear structure, as established by the author.

In *Cinematic Fictions*, Seed addresses the idea of montage in Hemingway's *In Our Time*, saying that "Understanding *In Our Time* involves us in reading *across* sections, following a montage-like sequence in which each scene is modified by its successor" (72). The collection, published in 1925, bears a unique structure, with each story separated by an inter-chapter that offers a brief, reportorial vignette, usually a war scene or a glimpse into the bullfighting ring. Hemingway himself explained the function of the vignettes within the book, saying that the structure was meant "to give the picture of the whole between examining it in detail. Like looking with your eyes at something, say a passing coast line, and then looking at it with 15X binoculars" (Seed 69).

This very visual interpretation of the intended effect of the book's structure corresponds well with the idea of cinematic influence in Hemingway's work; the long-shot, when one looks from a distance at the passing coastline, versus the close up, an examination in detail of what was only insinuated in the earlier establishing long-shot. Although such changing perspective is not unheard of previously in literature, this technique is a hallmark of the modern novelist, who "has, consciously or unconsciously, staked a trail that leads to perspectival techniques strikingly similar to the continual shifting of angle and distance in the camera set-ups of cinematic narration, or *montage*" (Seed 157; italics mine). The ways in which Hemingway and Quiroga incorporated these cinematic perspectival techniques in "Camp" and "Inmigrantes," and the manifestation of *kenosis* inherent to the texts, will be examined in detail in my cinematic analysis of the two stories later in the chapter.

The *discontinuity* that the *ephebe* seeks in relation to the precursor is also sought after in both film and in the modern novel, as we see in the use of *montage* in both of these artistic mediums. Keith Cohen says that in film the principle of discontinuity is the basis of montage, and it is the shifting that occurs from scene to scene due to the discontinuous effect of montage that gives film its unique multi-perspectival aspect (*Film and Fiction* 181). Cinema and modernist literature both seek uniqueness by means of montage: combining disparate elements to create something that is new and complete in its own right. In their use of cinematic technique, Quiroga and Hemingway use montage to create discontinuity with the very genre of the short story, to break away from their literary precursors and disrupt established literary norms in hopes of creating their own literary space.

Breaking away from the precursor is the function of *kenosis*. Bloom calls *kenosis* “a revisionary act in which an ‘emptying’ or ‘ebbing’ takes place *in relation to the precursor*. This ‘emptying’ is a liberating discontinuity, and makes possible a kind of poem that a simple repetition of the precursor’s afflatus or godhood could not allow” (*Anxiety* 87-88). How do Quiroga and Hemingway empty themselves or ebb away from their precursors? Their emptying is a product of the fragmentary nature of the short story, as inspired by the new techniques of the cinema of their day, and the thematic changes such discontinuity produced in the modern novel through its stylistic deviation. The influence of cinema and the use of cinematic technique are clear in both “Inmigrantes” and “Camp” and Bloomian analysis brings a fuller understanding of the cinematic impact in their work and its relationship to the anxiety of influence experienced by both writers.

Wyndham Lewis, in 1934, called Hemingway’s literary style a “*cinema in words*” (qtd. in Seed 68), and the same can be said of Quiroga’s literary style, particularly in reference to

“Inmigrantes.” Both stories begin with a sort of “establishing shot” —in Quiroga’s story, in long-shot, readers see a couple walking as the weather and temperature are described, the falling rain, the oppressive humidity, and the estuary through which they are traveling is also described. Similarly, Hemingway’s work begins at a distance, with an establishing shot of the lake shore, the rowboats, and the Indians waiting to take Nick, his father, and his uncle across to the Indian camp of the story’s title. If “In spatial metaphors, intimacy is rendered through proximity and detachment through distance” (Seed 75), then Quiroga and Hemingway chose first to keep readers at a distance, separating them from the stories’ protagonists so as to remain emotionally unattached, in much the same way that the third person omniscient narrators of their stories remain unattached in their narration.

This is an extremely cinematic introduction to both stories. Their opening imagery functions like the long-distance establishment shot, which allows the reader to situate himself or herself spatially in relation to the characters and the setting before zooming in on the action of a scene. Such a complete view is the exception to the general rule of cinema, in which “discrete portions of an action or event are cut up into separate shots and then spliced together, so that the totality of a scene... is never visually present all at once but is only implied by this or that part” (Cohen 181). The rest of the narrative of “Camp” and “Inmigrantes” follows this cinematic rule; the narrative unfolds in fragments, scenes are viewed from varying distances, and never again is the entirety of the scene present, but rather it is implied by the images that the reader *is* allowed in the text.

In both stories, the visual perimeter allowed to the reader is the same as that of the characters—except for the imagery of the introductory “long-shot” we never see more than what the protagonists might see at a given moment. Both “Inmigrantes” and “Camp” are narrated from

a third-person omniscient point of view, lending an immediacy and objectivity to the narrative, and such objectivity was a main goal of the modernists. Returning to Edmonde-Magny's argument, she explains that "the cinematic dimension in US novels emerges in the influence of behaviorism on their methods: thus, 'they give us not their characters' feelings or thoughts but an *objective* description of their acts, a court record of their speeches, the minutes of their 'conduct' in a given situation" (qtd in Seed 2; italics mine). This idea also extends to the writing of Quiroga and modernist writers in other parts of the world, who were seeking objectivity in their fiction and using cinematic technique to achieve this effect, "not by literally presenting us with the world, but by permitting us to view it unseen" (Seed 69).

The philosophy of showing rather than telling discussed earlier in the chapter also plays into the cinematic quality of Hemingway and Quiroga's writing. Stanley Corkin reaffirms Edmonde-Magny's statement in "Hemingway, Film, and US Culture," saying "Hemingway's notion of an absolute reality, which places the author in the position of recording the world, rather than creating it or interpreting it, connects him to... the cinematic apparatus," (149). Similarly in "Quiroga's Early Embrace of Cinema" Lee Williams notes that, "the writer Quiroga privileges the visual over the verbal... he denigrates the power of language and reason—'no se discute, no se analize'—and eulogizes the sentient and the visual—'se absorbe... por los ojos...'" (186). The "image-centric nature of cinematic narration" (Cohen 209) encouraged modernist writers to approach literature in a very visual way and Quiroga and Hemingway were major proponents of this approach, as is clearly seen in the example of "Inmigrantes" and "Camp."

In "Indian Camp" the reader's view is nothing more than Nick's visual perception of the actions taking place around him, from the rowboat journey across the lake, to the Caesarian section performed on the native woman. While certainly present in the narrative, Nick functions

more like a camera than a character, observing rather than experiencing the action of the story. Because it is through Nick's eyes that the reader watches the action of the narrative unfold, Nick becomes the protagonist of a scene in which he otherwise would have been a minor character, standing on the sidelines. There is little Nick can do in the situation; he is not present in order to provide assistance or input to his father, but simply to accompany him and observe. In the scene Nick "is both seen and seeing; object and subject" (Seed 71). The fact that he is a child lends itself to this objective, observational role; Nick takes in the action of the narrative with childish eyes, without imposing his own judgement or analysis on the reader. His observer status is emphasized by the words of his father, who continually repeats, "You see, Nick," as he offers his medical explanations, and in Nick's own response, a simple and repetitive, "I see" (*Complete Short Stories* 68). *Seeing* is Nick's most important function within the narrative.

In "Inmigrantes" there is a similarly objective narrative effect. I have already discussed that despite his love of cinema, Quiroga stopped short of appreciating "the talkies"; dialogue was of less importance to him than was the "privileging of gestures and glances," (Williams 182) characteristics one might typically associate with the melodrama of silent film. This remains true in his short story, where dialogue is brief (when it occurs at all), repetitive, and made up mostly of interjections. Although, unlike Nick in the Hemingway story, Quiroga's protagonists participate more actively within the narrative, it is still presented in an observational style, without intervention or explanation on the part of the narrator. The husband in the Quiroga text is the center of activity, trying to travel safely through the jungle, to protect his wife and make his escape, but ultimately he is unsuccessful in all of his attempts. In the end he is as much a simple observer as Nick, watching helplessly as nature takes its course.

The two stories' conclusions are also similarly modernist and cinematic; in each case the narrator allows readers to see into the protagonist's thoughts. "The inclusion of characters' directly rendered, narratively unmediated consciousness is one of the most celebrated earmarks of modern fiction," and such treatment of consciousness in the modern novel "lead[s] to techniques ultimately pertinent to the cinematic analogy" (Cohen 192-193). Quiroga ends "Inmigrantes" in what could be compared to a medium-close shot of the husband as he glances at "la horrible masa blanduzca"¹⁹ (*Todos los cuentos* 220) that is his wife. The narrative zooms into a close-up on the dying man's hands folded across his knees, then pulls back to follow the man's gaze into the distance of the estuary, a dream-like fade out into his hallucinations that brings the story to its end.

"Camp" closes in a similar fashion, with shifts in narrative perspective and transitions that can also be described in cinematic terms. The climax of the story is the conversation between Nick and his father as the two head back to the lakeshore, visualized as a tracking-shot following the father and son in conversation as they walk along the logging road. A jump takes the reader from the view of the logging road directly to a medium-shot of Nick and his father seated in the rowboat, then pans to follow their view of the distant horizon as the sun comes up over the hills. Hemingway then gives us a close-up of the boy's hand trailing through the water as Nick's final youthful thoughts on mortality (or *immortality*) close the scene.

These final moments of Quiroga and Hemingway's stories bear some striking parallels: first, in the focus on the hands of the protagonists, and secondly, in the inner monologue of each protagonist that brings the stories to a close. This is a return to the relationship between intimacy/proximity and detachment/distance described in *Cinematic Fictions* (Seed 75). In the close-up focus on the protagonists' hands at the conclusion of each story, Quiroga and

¹⁹ "the horrible, gelatinous mass"

Hemingway create a more intimate dynamic between reader and protagonist. The fragmented image of the protagonist's hand is representative of the dynamic between film and fiction itself, in the way that cinema cuts up reality and "endows these 'rescued fragments' with special significance" (Cohen x). The same is true of literature; simultaneity, along with multi-perspectivism and montage, were also important aspects of the modernist novel (Cohen 208), and a synecdochic image such as the close-up of the hand in the Quiroga and Hemingway stories allowed the writers to represent simultaneously both the part and the whole of a character. Because the reader is directed by the narrative to this fragmented visual image of the hand, he or she realizes the special significance of the image, although, in modernist fashion, the meaning of that image is left to the reader to decide.

Another parallel is the inner monologue of the husband in "Inmigrantes" and Nick in "Camp"; there is no sense of finality to either story, only a glimpse into the thoughts of the protagonist as the stories conclude. In Quiroga's text, the author leaves readers with an image of the husband, "mirando fijamente adelante, al estero venenoso, en cuya lejanía el delirio dibujaba una aldea de Silesia a la cual él y su mujer... regresaban felices y ricos a buscar a su adorado primogénito"²⁰ (*Todos los cuentos* 220; translation mine). The reader looks with him into the distance and into his hallucination, knowing that the jungle will take the life of the husband as it did his wife. In Hemingway's text, the conclusion is briefer still. Nick trails his hand through the warm water, and "In the early morning on the lake sitting in the stern of the boat with his father rowing, he felt quite sure that he would never die" (*Complete Short Stories* 70).

In their conclusions, the Hemingway and Quiroga texts combine modernist literary devices with cinematic techniques. Both stories end suddenly, ambiguously, and without

²⁰ "looking forward intently at the venomous estuary, in whose distance his delirium was drawing a little village in Silesia where he and his wife... were returning happy and rich in search of their adored first-born child"

dénouement. Particularly in Quiroga's case, the reader is left to conclude based on the circumstances that the protagonist will die, although no concluding confirmation of that fact is offered. The same is true of Hemingway's story; the reader may conclude that young Nick, safe and reassured in the rowboat with his father, has a long life ahead of him when they reach the lake shore. But the reader also realizes that Nick's thoughts on immortality and the comfort he derives from them are in error, just as he recognizes the delusional thoughts of the husband in "Inmigrantes," and thus Hemingway's conclusion provides no less ambiguity than Quiroga's.

Ana María Hernández says, "Es importante que Quiroga haya escogido una técnica de un nuevo género que en si juega con la percepción de la realidad/lo fantástico y que lo haya combinado con otros elementos de ambas modalidades," mentioning specifically "el uso del narrador engañoso (unreliable narrator), el close-up, la prolepsis (flash forward) y la analepsis (flashback)"²¹ ("Técnicas cinematográficas" 81-82). I have already discussed specific examples of the use of the close-up in both works. Although I do not find an occurrence of prolepsis or analepsis in "Camp," both can certainly be found throughout Hemingway's *In Our Time* as a whole. And in Quiroga's story we find examples of both, in the revealed thoughts of the husband as he reflects back on the couple's life in Europe, and again as he thinks ahead in his delusion, imagining a return to their homeland that is clearly impossible.

As for the third element mentioned by Hernández, in "Inmigrantes" Carlota's husband has already proven himself to be an "unreliable narrator" after the death of his wife, when he reflects on the path that has brought him to this point. Readers hear his inner monologue: "Venían de Europa, sí; eso no ofrecía duda... Su mujer estaba encinta..." as he thinks to himself in third-

²¹ "It is important that Quiroga had chosen a technique from a new genre that itself plays with the perception of reality vs fantasy, and that he had combined it with other elements of both modalities"; "the use of the unreliable narrator, the close-up, flash forward, and flash back."

person, going on to say “acaso... acaso su mujer hubiera podido encontrarse en peligro,”²² (*Todos los cuentos* 219). “Perhaps... perhaps,” he thinks. The doubtfulness of his own words leaves readers doubtful too as to whether they can trust the husband’s account of the action.

Nick in “Indian Camp” is also an “unreliable narrator.” Although it is narrated from the third-person omniscient point of view, Corkin asserts that based on the structure of *In Our Time*, which jumps from the first-person in its inter-chapters to the third-person in its short stories, “Nick” as Hemingway’s mouthpiece is the narrator of both, alternating between first and third-person “to indicate his estrangement from these events, which occurred prior to his military career” (*A Moving Picture Feast* 152). This theory gives the third-person narrator of “Camp” license to verbalize the inner thoughts of Nick as protagonist, to express his concluding feeling of certainty that he will never die. But in his thoughts of immortality, Nick is as delusional as the husband in Quiroga’s story, and this in turn creates doubt in the reader as to the credibility of Nick’s/the narrator’s perspective.

The ways in which Quiroga and Hemingway use cinematic technique to treat subject matter that was inspired by earlier literary genres and writers like London constitutes their *kenosis*, the anxiety-induced defense mechanism of the *ephebe* against his precursor. According to Bloom, *kenosis* is a form of isolation or undoing. “‘Isolating’ keeps apart what belongs together, preserving traumata but abandoning their emotional meanings... Spatial and temporal distortions frequently abound in such phenomena of isolation” (Bloom 89). This idea of “keeping apart what belongs together” rings of the *discontinuity* I have discussed at length in this chapter; as is true of the fragmented nature of the short story and the short story collection as a whole, the purposeful isolation attempted by the young poet serves to separate him from his precursor. Like the

²² “They came from Europe, there was no doubt about that... his wife was pregnant... perhaps... perhaps his wife could have found herself in danger.”

isolating of individual scenes in cinema was said to endow each fragment with special significance, the hope of the *ephebe* must be the same (*Film and Fiction* x). By separating himself from his precursor, the *ephebe* will be endowed with a special significance of his own.

Bloom also mentions that “spatial and temporal distortions abound” in the isolation of *kenosis*. This aspect of *kenosis* relates directly to the efforts of Quiroga and Hemingway to differentiate themselves from their literary forerunners by applying cinematic techniques to their writing. Both Hemingway and Quiroga have been described already as *visual* writers. Seed in *Cinematic Fictions* presents the argument that “the reader’s goal of visualization is a point of convergence” between narration in film and narration in fiction (2). In their attention to the visual effect of their words, the two authors often use techniques that distort the narrative space and time of the text. The use of the close-up, the long-distance establishing shot, and the tracking-shot, as related to the visual imagery presented in each story, show the effect of such spatial distortion in the context of the written work. Examples of temporal distortion are found equally readily; the cinematic borrowings of the flashback and flash forward are both forms of temporal distortion, and the very condensed nature of time, which is a necessary limitation to the genre of the short story, is a temporal distortion in its own right.

Another aspect of Bloom’s definition of “isolating” is “preserving traumata but abandoning... emotional meaning” (*Anxiety* 89). Applying this idea to Hemingway and Quiroga, I find the same isolation practiced in their work in response to their own influence-anxieties. Death, tragedy, and the struggle between man and nature have already been mentioned as central themes in both writers’ work, inspired by the subject matter treated by influences such as London and Poe, and “Inmigrantes” and “Camp” offer no exception. Both stories recount traumatic

events: the dramatic death of Carlota from eclamptic seizures, the makeshift Caesarian-section performed by Nick's father on the native woman, and the suicide of her husband.

However, with the passing of time and the shifting perspectives of *el vanguardismo* and modernism, Hemingway and Quiroga, while maintaining many of the themes and ideas of their literary forebears, have imbued new meaning into the same time-worn material. While still representing the bitter struggle of man and nature as did their precursor London, and while representing death and delusion as they are found in the works of London and Poe, Quiroga and Hemingway's 20th century perspective and technique offer the same themes while removing the moral overtones and the social and political *engagement* of the earlier works.

Poe's works were often satirical in nature, functioning as a sort of social commentary and offering readers an alternative to the established way of thinking, and London's writings promoted his beliefs in Darwinism and socialism, and in other social causes that were of importance to him, such as worker's and animal rights. This element of moralism and social activism that is present in the work of their precursors is all but eliminated in Quiroga and Hemingway's writing, as neither author was as *engagé* politically or socially as Poe or London, but rather preferred to maintain a greater distance between the author (and his personal opinions and beliefs) and the text, which should stand alone as an independent and objective account. As Bloom explains of the process of *kenosis*, "His [the *ephebe*'s] stance *appears* to be that of his precursor... but the meaning of the stance is undone; the stance is *emptied* of its priority, which is a kind of godhood, and the poet holding it becomes more isolated, not only from his fellows, but from the continuity of his own self" (*Anxiety* 90).

The technological developments of the 20th century that fascinated Quiroga, the events of WWI that irremediably changed Hemingway's perspective and that of the rest of the world, led

the two authors to seek new means of representing the subject matter of their precursors. They retained certain of the themes of London and Poe, of romanticism and naturalism and *el modernismo*, but by adding their modernist spin and incorporating the influence of new waves of thought, they erased the moral/emotional component of the content, effectively “abandoning the emotional meaning” (Bloom 89) of the earlier themes, or at the very least conferring new meaning upon them. Hemingway and Quiroga’s personal thoughts, opinions, and emotions did not intrude, they did not seek to provide a moral compass or promote a personal political or religious agenda; they simply sought to record a neutral account of reality as they observed it.

Corkin says that “Works that relied on this positivist-inspired method put the author/filmmaker in the position of simply placing his unproblematic cultural perception into textual form and then, due to the invisibility of the work’s creator as well as the composition’s reliance on concrete objects, giving them the illusion of immanence” (*Moving Picture Feast* 149). Hemingway (to whom Corkin refers in the above quote), and Quiroga as well, allow their readers to experience the text for themselves and create a literary space where readers have the opportunity to make their own observations and draw their own conclusions. Hemingway and Quiroga express Bloom’s *kenosis* by isolating themselves; they empty the themes borrowed from their precursors of their emotional meaning, use modernist techniques and new influences like that of cinema to provide the reader with “the illusion of immanence,” and hope that the immanence of their work will allow them to achieve a personal eminence for themselves in literary history.

This is the literary tie that binds Horacio Quiroga and Ernest Hemingway. In the previous chapter, Hemingway was extremely aware of the influence of Maupassant in his work, to such an extent that he went to great lengths discredit this influence, while the anxiety induced by

Maupassant's influence on his work continued to reveal itself in Hemingway's text. In the coming chapter the influence dynamic will be reversed and I will examine the *Hemingway* influence on the Italian writer Alberto Moravia, also a contemporary (and outspoken critic) of Hemingway. In this case, as in the case of Maupassant and Hemingway, the belated writer revealed his influence-anxieties directly, by openly recognizing and seeking to justify or nullify the influence, and also indirectly, by means of the written text and the evidence of influence-anxiety (both conscious and subconscious) that the text reveals.

Quiroga and Hemingway's influence-anxieties are unique in that they are not drawn from one another—it is doubtful that they would have read each other's work during their lifetimes. They did not have occasion to fight, or resist, or even acknowledge the tension that surely would have arisen from the recognition of their similar literary styles and treatment of common themes. What is fascinating to explore is the reaction of the two authors to their mutual influences, and the remarkably parallel ways in which the two responded to the literature that came before them and the “cultural impulse” (Corkin 149) by which they were both compelled to create their works, in spite of the geographical and linguistic distance that separated them. According to Bloom, “The strong poet survives because he lives the discontinuity of an ‘undoing’ and an ‘isolating’ repetition, but he would cease to be a poet unless he kept living the continuity of ‘recollecting forwards,’ of breaking forth into a freshening that yet repeats his precursors’ achievements” (*Anxiety* 83). Quiroga and Hemingway, unknown to each other yet in similar fashion, did just that, and in so doing carved out a literary space for themselves that lasts to this day.

CHAPTER 4

HEMINGWAY AND MORAVIA: *L'INFLUENZA IN SENSO INVERSO*

Chapter 4 of this study is dedicated to an examination of Hemingway and Italian influence, but unlike the two previous chapters, which analyzed the influence of Guy de Maupassant on the later work of Hemingway, and the mutual influences that affected Hemingway and his contemporary Horacio Quiroga, here I examine *l'influenza in senso inverso*, looking at the influence derived by an Italian writer from his exposure to writings by Hemingway. I focus on the literary relationship and rivalry between Hemingway and Alberto Moravia (1907-1990), an Italian master of the novel and short story. Moravia is the author of the *Racconti romani* (1954) and *Nuovi racconti romani* (1959), two short story collections set in Rome, which brought him notoriety and confirmed his status as an author representative of that city, just as Hemingway came to represent the city of Paris and the American expatriate community of the early 20th century. Hemingway and Moravia were contemporaries, both beginning their publishing careers in the 1920s, though Hemingway's earliest work precedes Moravia's slightly, Hemingway having published his first book of short stories in 1923, followed in 1926 by *The Sun Also Rises*, which was his first novel.

The Sun Also Rises was first published by Scribner's, with its UK edition appearing in 1927. Moravia states that his *Gli indifferenti* (*Time of Indifference*) was written between October 1925 and March 1928 (*Man as an end* 77), although the novel was not published until 1929. This three year span between the appearance of *Sun* in 1926 and *Indifferenti* in 1929 means that Moravia could plausibly have read Hemingway's novella as he was preparing and writing his

own. It is easy to believe that he was exposed to the earlier work considering their common substance, which I examine in detail in this chapter in light of Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence*.

From Hemingway's novel, with its biblical title and epigraph from Ecclesiastes, Moravia took inspiration that would ultimately influence the creation of his own novel built around the themes of vanity and futility. The author of Ecclesiastes claims that "No one remembers the former generations, and even those yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow them" (*New International Version* 1:11), and Hemingway himself said of the book in a letter to F. Scott Fitzgerald:

"Well, Fitz, I looked all through that bible, it was in very fine print and stumbling on that great book Ecclesiastics, read it aloud to all who would listen. Soon I was alone and began cursing the bloody bible because there were no titles in it—although I found the source of practically every good title you ever heard of. But the boys, principally Kipling, had been there before me and swiped all the good ones..." (*On Writing* 89)

This verse and the quote from Hemingway's correspondence speak to all *ephebes* in their poetic struggle for eminence in light of their precursors. Ecclesiastes offers both inspiration and encouragement to the belated writer as he navigates the revisionary ratios in his agonistic effort against the precursor whose influence he must nullify, and yet in Hemingway's own words the inescapable belatedness and the priority of the precursor are again confirmed.

The reasons for choosing *Sun* and *Indifferenti* for comparison are numerous. Although the stories they tell differ greatly, in other ways the two works are strikingly similar. In their philosophical questioning, their use of indirect characterization and more, Hemingway and Moravia make use of distinct story lines to convey a common subtext and create a similar

expression of the sense of existential turmoil that existed in post-WWI Europe (and the rest of the world). As I approach the two texts from a Bloomian perspective, it is apparent that Moravia's work manifests Bloom's revisionary ratio *tessera*, in that it completes and opposes the precursor work. Bloom states with regard to this ratio that "the anxiety of influence is an anxiety in expectation of *being flooded*" and that "every good reader properly *desires* to drown, but if the poet drowns, he will become *only a reader*" (*Anxiety* 57). Moravia, as reader, is immersed so thoroughly in Hemingway's text that he has lost all consciousness and is no longer aware that he is even submerged. His own novel, written from the depths of a flood of anxiety, appears as a life raft to carry him safely away from the scene of his near-drowning, where he would have become nothing more than a mere reader. *Indifferenti* is Moravia's opportunity to tell his version of *Sun* but to mean it in a different way, and in so doing, to prove his own poetic eminence.

An examination of the authors' first forays into novelistic territory reveals an undeniable correspondence between the two works. My previous analyses were within the genre of the short story, as I examined Hemingway's "The Light of the World" in light of its complicated relationship with Guy de Maupassant's "La Maison Tellier," and read "Indian Camp" and Horacio Quiroga's "Los inmigrantes" in order to draw comparisons between the influence-anxieties manifested by both authors in relation to their mutual literary influences. I now transition my focus from the short story to the novel, and by jumping genres I hope to expand the breadth of this study, to show the application of Bloom's critical model to another literary form, and to address Hemingway's first novel, which is also one of his most important and influential works.

Moravia says in *Man as an End* that "The novel's birth derives from man's warfare of words against men and the world" (20), a statement that both Hemingway and Harold Bloom

would corroborate. According to Bloom's theory, all poetic discourse is a war of sorts, a literary assault against the assumed enemy that is the precursor text. Hemingway, as discussed in the introduction to this work, spoke of writing in similarly combative fashion. Unlike the short story, a form in which both Hemingway and Moravia unquestionably excelled and where extreme concision and omission are the genre's trademark qualities, the novel provides an opportunity to examine another side of Hemingway and Moravia's craft. By analyzing both writers' first novel-length projects, I am able to level the playing field to a certain degree, recognizing that *Sun* and *Time* were each author's first exploration of this literary genre. In the form of the novel there is space for greater character development and further authorial exposition, perspectives become more multi-faceted. In the novel, the brief narrative moments chosen to be highlighted in the short story suddenly come to be seen as puzzle pieces fit into place in the totality of a larger story, a totality consisting of more than a series of loosely inter-connected stories gathered in a collection.

Like Quiroga in the preceding chapter, Moravia also shared many common literary influences with Hemingway. For him, as was the case with Hemingway, his extensive reading of the European canon shaped his literary and artistic viewpoint. Balzac, Proust, Dostoyevsky, Stendhal, Cervantes, and other authors also important to Hemingway were cited by Moravia as influential to his work (*Man as an end* 67). After an extended period of illness during his youth, Moravia spent much of his time reading and studying, becoming fluent in French and conversant in English and German. Through these languages Moravia was exposed to a wider world of literature, consuming it as Hemingway had done after his move to Paris and introduction to Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare & Co. In this way, a study of literary influence in the works of Moravia could follow a pattern similar to that in which I examine Hemingway, looking at the

influence of great writers of world literature, often from diverse linguistic backgrounds, on his prose. With this in mind I will compare the two writers and consider the influence of the American author's work on that of Moravia.

Aside from their extensive reading and the autodidactic nature of their literary education, there are other similarities of note in the life and work of Hemingway and Moravia. The economy of words so characteristic of Hemingway can also be found in Moravia's writing, whose "antirhetorical manner favored objectivity and clarity in a style that verged on the redundant so as never to be ornate or allusive" (Peterson 20). In his collection of essays, *L'uomo come fine* or *Man as an End*, Moravia speaks of a "crisis in the cultivated language" and states that "the cultivated language is the idiom of culture and dialect the idiom of necessity" (190). Both Hemingway and Moravia, as literary craftsmen, were masters of the representation of dialogue and the use of vernacular speech in their prose, weaving seamlessly the two disparate worlds of cultivated language and authentic vernacular speech. This "unmistakably direct and communicative quality" (Peterson ix) in Moravia's writing is true of Hemingway as well, and this common ground makes analysis of their individual interpretations and manifestations of this communicative quality particularly relevant.

Unlike Maupassant, who preceded Hemingway, and Quiroga, who was a contemporary but whose work remained unknown to Hemingway, Moravia and Hemingway shared a special relationship in that they were familiar with each other's work. Moravia engaged in open criticism of Hemingway and his fiction, even writing him a less-than-flattering obituary upon his death in 1961, entitled "Niente e così sia: un necrologio non convenzionale," a brief essay in which Moravia criticized Hemingway as a man and a writer, and went on to denigrate America in general and its "minor, degraded and anti-humanistic culture" (*Man as an End* 231). Although

Hemingway did not speak explicitly of Moravia, we know that he was also familiar with Moravia's work; English translations of *Il conformista*, *L'amore conjugale*, *Racconti romani*, and other collected novels are listed in *Hemingway's Library: A Composite Record* as having belonged to the author and been shipped with other of his collected works to his library at Finca Vigía in Cuba.

Moravia was outspoken in his distaste for Hemingway and his literary style, tearing apart such novels as *To Have and Have Not*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, *Across the River and into the Trees*, and *The Old Man and the Sea*. Of Hemingway's earlier work Moravia conceded that, "His best books are far removed from our time and are really fine. They are the only ones we like to read and re-read. Unfalsified reality shines through them" (*Man as an End* 234). To avoid any undue generosity, he qualified the former statement, adding that those same books "have preserved intact the fascination of his infantile, one-dimensional and boisterous prose" (*Man as an End* 234-235), which is a particularly interesting accusation where influence anxieties are concerned.

Bloom considers infantilism, or the regression to childish behavior, in his discussion of the anxiety of influence, and quotes a long passage from Thomas Mann in his essay "Freud and the Future," in which Mann says:

The shaping of the human being is [...] just this powerful influence of admiration and love, this childish identification with a father-image elected out of profound affinity. The artist in particular, a passionately childlike... being, can tell us of the mysterious yet after all obvious effect of such infantile imitation upon his own life, his productive conduct of a career which after all is often nothing but a

reanimation of the hero under very different temporal and personal conditions...

(*Anxiety* 54)

The writer or artist is a creature particularly susceptible to this “infantile imitation” of his precursor-hero, according to Mann. Moravia goes on to elaborate further his opinion on imitation in his work, but in these accusations of childishness in Hemingway’s prose, Moravia is indicting his precursor for a weakness that he actually sees in himself in an attempt to deny or at least deflect his own sin of imitation.

Joan Ross and Donald Freed in *The Existentialism of Alberto Moravia* cite the words of one of Moravia’s characters from *Indifferenti*, Carla, saying of her proclamation, “Tomorrow is the day on which I was born,”: “This is pure existentialism in the diction of an *adolescent*,” (39; italics mine). Here Carla asserts that she is creating her own future and giving birth to a life of her own choosing by taking action. She has acquiesced to Leo’s attempt at seduction in her hope that her choice to alienate herself from her mother, brother, and the life she has known will provide the impetus for the new life she hopes to create for herself. The statement is characteristic of adolescence first and foremost in that it emanates from an inherently juvenile character, but it also expresses her adolescence in its very falseness and naïveté, the false hope that the freedom to choose our day of birth is possible, or that our decisions for the future are capable of erasing the past. Although the term “adolescent” describes Carla, her words are Moravia’s words, and this makes the attribution of adolescence as applicable to the author as to his creation. In this way Carla’s words prove Moravia’s own claim of immaturity in the narration of others (namely Hemingway) to be hypocritical, an expression of his fear of the existence of the same immaturity in his own work and his desire to deflect subconsciously any criticism of such in his own *oeuvre* by challenging others for this same perceived “flaw.”

That said, Moravia also acknowledged debts owed to Hemingway by modern Italian literature, claiming that it was Hemingway's lyrical and autobiographical storytelling that influenced what was to become Italian neo-realism (*Man as an End* 235). This concession of Hemingway's impact on the national literature of Italy, combined with a harshly critical attitude toward Hemingway's work is indicative of influence-anxiety on Moravia's part. His contradictory claims illustrate that, in addition to the crises of language, character, and the concept of man that he elaborates in the essays of *L'uomo come fine*, a deeper crisis was taking place in his subconscious in order to justify and essentialize himself before the author who preceded him. In fact, his very recognition of a "debt" owed to Hemingway with regard to narrative style and the effect he may have had on Italian literature could also serve as a means of concealing Moravia's very personal debt to the author by diluting it with more general acknowledgements of other Hemingway influences on the greater literary scene.

Bloom quotes Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, saying that "a person doesn't only love himself in others, he also hates himself in others," (*Anxiety* 56) and this is painfully true in the relationship between Moravia and Hemingway. As *ephebe*, Moravia read Hemingway's work and saw that all that he had to say had already been said; he was simultaneously drawn to and repulsed by this knowledge. This is the anxiety/desire dialectic that makes up Bloom's "antinomies of the ephebe," (*Anxiety* 57). Going back to Ecclesiastes, as Hemingway's (and vicariously, Moravia's) source of inspiration for their first novels, we read that "What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new *under the sun*. Is there anything of which one can say, 'Look! This is something new?' It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time" (*NIV* 9-10; italics mine). This quote from Ecclesiastes confirms Bloom's notion that imitation and repetition are impossible to escape; the *ephebe*'s attempt at

discontinuity, at freeing himself from the precursor, is only another vain exercise in futility in a world where all is meaningless. Hemingway, because of the “injustice of time,” (*Anxiety* 55) maintains priority over Moravia, and the anxiety induced by such injustice elicits Moravia’s powerful and self-contradictory reaction to his precursor’s work. In his *misprision*, Moravia denounces Hemingway’s work, declaring it puerile, shallow, while in reality he is unconsciously railing against his own childish admiration for him.

Another accusation directed at Hemingway by Moravia is his insistence on the imitative quality of his work, in his somewhat-veiled claim that “After he has made his *début* with a couple of books, the American writer tends to restrict himself to re-writing them, and so increasingly falls into imitating himself and his own particular mannerisms” (*Man as an End* 231). Moravia accuses Gustave Flaubert and Fyodor Dostoyevsky of the same self-imitation, saying “In the last analysis all they did was to write the same novel over and over again, with the same situations and the same characters” (*Man as an End* 179). According to Moravia, in comparison to the short story writers Maupassant and Chekhov, both Flaubert and Dostoyevsky painted a less “complete” picture of their world and of their time in spite of the worldwide reputation of the two authors as documenters of their countries and of their moment in history. For Moravia, Maupassant and Chekhov were able to create, in the much more restrictive and limited scope of their medium of the short story, “an incomparable picture of the life in France and Russia of their time,” (*Man as an End* 179) creating a world “wider and more varied” (*Man as an end* 178) than that created by the novelists Flaubert and Dostoyevsky. In Hemingway’s case, having worked in the genres of both short story and novel, it is again contradictory on the part of Moravia to accuse the former of blatant imitation (even self-imitation) when such a claim is restricted to only one genre in which the writer worked. Moravia privileges the short story and

short story writers in general, knowing full well that Hemingway was a recognized master of the short story form, whose influential and unique style was imitated by many.

The idea of self-influence through imitation and repetition is a difficult subject to approach and poses problems distinct from those considered here, where my concern is with the literary influence between writers. What may have been an author's attempt to build upon certain themes and ideologies (to borrow the term from Moravia's depiction of the narrative structure of the novel as compared to the short story) within his own *oeuvre* can be misconstrued as imitation, a lazy attempt on the part of the author to repurpose what has proven to be a successful literary formula for him in the past. But is it possible to think that such a claim is true of Ernest Hemingway? From the earliest short stories, to *Sun*, to his final, unfinished work *The Garden of Eden*, is Moravia correct in his assertion that the American writer "sets out from a prototype designed when he was young, and spends the rest of his life turning out a standardized production based on the blueprint of his original prototype" (*Man as an End* 232)? Can it possibly be said that such authors as Flaubert and Dostoyevsky did the same?

In the end, Moravia's sweeping generalizations and accusations concerning Hemingway and others lead nowhere; they are more an excuse not to read the work of anxiety-inducing precursors than a true literary critique, and as such are less than productive. The enduring legacy of these writers is reason enough to acknowledge the importance of their work, despite any shortcomings that might rightfully be attributed to them. Self-imitation, even if it can be proven, has not lessened the esteem in which they are held, nor removed them from their place in the canon of world literature. What Moravia's accusations towards other writers do is provide evidence of his critical awareness of other writers and reveal the jealousies and defense mechanisms that come into play in all efforts to analyze, interpret, and understand their work.

Because of the vehemence of Moravia's response and his denunciation of Hemingway's literary importance, comparative analysis of *Sun* and *Indifferenti* provides ample opportunity to discuss Bloomian influence-anxiety in relation to their work.

In *L'uomo come fine*, Moravia devoted a chapter to "Recalling *Time of Indifference*." His recollections on the writing of the novel are telling, particularly when considered in the context of influence-anxiety. Moravia says that before the publication of *Indifferenti* in 1929, "[I] was never sure if I could really see myself in what I wrote. I had written a good many poems and short stories, and even two novels, most of which were imitations of this or that author with whom I had become infatuated as I went along. With *Time of Indifference* I felt for the first time in my life that I had put my feet on solid ground" (*Man as an End* 77). In this moment of candor, Moravia reiterated the important influence of his early reading on his development as a writer, and admitted that in his infatuation with certain authors he sought to recreate what he had admired in them. There is no denying of influence on Moravia's part in this essay published more than 30 years after *Indifferenti* (and, notably, after the death of Hemingway in 1961). However, it is possible that Moravia allowed himself this sort of "confession" because, as was the case when Hemingway spoke of Maupassant, he felt that he had overcome this weakness, improving upon his earlier attempts as well as the work of his predecessors. The imitation of self or others that he criticized in Hemingway is precisely what Moravia felt he had overcome with the writing of *Indifferenti*, as he transcended his own imitative tendencies to create something new and spontaneous (*Man as an End* 77).

In his personal study of literary comparisons, Moravia likened Hemingway to the Italian writer Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863-1938) for his decadentism and to André Malraux (1901-1976) for his irrationalist tendencies (*Man as an End* 233). It is to these writers that Moravia

attributes Hemingway's desire to create his personal myth, the larger-than-life persona that perhaps to some degree over-shadowed, or at least informed (Moravia might say *mis*-informed) Hemingway's readership, blurring the line between fiction and reality. "What remains of such myths?" asked Moravia in his Hemingway obituary. "Nothing, even less than nothing. They are fabricated for the masses, and the masses forget them as soon as other more up-to-date and beguiling myths arise" (*Man as an End* 233).

Moravia's recognition of the "Hemingway myth" and the confusion of his life and his fiction are not unfounded. However the prediction that such mythology would soon be forgotten, that less than nothing would remain of Hemingway's legacy, was presumptive. To Moravia's hyper-sensitive critical eye, what he considered a lack of substance in Hemingway's writing justified these statements and led him to hope that a certain insufficiency in Hemingway's body of work would lead to his ultimate disappearance into literary obscurity. Such insistence and desire for the disappearance of the precursor is clearly tied to the anxiety of influence and to the obstacle that Hemingway's work represented for Moravia. It is an early revelation of *kenosis* in Moravia's work, and brings us back to his accusations of imitation on Hemingway's part, since *kenosis* is a defense mechanism meant to be employed against the *ephebe's* "repetition compulsions" (Bloom 14). In his *kenosis*, Moravia will seemingly empty and humble himself (as will be seen in the context of the text itself later on in the chapter), but he will do so in such a way as to also empty the precursor of his privileged position, from which deflated position the *ephebe* will return stronger, while the precursor, ideally, remains in obscurity.

For Moravia to succeed in his own right, to overcome the monumental stumbling block of Hemingway's legacy (both the man's and the work's), the assertion of Hemingway's worthlessness is unquestionably necessary. Before arriving at the *kenosis* that will allow him to

further obscure the relevance and even the necessity of comparison with Hemingway, the first step in Moravia's poetic lifecycle is his *misprision* of Hemingway's text. This hubris on the part of Moravia allows a "'swerve' of the atoms so as to make change possible in the universe" (*Anxiety* 14), a change where Hemingway's "inferior" work is supplanted by his own. Moravia's *misprision* "swerves" us directly into Bloom's first revisionary ratio, *clinamen*. It is the first and most readerly of the ratios, as it deals with the initial encounter of the *ephebe* with the work of the precursor poet. Bloom states that "The stronger the man, the larger his resentments, and the more brazen his *clinamen*" (*Anxiety* 43). Taking into consideration Moravia's harsh opinion of Hemingway and the vehemence with which he spoke against him, his resentments are certainly large and his *clinamen* brazen indeed, perhaps due to the creative strength of both Moravia and Hemingway in their own right.

I begin by looking at *Sun* as Moravia no doubt saw it, during the time when he was preparing and writing his own first (published) novel. Moravia may have begun right away to experience the contradictory emotions he would later express in *L'uomo come fine*, the acknowledgement of the "fineness" of Hemingway's work, while at the same time snubbing the man and his prose. This is, in part, a manifestation of the conflict between Moravia's inner critic and his inner reader, a conflict also examined in the earlier chapters of this study. Bloom describes the inner turmoil experienced as poet faces poet, saying that "What gives pleasure to the critic in a reader may give anxiety to the poet in him, an anxiety we have learned, as readers, to neglect, to our own loss... This anxiety, this mode of melancholy, is the anxiety of influence" (*Anxiety* 25). This is an apt representation of Moravia's attitude toward Hemingway, in which his contradictory sentiments with the regard to the latter can be explained as the struggle between his inner critic, who appreciates the work and draws inspiration from it, and his inner poet, who

seeks to remove all traces of the work and thereby remove the possibility of comparison with it. Bloom says that Poetic Influence is an “oxymoron” (*Anxiety* 31), and as a reader practicing the dual functions of critic and poet, Moravia entrenches himself in the contradictory nature of this struggle.

Like Hemingway, Moravia was a prodigious reader but at the same time a craftsman, using the literature he consumed to hone his own craft. Moravia’s encounter with Hemingway’s text, particularly coming as it did at a formative moment in the development of his writing, must have triggered in him the influence-anxiety that I examine here. However, according to Bloom, the amount of anxiety experienced by the *ephebe* is really of no great importance; we should think rather of the achievement of the literary work as the manifested anxiety itself. “The anxiety may or may not be internalized by the later writer, depending upon temperament and circumstances, yet that hardly matters: the strong poem is the achieved anxiety” (*Anxiety* xxiii). And so, consciously anxiety-ridden or not, Moravia would have confronted Hemingway’s text from the dual perspectives of reader and critic. This is the birth of the anxiety of influence in him, which is also the beginning of his own “Second Birth” (*Anxiety* 34), his poetic attempt at self-creation.

Bloom says that poetic influence “always proceeds by a misreading of the prior poet, an act of creative correction... of distortion, of perverse, willful revisionism without which modern poetry as such could not exist” (*Anxiety* 30). *Sun* is the story of a “Lost Generation” (to quote Hemingway and Gertrude Stein, to whom Hemingway attributed the term), a story of decadence, hedonism, and despair in a world made unstable by war, where fixed rules give way to moral relativism. In *Sun*, each character is on a quest for purpose, a mission to escape the dullness and futility of existence. This is the premise drawn from the biblical reference that prefaces the work

and provides its title; in the world of *Sun*, Hemingway illustrates in vivid detail the vanity and futility of life as presented in the book of Ecclesiastes. The novella is peopled with American and British expatriates living a wild and unfettered life in Paris in the 1920s, who travel together to Pamplona, Spain, for the running of the bulls at the festival of San Fermín. At the heart of the novel is the love affair between the protagonist Jake Barnes, a young American military officer rendered impotent by his service in WWI, and Brett Ashley, the beautiful, liberated English “Lady” whose love for Jake, although it is probably one of the few true emotions she experiences, can neither satisfy her sexually nor provide for her financial needs. In addition to Jake and Brett, other essential characters in the text are Robert Cohn (ineffectual friend to Jake and short-term lover to Brett), Bill Gorton, Mike Campbell (Brett’s fiancé), and Pedro Romero (the young matador who is Brett’s final dalliance). In the novel’s end we find that although the characters have progressed little and their inter-personal dynamics remain unchanged, perseverance is the true achievement of Hemingway’s characters, as they find the means and the will to continue a life of meaninglessness, completely lacking in personal fulfillment.

Sun, as Hemingway’s first novel and the foremost of his early works, should be counted among those works said by Moravia to be “really fine,” with “unfalsified reality” shining through them (*Man as an End* 234). These stories were to be admired and appreciated, as Moravia admitted even 30-odd years later in *L’uomo come fine*, and so we assume that the impact of the novella on Moravia was profound. The philosophical questioning and the themes of love and loss in the work seem to have resonated with the young Moravia as he shaped his own novel, the very title of which rings with the same essential qualities of Hemingway’s text.

Moravia’s novel is “staged” much like a play, with five central characters and minimal changes in scene, and it takes place over a span of two to three days. The protagonist, Michele,

struggles internally against the boredom and utter emptiness of life (the vanity and futility we find in Hemingway's epigraph from Ecclesiastes could not be of greater importance to Moravia's text). Michele finds no comfort or purpose in his bourgeois Roman surroundings, and his problems and discontent are only worsened by the presence of his widowed mother, Mariagrazia, his sister, Carla, and Leo, the opportunistic, chauvinistic lover of both women. There is also Lisa, Mariagrazia's friend and former lover and fiancée of Leo. The much older Lisa systematically attempts to seduce Michele, whose *indifference* to the situation, as the novel's title would suggest, leaves him more or less emotionally and physically impotent. The indifference at the heart of Moravia's novel can be defined as "a moral obtuseness or lack" (Peterson 7): it is a *lack* of interest, a *lack* of concern, and Hemingway's *Sun* is equally a story of characters obsessed with what they lack, whose apathy (feigned or otherwise) consumes them and controls their actions.

I return to the concept of *clinamen*, the swerve, observing as Moravia swerves in avoidance of Hemingway's pre-existentialist text in order to "provide an Italian version of, and response to, the literature of existentialism" (Peterson vii). The term "existentialism" was adopted and debated by many in the 1930s and 1940s, and was probably best defined by Jean-Paul Sartre in his text, "L'existentialisme est un humanisme," in which he states that man is nothing more than what he makes himself. Moravia wished to respond and reinterpret the meaning of "existentialism" for an Italian audience, from an Italian perspective. The writing of *Indifferenti* is, therefore, his "act of creative revisionism" (*Anxiety* 42). Moravia's reading and misreading of *Sun* provided him with the impetus to create a work that would bring a necessary correction to the "flaws" in Hemingway's text, while simultaneously representing a specifically

Italian counter-argument to the existential leanings of the initial work and of the existentialist literature of the day.

While Hemingway's novella is set in Paris, arguably the heart of the existentialist movement, and focuses on the experiences of English-speaking protagonists in Europe, Moravia's story is rooted in his home city of Rome and offers an insider's look at the complexity of life in Roman society. Hemingway may have explicitly invoked the reference from Ecclesiastes (which is also, more subtly, recognized at the beginning of Moravia's story) concerning life's meaninglessness for the "Lost Generation" of young adults at the close of WWI, but he did so while offering no hope and no consideration of the future, but rather characters who are caught up entirely in their past. Moravia sought to examine the same ecclesiastical ideas in *Indifferenti*: it is a story of discontent and despair, of love and jealousy marked by indifference and boredom. In its themes and philosophical approach it is unquestionably indebted to *Sun*, and yet the work represented for Moravia literary freedom, an escape from earlier weaknesses of self-doubt and imitation, and from the overwhelming presence of his precursors, as he offered an alternative to the existentialism expressed by Hemingway and other European writers of the early 20th century.

From the first chapter of Moravia's novel it is impossible to ignore the relationship between his work and *Sun*. When Carla, the beautiful daughter of Mariagrazia, watches the interaction between her mother and her mother's lover Leo (who will soon become Carla's lover as well), Moravia even includes what I consider a veiled reference to Hemingway's work. Carla observes the interaction between her mother and Leo, and we hear her inner thoughts saying, "non sapeva quando e in che modo ma ne era certa come del sole che avrebbe brillato all'indomani e della notte che l'avrebbe seguito; e questa chiaroveggenza le dava un senso di

paura; non c'era rimedio, tutto era inamovibile e dominato da una meschina fatalità" (*Indifferenti* 11).¹ In Carla's doubtfulness there is also certainty; she may not know what will happen, or when, but she can be certain that something *will* happen, as certain as she is that the sun will rise and set again tomorrow, the next day, and forever. Moravia uses the simile employed by Hemingway, whose "sun also rises" served as a title for his text and a symbol in his novel of the unending futility of life. In Moravia's text we find the same sentiment, but used to different effect, as will be seen in the later revisionary ratios.

The above quote embodies Moravia's *clinamen* or "swerve," his recognition and revisionistic movement away from the precursor in order to fill in what he found lacking in the prior text. Hemingway's choice of title for *Sun* was purposeful and reflects the central theme of the work, taken from the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes, which reads:

One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever... The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to the place where he arose... All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. (*King James Version* 1.4-7)

In a world shaken by the horrors of war, one thing that Hemingway's shiftless characters can depend on is that life will go on; the sun will continue to rise and set in spite of their personal tragedies, their unrequited loves, even in spite of events that change the course of history forever.

The same fatalistic premise is put forth in Moravia's quote from *Indifferenti*. Carla's inner musings make use of the same biblical reference to express her sense of helplessness in a world where everything is immutable, unchangeable. She experiences the same helplessness,

¹ "[S]he could not tell when and how it would happen, but she was as certain of it as that *the sun would rise* next day and night follow in its turn. And this foreknowledge brought with it a feeling of fear; there was nothing to be done, for everything was immutable, everything was ruled by a kind of shabby fatality" (*Time* 9; italics mine)

indifference, and apathy that Hemingway's characters face, and also acknowledges the inherent fear that comes from the recognition of such a fate (*Indifferenti* 11). But in the case of Moravia's text, rather than Hemingway's living "Lost Generation," we see mother and daughter, two generations mutually lost, with their shared lover passing between the two. The passing of time has been no kinder to this family than it was to the characters of *The Sun Also Rises* and Michele and Carla, as the next generation in their upper-middle class Roman family, wish nothing more than to escape their lot, as each rising and setting of the sun brings them closer to stepping into and fulfilling their expected roles in Roman bourgeois society.

Leo wishes to take advantage of the discontent of both Carla and Michele, beguiling them with a chance to better themselves, or at least to find a new life and fulfillment, an escape from the gilded cage in which they live. Leo knows that their dissatisfaction has the potential to push them to extreme actions, which could greatly benefit him and thus is his primary motivation for insinuating himself into their lives. But Carla and Michele's apathetic and *indifferent* nature keeps them both in a perpetual state of inaction. They speak bitterly and sometimes violently in their internal monologue, occasionally expressing these thoughts to others, but boredom seems to weigh so heavily on both characters that they are rendered useless, incapable of action. "Well, then," says Leo in Chapter 1, as he listens to Carla's complaints about her oppressive and miserable life, "'E allora', soggiunse 'sai cosa si fa quando non se ne può più? Si cambia'" (*Indifferenti* 7).² This "breaking away" from life and expectations offered by Leo is Michele and Carla's own *clinamenic* "swerve" away from the influences of the past; it is a window on Moravia's own "swerve" from the path forged by Hemingway in his attempt at literary self-creation.

² "[Y]ou know what one does when one can't stand a thing any longer? One breaks away from it," (*Time* 5)

So Moravia borrows from Hemingway the biblical quote that provides the title and central thesis of his work, retaining its terms but using them to different effect in his own novel, whose meaning and purpose are distinct from Hemingway's. This moves us from *clinamen* to the second revisionary ratio, *tessera*, where the young poet antithetically completes his precursor by retaining the terms of the early work but meaning them in another sense, and in so doing reveals the failure (real or imagined) of the precursor (*Anxiety* 14). As mentioned previously, *tessera* is the defining ratio in the relationship between *Indifferenti* and *Sun*, where the *tessera*, that tiny fragment of the parent-text, serves as the "token of recognition" among the other fragments that constitute the completed work (*Anxiety* 14). The words of Ecclesiastes are this *tessera* manifest in Moravia's work, and it is the author's retention of these terms while presenting an unquestionably unique message that validates the comparison of the two texts by means of Bloom's theory of influence-anxiety.

In order to achieve his antithetical completion of the precursor, Moravia must retain Hemingway's terms while meaning them in a different sense. But what are the "terms" to be retained from *Sun*? Hemingway's story is peopled by characters who are all in some way lost. Some, like Jake, are lost in impotence, in their inability to affect the world around them or to be affected by it; others, like Brett, are lost in love, separating the ideas of love and sex as mutually exclusive concepts and finding satisfaction in neither. There is Robert Cohn, who perhaps is more lost than any other character in *Sun*. He is aware of his dissatisfaction and yet blind to the infantile actions and futile, desperate ways by which he attempts alleviate his misery. The common thread that binds them together, despite differences in age, sex, and socio-economic standing, is the profound sense of futility that overwhelms each of them. Futility, boredom,

irony, pity, and that ever-present theme of “value” are all defining terms of Hemingway’s story, and motifs that are carried over by Moravia into *Indifferenti*.

But it is futility that reveals itself as the most constant theme in both *Sun* and *Indifferenti*, with the existential angst that is experienced by Hemingway and Moravia’s characters stemming from their deeply-rooted feelings of meaninglessness. The passage in Ecclesiastes from which Hemingway’s *tessera* in the Moravia text is drawn is a clear representation of the feeling of meaninglessness on the part of these fictional characters. In various editions of the Bible, the chapter’s opening statement has been translated as “Vanity of vanities... all is vanity” in the King James Version, “Meaningless! Meaningless! [...] Everything is meaningless,” (*NIV*), and “Futile! Futile! [...] Everything is futile!” (*New English Translation*). These verses directly precede those that make up the epigraph of the Hemingway text and Carla’s quote in Moravia’s novel, and the terms appear again and again in both texts.

“Listen, Jake... Don’t you ever get the feeling that all your life is going by and you’re not taking advantage of it?” says Robert Cohn, in distress. “I can’t stand to think my life is going so fast and I’m not really living it” (*Sun* 9). Trying to escape himself is Cohn’s obsession from the beginning to the end of the novel and this sentiment is shared by Carla in Moravia’s work, in her weak-willed attempts at creating a new life for herself. She considers her circumstances and the betrayal of her mother that she sees as her only means of escape, and repeatedly asks herself “Dove va la mia vita?” (*Indifferenti* 48).³ Michele is also consumed by the futility of his existence. He asks himself as he looks around the table at his mother, Leo, and Carla, “‘È mai possibile’ si domandava angosciato, ‘che questo solamente sia il mio mondo, la mia gente?’ Più

³ “Where is my life going?” (*Time* 42)

li ascoltava, più gli parevano ridicoli e incomprensivi nelle loro solitarie sincerità... ‘C’è un errore’ si ripeteva” (*Indifferenti* 88).⁴

The characters of Hemingway and Moravia’s novels share a similar disbelief at what they consider their own misfortune and maintain the same dread and fear of the meaninglessness and futility of life. In practice they are mostly feeble characters, weak-willed and ineffectual, and so manifest their discontent less by proactively taking steps to better themselves and more by internalizing their unhappiness. In the examples of Robert Cohn, Carla, and Michele I have cited here, the only reaction the characters have to their problems is to question life and the direction that it is taking them—they wallow in their discontent, asking themselves not “What am I doing with my life?” but “Where is *life* taking *me*?” Hemingway and Moravia’s characters are passive rather than active participants in their own stories, making *futile* and superficial attempts to alleviate their discontent. By questioning both themselves and others, they seek validation of the awfulness of their fate, as well as seeking a means of escape.

Another term from *Sun* that is retained by Moravia in his later work is *boredom*, a state of being that could be considered alternately a cause and an effect of a life of meaningless and futility. Hemingway’s characters, lacking in purpose and incentive, find boredom to be one of their primary motivations to action. Robert Cohn in *Sun* struggles with boredom, and more specifically the *fear* of boredom. On the first day of the *fiesta* in Pamplona, the men discuss the bullfight they will attend later that day and wonder whether Cohn will be able to stand the gruesome sight, never having previously attended the bullfights, but Cohn brushes off this suggestion of weakness. Another friend, Bill, is irritated by the interaction and says after the group separates, “That Cohn gets me... he thinks the only emotion he’ll get out of the fight will

⁴ “Is it really possible... that this is my whole world, my whole circle of acquaintance? The more he listened to them, the more ridiculous, the more lacking in understanding they seemed to be... There’s some mistake, he kept repeating to himself” (*Time* 77-78).

be being *bored*” (*Sun* 141; italics mine). Later after the bullfight, the others continue to berate Cohn for his earlier statement of boredom, although he has apologized at this point and seems to regret what he said (*Sun* 144).

Boredom is also a determining factor in Jake Barnes’s decision making process when, as he dances with Brett Ashley at the *bal musette*, they discuss the fact that he has brought a prostitute to accompany him that evening. “What possessed you to bring her?” Brett asks. “I don’t know, I just brought her,” Jake replies. “You’re getting damned romantic,” Brett states, to which Jake replies, “No, bored,” (*Sun* 19-20). The *indifference* inherent to Brett and Jake’s back-and-forth is clear, as is the common emotional thread that ties together these themes of indifference, futility, and boredom in Moravia and Hemingway’s work. Moravia’s characters likewise suffer from the boredom of their bourgeois lifestyle. When Michele is enticed by the money and professional connections that Lisa can offer in exchange for sexual favors, he goes to her despite the absolute lack of desire that she inspires in him. When he realizes that he has been deceived and that there is no true benefit, financial or otherwise, for him in Lisa’s scheme, he says to himself, “[T]utto era stato in definitiva inutile: disgusto, pietà... questo senso di vanità dei suoi sforzi gli faceva male, dalla noia disperata e angosciata che l’opprimeva avrebbe voluto gridare” (*Indifferenti* 63).⁵

Here Hemingway’s terms, taken from Ecclesiastes, appear again, another *tessera* revealed in the Moravia text. The difference is in Moravia and Hemingway’s interpretations of these terms. In *Sun*, Jake and Brett talk nonchalantly, calmly, blaming Jake’s inappropriate actions on his boredom. Boredom incites *action*, but not *emotion* in Hemingway’s characters; it is more a lack of emotion than an emotional response. For Jake, it is boredom that compels him

⁵ “Everything had turned out, in the end, to be useless—both disgust and pity... This sense of the *vanity* of his efforts hurt him, and the desperate, agonizing *boredom* that oppressed him made him want to cry out” (*Time* 55-56; italics mine)

to make a choice, to take some sort of action, however capricious it may be. For Michele, the sheer agony of boredom is enough to make him scream (*Time* 56); his own boredom seems to arouse him more than any sexual or emotional satisfaction that he might derive from his encounter with Lisa. He knows that he is manipulating Lisa for his own financial gain, and that in his dealings with her he, like Carla, is betraying familial trust by becoming the lover of a woman who is both his mother's confidante and rival. However, having weighed his options, Michele remains ambivalent as to his course of action; it is difficult for him to assess the costs and benefits of using Lisa for his own gain and more difficult still, because of his ambivalence, for him to care about the outcome either way. This is what distinguishes Hemingway's use of boredom from Moravia's. Jake and Brett care deeply for one another, but use boredom as means of hiding their emotions, while Michele's boredom is "agony," a passionate response elicited by a situation to which he is actually completely indifferent.

Bloom describes the relationship between *ephebe* and precursor in the context of influence-anxiety as "an intense degree of ambivalence... and from this ambivalence rises a pattern of saving atonement which... determines the succession of phases in the poetic life-cycle of strong makers" (*Anxiety* 66). Ambivalence, like indifference and boredom, is another type of neutrality, but it differs from the other two in that it does not so much represent a lack of interest as it does a state of mixed emotions, or contradictory opinions. This perfectly describes the relationship between Hemingway and Moravia, harking back to the contradictory sentiments of disdain and admiration that Moravia expressed for Hemingway in his obituary for the writer. Moravia's ambivalence as he stands face-to-face with his precursor's text is certainly intense and it is this intensity of emotion that, according to Bloom, will continue to propel Moravia through the poet lifecycle.

Bloom tells us that *tessera* is a reductive tendency on the part of the *ephebe*, “a kind of misprision that is a radical misinterpretation in which the precursor is regarded as an over-idealizer” (*Anxiety* 69). Moravia’s own quote from *L’uomo come fine* makes his opinion of Hemingway clear, casting him as an over-idealizer, a boisterous and emotionally-stunted figure, trapped in perpetual adolescence, writing to glamorize lost youth. From such over-idealizing stems the creation of the Hemingway myth that Moravia belittled so, and in order to create a literary space for himself Moravia had to radically misinterpret the precursor text, providing his own work as an antithetical alternative, both a rebellion against and a reinterpretation of the original work. In his belated work, the *ephebe*’s deliberate misinterpretation serves as a sort of covert translation (*mistranslation* according to Bloom [*Anxiety* 71]) of the precursor text, explaining to the reader what the precursor was unsuccessful in communicating himself.

Bloom asserts that “the meaning of a poem can only be a poem, but *another poem*—a *poem not itself*” (*Anxiety* 70). Using this definition, Moravia’s *Indifferenti* becomes not only an alternative to *Sun*, but also a means of defining the earlier work (and by extension, a redefinition of Hemingway). So, in reductive fashion, Moravia draws the themes that inspire him from the Hemingway text, the futility and boredom of existence inspired by Ecclesiastes, and distills them into his own text, allowing himself to redefine them as he sees fit, to “mean them in another sense, as though the precursor had failed to go far enough” (*Anxiety* 14). He takes the terms of *Sun* and manifests them in a subtler, more internal fashion, in stark contrast to Hemingway’s raucous expression of the same concepts.

Hemingway’s characters are members of the “Lost Generation,” disenchanted youths whose feelings of futility stem (consciously or unconsciously) from their experiences in the war and its aftermath. Their ties to one another are uncertain at best, with most of their relationships

existing on a superficial and precarious level. The beautiful Brett, arguably the most capricious of the novel's protagonists and the one with the most tenuous connections to her fellow characters, is also the only tie that binds the others together in the "love polygon" of her relationships with Mike the fiancé, Jake the star-crossed lover, Robert Cohn the one-long-weekend-stand, and Romero the Spanish love affair. The futility of their existence is apparent even in these complicated interpersonal relationships, which are nothing more than a series of loose attachments from which no positive or lasting outcome can be expected.

Moravia's characters, unlike Hemingway's random assortment, are a tight-knit family unit living in Rome under the Fascist regime (although this is not explicitly mentioned in the text, as Moravia was adamant in his denial of any sort of political *engagement* in his writing) (*Man as an End* 80). Differing from Hemingway's characters, whose sense of detachment, futility, and boredom is tied to their wartime experiences, the family of Moravia's novel suffers the futility of life in a society where the entire social structure is crumbling around them, leaving them unsure of their place and relevance in it. Mother, daughter, and son all repress the sense of meaninglessness that haunts them, and keep their personal expressions of *indifference*, futility, and boredom internalized. With each other they are rarely candid about their feelings and often they are blatantly dishonest with each other.

An example of this is Michele's behavior when he realizes Leo's designs against his family and his intentions of allowing them to default on their mortgage loan. At this moment, Michele must talk himself into standing up for his family's honor and remind himself that he should be outraged. Finally, without movement, he shouts at Leo, "[M]ascalzone" (*Indifferenti* 31),⁶ an insult that results in a complete turning of the tables and ends with Michele offering a quietly indifferent apology to Leo at the insistence of his mother. "Se sapeste quanto tutto questo

⁶ "You swine!" (*Time* 26)

mi è indifferente,” (*Indifferenti* 31)⁷ Michele says. This contrasts with the brashness of Hemingway’s characters (although they too have their introspective moments), who are more vocal about their discontent and disgust for others, expressing themselves much more freely than the family in Moravia’s text. For Mariagrazia, Carla, and Michele there is hesitation, a greater sense of shame at the feelings of futility they harbor and the deadly boredom of the life they are required to lead according to their status in Roman society. For this reason, Moravia “swerves” from Hemingway’s narrative openness and allows the indifference, futility, boredom of his characters to be expressed in a subtler, internalized fashion.

In the examples given, Hemingway’s characters make their unhappiness seen and felt; they experience unwonted emotion and rail against it. Moravia’s characters, on the other hand, take their misery and internalize it, only expressing their true thoughts and emotions through their inner dialogue, while presenting a façade of boredom and disaffection to the rest of the world. When they do take action, Moravia’s protagonists do so in awkward and ineffectual ways, as in the example of Michele’s attempt to become Lisa’s lover, and the false anger he holds against Leo and must convince himself to express. The characters of *Sun*, although also hopeless in the end, take a more active approach to their frustrations, while Moravia’s characters remain more passive and self-controlled; they are less willing to allow themselves to be seen than Hemingway’s characters. The protagonists of *Sun* make their presence felt and their feelings known, they dance, drink, and travel in their attempt to alleviate their suffering and escape their boredom. They engage in life’s vanity in order to justify their existence, or at least to exercise a sort of control in the midst of chaos. Moravia’s characters are more sedentary, trapped in their existence, in the magnificently shabby house that is disintegrating around them, which stands as a representation of the life and society that are also crumbling at their feet. But their day to day

⁷ “If you only knew how little all this matters to me” (*Time* 30).

life, the parties, lunches, food and wine they partake of are carefully recorded by Moravia, evidence of the existence that goes on in spite of their indifference to it.

Drawing again from Ecclesiastes we read, “So I commend the enjoyment of life, because there is nothing better for a person *under the sun* than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy will accompany them in their toil all the days of the life God has given them *under the sun*” (NIV 8.15; italics mine): if life is all futility and vanity, then there is nothing left but to eat, drink, and enjoy life to the best of one’s abilities. Hemingway’s characters take this verse to heart and find pleasure, however superficial, in the meals, the drink, and the excitement that he details throughout the novel. Although Moravia’s characters also go through the motions of life and love in their futile attempts to escape life’s monotony, in *Indifferenti* there is no sense of false joy, no superficial pleasure in the routine acts of eating and drinking, or in the formalities of the bourgeois Roman lifestyle. In this way, Moravia reimagines the verses that inspired Hemingway’s novel, and by extension his own, by correcting the “flaw” in Hemingway’s work, the over-idealizing of which Moravia accused him, and offering a more realistic, less romanticized view of life. In this way, both authors present common themes, but to different effect, and the Hemingway *tessera* in Moravia’s work is both revealed and revised.

Now that the *tessera* of Hemingway’s influence has been revealed in *Indifferenti*, it becomes necessary for the latter writer to break away from this recognition of the earlier text in his work by means of *kenosis*, the breaking-device, defined by Bloom as “a movement towards discontinuity with the precursor” (*Anxiety* 14). It makes use of the same “terms” that were retained in *tessera*, while moving beyond the act of completion characterized by this ratio. *Kenosis* is an emptying and isolating action on the part of the *ephebe* that changes the relationship between the new work and the old and makes of the new text something more than a

simple repetition of the precursor (*Anxiety* 88-87). In this way *kenosis* takes the previous ratio one step further, ensuring that the *tesserae*, the remnants of the precursor text retained and reconstituted in the new work, are more than just a recapitulation of what has already been said. Bloom says that *kenosis* is more ambivalent than *clinamen* or *tessera* and brings poems more deeply into the realm of antithetical meanings, as it is a form of self-isolation that ironically and antithetically serves to isolate and empty the precursor as much, if not more than the *ephebe* (*Anxiety* 89-90).

In his discussion of *kenosis*, Bloom quotes Freud's essay "Analysis Terminable and Interminable" saying that "one cannot flee from oneself and no flight avails against danger from within," relating the idea to that of the agonistic struggle of the strong poet (*Anxiety* 88). We see the struggle of *kenosis* in Hemingway's characters as they try to distance themselves physically from their circumstances; they travel in their futile attempt to escape the boredom and vanity of life. Jake Barnes does not heed his own advice, but offers it freely to Robert Cohn, who is desperate to recruit friends to join him on a trip to South America, where he believes he can avoid his troubles. "Listen, Robert, going to another country doesn't make any difference. I've tried all that. You can't get away from yourself by moving from one place to another. There's nothing to that," Jake says (*Sun* 10). Yet only a few pages later, the plans are laid for Jake, Robert, Brett, and Mike to travel to Pamplona, entertaining themselves by heedlessly spending money and drinking away their sorrows. Their actions may be futile, but nonetheless Hemingway's characters, as was illustrated in Moravia's *tessera*, are actively pursuing a way out of their misery.

For Moravia's characters, action, no matter how futile, is impossible in their current state of mind:

Overcome with despondency and futility, Michele and Carla are powerless to act or rebel against an environment which holds them captive. Their alienation is one against the ego (I)—an I which, aware and sensitive, has seen through the frantic clamor after money and possessions but is incapable of acting. (Ross 40)

In this way we see again how Moravia has changed the terms of the earlier Hemingway work—the *tessera* is there, as his characters experience the same emotions of boredom and futility of Hemingway's characters; they are equally *isolated* and indifferent, yet Michele and Carla have seen through their bourgeois lifestyle, "the frantic clamor after money and possessions," (Ross 40) a clamor in which Hemingway's characters take an active role.

The alienation and isolation of Michele and Carla in *Indifferenti* illustrates the same isolating of self that occurs in Moravia's *kenosis*, a ratio that, unlike *clinamen* and *tessera*, "seems more applicable to poets than to poems" (*Anxiety* 90). According to Bloom's appropriation of the Freudian id/ego dichotomy in the context of influence-anxieties, the "ego" takes the place of the precursor, while the "id" represents the *ephebe*. Standing off against Hemingway, Moravia practices self-abnegation by means of the abasement of his own characters. Michele and Carla are alienated from the ego ("I") just as Moravia must alienate himself against the ego ("precursor," in this case Hemingway) so that he can achieve the isolation necessary to distance himself from the precursor and distinguish the two works.

In both Moravia and Hemingway's stories the characters sense the futility of their existence, their inability to find fulfillment and happiness. Boredom permeates their lives as they operate in a sort of spiritual vacuum from which they are unable to escape. If this continuity of

theme seems to link Moravia's novel too closely to Hemingway's, so that the precursor's work seems to have thrown the *ephebe* into "the outward and downward motion of repetition" (*Anxiety* 83), the different ways in which their characters *experience* this emptiness is Moravia's saving difference. In *Sun* it is an active, a *moveable* boredom, in true Hemingway fashion; his characters live in a whirl of activity, talking fast, drinking fast, dancing fast, and allowing action and futile, meaningless activity to substitute for true depth of emotion.

In *Indifferenti* the characters respond to boredom in a less manic way, they remain idle in spite of themselves. Carla's contemplation of whether or not to succumb to Leo's advances is an example of just such apathy. Her exchange with Leo at first invokes real emotion in her, but these feelings quickly dissipate. "'Succederà quell che succederà' pensò; raccolse il pigiama, pigramente lo infilò; scivolò sotto le coltri, spense la luce; chiuse gli occhi" (*Indifferenti* 48).⁸ She remains idle, indifferent, even in response to the only known escape from the life she can no longer bear. Michele functions similarly. He knows that any action he might take is futile and this knowledge paralyzes him. Walking down a crowded Roman street, Michele commiserates with himself, saying, "Tutta questa gente... sa dove va e cosa vuole, ha uno scopo, e per questo s'affretta, si tormenta, è triste, allegra, vive, io... io invece nulla... nessuno scopo... se non cammino sto seduto: fa lo stesso" (*Indifferenti* 134).⁹ He talks to himself because of the sense of isolation that overwhelms him, and in his isolation Michele is able to rationalize, to compare his own existence to that of others, and he finds himself lacking, in motivation if nothing else.

Michele's isolation illustrates what takes place within Moravia as he passes through the ratio of *kenosis*. He is a melancholy personage; he shuts himself off from others, confining

⁸ "What will happen will happen, she thought. She picked up the pyjamas, *idly* put them on, slipped under the bedclothes, turned out the light and closed her eyes" (*Time* 42; italics mine).

⁹ "All these people... know where they're going and what they want, they have a purpose in life and that's why they hurry and torment themselves, and are sad or happy. They have something to live for, whereas... I have nothing... I have no purpose. If I don't walk, I sit: it makes no difference" (*Time* 119).

himself to a space where he can reflect on his perceived failures and inadequacies. He disassociates himself from the world in which he lives, creating a discontinuity which, were it not for his inability to act, might allow him to create his own life and his own story, separate from the life already established for him by tradition and circumstances. Michele's story is the manifestation of the same process in Moravia's anxiety-ridden work. Bloom says that "A poem is a poet's melancholy at his lack of priority" (*Anxiety* 96), and *Indifferenti* expresses this same melancholy; it is Moravia's achieved anxiety born from the repetition and discontinuity of *kenosis*.

Bloom calls *kenosis* "not so much a humbling of self as of all precursors, and necessarily a defiance unto death" (*Anxiety* 92). Hemingway's characters express their boredom and sense of life's futility by living dizzying and frantic lives as they attempt to overcome their own belatedness (belated in that they can never again return to the reality they knew before the war). They are defiant unto life, not unto death. But as seen in the example of Carla and Michele, Moravia has swerved from Hemingway's more blatant expression of boredom and futility. For Moravia, the *inaction* of his characters is more important than their *reaction*, and this inaction leaves them, for all intents and purposes, dead. "Their philosophical suicide is an annihilation of the world, but it is, of course, like every other gesture, *manqué*," (Freed 40). *Manqué*, failed, unfulfilled, *lacking*; Hemingway shows life's emptiness by desperately trying to fill it back up, while Moravia uses the empty vessel of his characters to reveal the emptiness of life itself, and in so doing, reveals the annihilation of the world, or the final collapse of the bourgeois existence that they have known. Moravia, by means of the self-abnegation required by *kenosis*, becomes an empty vessel like his characters. Throughout the discussion of *clinamen*, *tessera*, and *kenosis*, Moravia's stance has remained as Hemingway's, while his methods and meanings differed. Now

in *kenosis*, “the meaning of the stance is undone; the stance is *emptied* of its priority” (*Anxiety* 90). In emptying his characters, Moravia also empties himself, and in turn, empties “the precursor of *his* divinity, while appearing to empty himself of his own” (*Anxiety* 91).

Now that Hemingway’s influence on Moravia’s work has been revealed by means of *tessera* and emptied of meaning (or of its original meaning) through *kenosis*, Moravia must in turn seek to repress the influence that has been proven in his text. This brings us to *daemonization*, which I treat in tandem with its subsequent revisionary ratio, *askesis*. The two go hand-in-hand, *askesis* being a poetic sublimation (repression) of instincts intending an ultimate state of solitude for the *ephebe* (*Anxiety* 116), while *daemonization* is also a repression, this time not of instincts, but of the very influence of the precursor work. The two ratios are also readily dealt with simultaneously in that *askesis*, or self-purgation, is derived directly from a successful *daemonization*, where the *ephebe* becomes intoxicated and empowered by the Counter-Sublime achieved in relation to the precursor and turns upon himself in *askesis*, his final “match-to-the-death with the dead” (*Anxiety* 122).

Daemonization is defined by Bloom as the “movement towards a personalized Counter-Sublime,” (*Anxiety* 15); it is the *ephebe*’s direct reaction when faced with the original sublime of the precursor. In Chapter 2, I discussed this ratio as it relates to Guy de Maupassant and Hemingway, drawing a connection between this revisionary ratio and Hemingway’s iceberg theory. Bloom states that poetry is more than just a struggle against repression, it is itself a kind of repression, and it is the repressive tendency in both *daemonization* and Hemingway’s iceberg theory that connects the two (a connection that grows stronger as we consider the relationship between the iceberg theory and *askesis*) (*Anxiety* 99). However, in this final chapter, the roles have been reversed and I now examine Hemingway’s influence as it relates to Moravia as

contemporary/successor, so the question is now how *daemonization* affects Moravia's writing as it relates to the work of Hemingway as precursor rather than *ephebe*.

Bloom summarizes *daemonization* as a reaction to the precursor's sublime. As he moves through this revisionary ratio, "The later poet opens himself to... a power in the parent-poem that does not belong to the parent proper," (*Anxiety* 15) a power that the *ephebe* considers fair game. He then positions his own work in relation to the precursor text in a way that serves to minimize its power and generalize the uniqueness of the earlier work (*Anxiety* 15). Inherent in the name of the ratio and in the concept of sublimity ascribed to it is an element of the spiritual. The strong poet is not *possessed* by the "demon"/muse/artistic spirit which acts within him and inspires him to create, but rather, in his poetic strength, the poet *becomes* the demon himself (*Anxiety* 100). This spiritual quality also comes into play in *askesis*, when the *ephebe* goes to battle with the precursor in an attempt to sublimate his own poetic, spiritual tendencies and achieve a state of solipsism.

And so *daemonization* recognizes the precursor's sublime and acknowledges that sublimity is equal to power in poetic terms. Passing through this stage of influence-anxiety, the *ephebe* must take this power from the precursor in order to create his own "Counter-Sublime," and in so doing, lessen the effectiveness of the precursor. Continuing through the revisionary ratios, it becomes necessary to find what has been repressed in the Moravia text, since poetry is not a struggle *against* repression but a repression in its own right, and to determine how Moravia uses the repressed material in *Indifferenti* to correct the balance of power between Hemingway and himself, putting that balance into his own favor. First, we observe the manifestation of Moravia's Counter-Sublime, where he successfully represses Hemingway's influence in his own

text, and continue to study this repression into *askesis*, which represents the sacrifice that such repressive tendencies entail.

For Hemingway in the role of *ephebe*, *daemonic* repression was a consequence of his strict self-editing, the iceberg technique that privileges the intellect of the reader so that certain truths can be left out of a text yet still understood and acknowledged by the reader, possibly even more so than if those same “hidden” or unwritten truths had been explicitly stated. In Chapter 2, I related this theory of purposeful omission to an “intellectual acceptance of what is repressed” (*Anxiety* 102) on the part of Hemingway, and it was the newness of Hemingway’s literary style that made Maupassant’s appear weak by comparison and contributed to Hemingway’s own *daemonization* by consequence.

Moravia’s own editorial style was not as severe as Hemingway’s, although he did state with regard to *Indifferenti* that he wished to achieve “a novel in which all that existed were dialogue and background, and in which all the comments and analyses and author’s interventions were meticulously eliminated in perfect objectivity” (*Man as an End* 78). Although an overstatement, Moravia’s comments show that he intended, like Hemingway, to practice a very conscious form of self-editing in the writing of his novel and was “absolutely determined not to say anything extraneous to the inevitable channels of the characters” (*Man as an End* 78). Like Hemingway, Moravia curbed his desire to say more, favoring a narrative free of authorial interventions and descriptions or explanations that could not come from the characters themselves, or from within their realm of knowledge and awareness.

But for Moravia, this repression was more than an act of self-restraint deterring him from saying more than was necessary to the narrative. He had to contend with a writer whose unique literary style changed the conception of dialogue and narrative in the literary world and whose

success in both short fiction and novel-length work was already being established at the time of the publication of his own first novel. I have already discussed Moravia's "swerve" away from this precursor text in *clinamen*, his "completion and anti-thesis" of and "movement towards discontinuity" with the earlier work as he passed through *tessera* and *kenosis*, but with *daemonization* Moravia transforms another element of *Sun* in order to achieve his Counter-Sublime and prove his own strength in relation to Hemingway and the precursor text, and he does so through his unique treatment of "tragedy" in *Indifferenti*, as it is distinct from the tragic element employed by Hemingway in *Sun*.

Although they do not conform to the classical formulation of "tragedy" as defined by Aristotle in his *Poetics*, both Hemingway and Moravia had this concept in mind when writing their first novels; Hemingway referred to *Sun* as a "damn tragedy" (*Letters* 229) and Moravia stated in *L'uomo come fine* that in writing *Indifferenti*, "I set out to write a tragedy in the form of a novel..." (79). Aristotle's definition of tragedy requires that the two works be written as drama rather than narrative, which was Moravia's original intention; he wished to give an overall theatrical shape to his work, confining the events of the novel to two isolated days, and treating it like a two-act play (*Man as an End* 79). For this reason I classify the novels as "tragedy of circumstances"—a designation ascribed by Günther Schmigalle in "'How People Go to Hell': Pessimism, Tragedy, and Affinity to Schopenhauer in *The Sun Also Rises*." His definition is derived from Arthur Schopenhauer's, who called tragedy "the description of the terrible side of life. The unspeakable pain, the wretchedness and misery of mankind, the triumph of wickedness, the scornful mastery of chance, and the irretrievable fall of the just and the innocent... It is the antagonism of the will with itself which is here most completely unfolded" (Schmigalle 4).

The classification “tragedy of circumstances” is befitting of *Sun* and *Indifferenti* in that it presents tragedy and misfortune as natural effects, essential to the character and actions of men, and brings the concept of tragedy closer to our own experience than the “extreme wickedness” and “blind destiny” that drive other tragic forms (Schmigalle 4). Both *Sun* and *Indifferenti* relate tragic occurrences and both end unhappily, if ambiguously. According to Ernest Lockridge in “‘Primitive Emotions’: A Tragedy of Revenge Called *The Sun Also Rises*,” it is Jake Barnes’s “abiding moral sense—his profound shame and self-disgust” (51) that make the work a tragedy. Barnes as protagonist is an honest and decent man, but his “tragic flaw” is the jealousy incited by his unrequited love for Brett Ashley and the actions that this jealousy provokes. Lockridge explains, “His [Barnes’s] ‘death’ is not physical, as befalls the revenger-hero in the traditional revenge tragedy; it is the *spiritual* death, the terminal self-revulsion, of someone who has done the unpardonable and knows it—and knows, further, that he has sold his soul for nothing,” (51; *italics mine*). As is often the case for Hemingway’s characters, it is drink that enables them to escape, if only momentarily, from their deeper feelings. In Pamplona, Jake, Brett, Robert, and Mike dine together, and Jake describes the situation: “It was like certain dinners I remember from the war. There was much wine, an ignored tension, and a feeling of things coming that you could not prevent happening. Under the wine I lost the disgusted feeling and was happy,” (*Sun* 127). This is yet another reiteration of the central theme from *Ecclesiastes* that informed Hemingway’s novel, where disenchantment with a vain and meaningless life is “eased” or at least forgotten by the simple pleasures of eating, drinking, and merry-making.

Literal, tragic death does not claim Michele or any other of the characters of *Indifferenti* either, although Leo has a brush with death when Michele makes a weak and ineffectual attempt on the former’s life. Moravia says in *L’uomo* that “I set out to write a tragedy in the form of a

novel, but, as I wrote, I realized that the traditional tragic motif, or indeed any really tragic event, slipped through my fingers as soon as I tried to formulate it,” (79). He felt that he could not create a true tragedy from the story of the Ardengo family, probably because of his understanding of the Aristotelian tragic formula, which requires the “irretrievable fall of the just and the innocent” (Schmigalle 4). The terms “just” and “innocent” are unfitting for characters such as Michele, Carla, Mariagrazia, and Leo, and the same can be said of Jake Barnes, Brett Ashley, Robert Cohn, and the other characters of Hemingway’s work. However, the spiritual death and “terminal self-revulsion” described by Lockridge as tragic characteristics of *Sun* are also on display in Moravia’s novel and prove the tragic nature of both works.

Disgust and self-revulsion are sentiments expressed repeatedly in Moravia’s work. In the midst of his romantic encounter with Lisa, Michele’s excitement is tempered by his repulsion: “‘Tutto questo è ignobile’ pensava disgustato” (*Indifferenti* 59).¹⁰ In this moment he finds Lisa repugnant and loses all desire, and to the novel’s end he maintains these feelings. After parting from Lisa for the last time, “[U]n disagio lieve ed angoscioso l’opprimeva, e per quanti sforzi facesse non riusciva a sciogliere la triste confusion della sua mente... allora annaspava, soffocato” (*Indifferenti* 299).¹¹ Lisa herself is not immune to such feelings, though her disgust is directed at others and does not express the self-revulsion felt by Michele. It is Lisa who first discovers the affair between Leo and Carla, and discovering the two embracing, Moravia describes Lisa’s response: “Un senso di disgust la opprimeva, altro sentiment nuovo per lei; un

¹⁰ “All this is degrading, he thought in disgust” (*Time* 52).

¹¹ “He was oppressed by a feeling of dull disgust. His thoughts were arid, his mind a desert; there was no faith, no hope there... He felt himself suffocating” (*Time* 302).

disgusto chiaroveggente che considerava la giovinezza della faciulla e freddamente prevedeva la rovina che avrebbe portato questa tresca,” (*Indifferenti* 149).¹²

Daemonization invokes the spiritual idea of the “sublime.” Bloom calls this ratio the *ephebe*’s search for his Counter-Sublime and says that it is meant to make the son more of a daemon and the precursor more of a man (*Anxiety* 106). It is in his distinct treatment of tragedy that Moravia diverges from Hemingway’s example and creates a “Counter-Sublime.” Both works can be seen as tragedies in their own right, if not in the Aristotelian sense, but Hemingway’s “damn tragedy” (*Letters* 229) tells the interwoven stories of his unfortunate characters and the series of tragic circumstances that began to unravel each one. Hemingway’s energetic prose serves to illustrate each scene, showing rather than telling the tragic nature of the events of the novel. The scenes of Parisian expatriate life in Book 1 of *Sun*, the fishing trip to northern Spain and the bullfights and festivities of San Fermín in Book 2, and the melancholic taxi ride in the novel’s conclusion in Book 3, highlight the tragic nature of the global story through the actions, reactions, and conversations of the characters. Hemingway allows his understated story to unfold organically, enacted by his characters.

Moravia’s approach to tragedy differs from Hemingway’s, however. The author says of the writing of *Indifferenti*:

I began to see the impossibility of tragedy in a world in which non-materialist values seemingly lacked any right to exist, and where moral conscience had become so hardened that people acted from appetite only and were more and more like automata. *So the spirit of tragedy became transferred from outward events (such as the seduction of the daughter by the mother’s lover) to the inner*

¹² “A feeling of disgust oppressed her—another sensation new to her; a clear-sighted disgust which dwelt upon the girl’s [Carla’s] youthfulness and coldly foresaw the ruin that this intrigue would bring with it,” (*Time* 132).

experiences of Michele, an impotent character in revolt, who, while participating in the general lack of feeling, had retained enough insight to suffer from his participation. (*Man as an End* 79-80; italics mine)

It is this transference of tragedy from a focus on outward events to a focus on the inner psyche of the protagonist that separates Hemingway and Moravia's works and constitutes Moravia's *daemonization*. Just as Moravia took the concepts of boredom and futility derived from Ecclesiastes in the precursor text and retained them while meaning them in a different sense, here he takes the tragedy of Hemingway's story and transforms it in order to achieve his Counter-Sublime.

Moravia opens himself to the power of the precursor text, the power of the *tragic*, and tragedy as a literary modality is certainly a power "that does not belong to the parent proper" (*Anxiety* 15); Hemingway and his Lost Generation have no singular claim to tragedy. Moravia's appropriation of the genre of tragedy effectively generalizes away some of the uniqueness of Hemingway's work in order "to augment repression [...] by absorbing the precursor more thoroughly into tradition than his own courageous individuation should allow him to be absorbed" (*Anxiety* 109). We are reminded by Moravia's use and reinterpretation of tragedy that Hemingway's work, even if it was at the literary vanguard of its time, also falls into the tradition of tragedy, and in this way the "great original" remains, but loses its originality (*Anxiety* 101). In this way Moravia's novel is his repression, as *daemonization* requires it to be. He transforms a classical literary form which had already begun the process of transformation in the hands of his precursor and makes it his own, lessening Hemingway's mythical status by fitting him firmly into the ranks of literary tradition. In so doing, the relative newness of the *ephebe* can now work to his benefit, negating the priority of the precursor which, until now, has given him the

advantage. Turning the tables on the precursor in this way, Moravia's Counter-Sublime is achieved and with it, his *daemonization*.

Askesis begins the instant that *daemonization* is accomplished. As Bloom explains, "Poetic *askesis* begins at the heights of the Counter-Sublime, and compensates for the poet's involuntary shock at his own daemonic expansiveness" (*Anxiety* 120). *Askesis*, as mentioned previously, is a "movement of self-purgation" (*Anxiety* 15) in which the young poet must sacrifice something of himself in order to separate himself from others, including the precursor. In *askesis*, the *ephebe* seeks transformative self-curtailment, even at the expense of his own creativity (*Anxiety* 119). According to Bloom, Moravia cannot bask in the success of *Indifferenti*. Instead, the author must immediately continue the process of separation, individuating himself from the precursor text this time by means of the sublimation of his own poetic instincts. In the case of Hemingway as *ephebe*, it was a sacrifice by omission, of that which was left unspoken, which constituted the author's curtailment and self-sacrifice in relation to the Maupassant short story. According to Freud, it is anxiety that causes repression, rather than repression that induces anxiety (qtd. in Bloom 135). Moravia's experience of influence-anxiety causes him to *repress* his spiritual instincts, and this repression represents his *askesis* in relation to the Hemingway text.

Bloom, referencing the American poet Wallace Stevens, says that ego anxieties about priority and originality are perpetually provoked by the id's absorption of its precursors, who operate in him as his own instincts, rather than as censorious powers (*Anxiety* 135). The same is true of Moravia who, through the process of *daemonization*, managed to absorb his precursor not only more thoroughly into literary tradition, but also into the very fabric of his own poetic being, to the point that Hemingway no longer represented an external influence but rather an internal, instinctual one. This returns us to the aspect of the spiritual as was hinted at in the analysis of

daemonization, and which now relates to Moravia's *askesis* as a direct consequence of the prior revisionary ratio.

In *daemonization* the disgust and self-revulsion felt by Moravia and Hemingway's characters bring up the question of morality, which brings us in turn to thoughts of the spiritual, at least in as much as it is from a religious or spiritual source that we derive our moral code. After all, Hemingway's Jake Barnes makes the statement, "That was morality; things that made you disgusted afterward" (*Sun* 129). The moral, spiritual aspect of the Moravia text is important to the author's movement through *askesis*, as it is his repression of spiritual instincts and treatment of religion that distinguishes Moravia's novel from the precursor Hemingway's text, and constitutes his *askesis*. This repression is particularly interesting as it relates to the biblical reference that has continued to reveal itself as central not only to Hemingway's novel, but also to Moravia's by comparison. There is a religious basis to both these works that is clear (most obviously in Hemingway's title and epigraph for *Sun*) and yet subverted; for both authors the religious element of their works is contradictory, at once embraced and rejected, and ultimately, in Moravia's case, repressed as a means of removing this last hint of the precursor from his work.

The characters of *Sun* and *Indifferenti* are neither religious nor moralistic. But in *Indifferenti* there is clearly an honor code at play, otherwise Michele would not feel compelled to stand up for his family against the conniving Leo, or to fight for his sister's honor, and he would not hate himself for his own indifference to these perceived dishonors. Although there is no real mention of God or spiritual things in *Indifferenti*, the Ardengo family moral code has been established and passed down to them by society; what is right and wrong, proper and improper,

has been determined not by a higher power, but by the long held traditional values of the Roman bourgeoisie.

Hemingway's characters struggle more explicitly with religion and spirituality; after all, the festival of San Fermín is a religious festival. Jake Barnes enters a cathedral in Pamplona where he kneels to pray, but his prayer becomes more a wish list until his thoughts gradually drift to Brett Ashley and he is ashamed at being such a "rotten catholic" (*Sun* 85). It is Brett herself who best summarizes God and spirituality for the characters of *Sun* when she tells Jake at the novel's end, "You know it makes me feel rather good deciding not to be a bitch... It's sort of what we have instead of God," (*Sun* 214). In this way, Hemingway via Brett expresses the unique spiritual atmosphere that dominates *Sun* and also characterizes Moravia's *Indifferenti*: the sense that religion, or God, has been gradually replaced by the rote practices of a moral code that itself has now become insufficient, as accepted codes of behavior and morality have become relative in light of the events of the Great War. According to Brett Ashley's logic, when this moral code is removed, what is left in place of God are simply the actions and the choices that we make, a very empirical philosophy in tune with the existential philosophical tone of both works.

Bloom calls *askesis* "a road through to freedom" (*Anxiety* 131). In his *askesis*, Moravia enacts a sublimation of his own poetic instincts and now, after the absorption and internalization of *daemonization*, we see Hemingway operating within Moravia's own psyche rather than as an external influence, and it is this internalization that is Moravia's pathway to freedom from his precursor. Bloom says that in *askesis* the prayer is to *be* an influence rather than to *be* influenced (*Anxiety* 126), and so by internalizing, becoming one with the precursor, it is possible to preclude

the influence of the precursor and again “lie against the truth of time” (*Anxiety* 130) in order to gain poetic autonomy and freedom.

The examples from *Sun* show that the spiritual and religious aspect of the novel, tied to the concepts of morality and value that are also integral to both Moravia and Hemingway’s works, is more overt in the Hemingway text, just as he was more overt in his expression of the spirituality in the biblical title and epigraph of to the work. Hemingway allowed himself the creative freedom to express openly his questioning of the religious establishment, as we see in Jake’s attempt to reconcile himself to being a “rotten catholic” and Brett’s discomfort with organized religion as a whole. Moravia, however, “seeks transformation at the expense of narrowing the creative circumference of precursor and ephebe alike,” (*Anxiety* 119) by denying himself that same creative freedom of expression. Moravia is also concerned with values, with moral standards, and he similarly questions their legitimacy, but he does so without explicitly addressing the questions of God, religion, or spirituality in general. If, as Bloom states, internalization is the poet’s means of separation (*Anxiety* 120), then Moravia achieves his *askesis* and separation from the precursor text by means of this internalization of the moral question and exclusion of open spirituality from his novel. This leaves Moravia, much like his characters, in a state of solitude; his curtailment is the evasion of his own spiritual instinct and this constitutes the “self-sustaining solitude” which is the ultimate goal of *askesis* (*Anxiety* 131-132).

When by means of *askesis* the state of solipsism has (almost) been achieved, the *ephebe* moves into the final stage of the revisionary process, *apophrades*, or the “return of the dead” (*Anxiety* 15). At this moment in the poetic lifecycle, the precursor will again appear and the *ephebe* will now purposefully and pointedly open the new work to the precursor text. If he can successfully do this without impoverishing his own text, he achieves his *apophrades* and

successfully joins the ranks of the strong poets. In Chapter 2, *apophrades* was evidenced in Hemingway's "The Light of the World"; stories, plots, and themes treated by Hemingway that had clearly, sometimes explicitly, been influenced by his precursor were revealed in the light of *apophrades* to have been reimagined and transformed into elements of his original style to such an extent that the parent-text evidenced the *ephebe*, rather than the reverse. In the case of the comparison of Maupassant and Hemingway, it was the conclusion of their two short stories that demonstrated most clearly the latter's movement through the *apophrades*.

Bloom says in the preface to *Anxiety* that "strong poems are always omens of resurrection" and that although the dead may or may not return, it is not *imitation* that revives them, but the "agonistic misprision" that is accomplished by their most gifted successors (xxiv). He goes on to say that "The irony of one era cannot be the irony of another, but influence-anxieties are embedded in the agonistic basis of all imaginative literature... [from] Plato's contest with Homer... down to the parodistic matches between Hemingway and his precursors, and the followers of Hemingway with the master" (xxiv). Approaching the texts from this perspective, it is now possible to see Moravia holding his text open to "the master" Hemingway and to draw our conclusions as to his successful completion of the agonistic process, the "grand and final revisionary movement that purifies even this last influx" of influence from the precursor (*Anxiety* 141).

At the end of both *Sun* and *Time* there is a final, private conversation between the protagonists that takes place in a taxi cab, a conversation that in both texts represents the end of one life and the beginning of another. Both works end in ambiguity and without the satisfaction of resolution, as was the case in the other works of Hemingway and those of Maupassant and Quiroga addressed previously in this study. Hemingway's text follows Brett and Jake, the latter

having come to rescue Brett in Madrid, where she is stranded without funds and without her latest lover. The two talk at the hotel, then over lunch, and lastly during a taxi ride through Madrid, and both characters are as they were at the novel's beginning: unhappy, dissatisfied, and unsure of how to go on. Jake and Brett are brutally honest with each other in their conversation and they speak of spirituality when Brett states that it is their choices and their free-will that take the place of "God" for people like them, members of the Lost Generation.

The unspoken tension between the two characters is palpable, particularly in the close confines of the taxi. Hemingway says through Jake, the narrator, that "The driver started up the street. I settled back. Brett moved close to me. We sat close against each other," (*Sun* 216). In the end, even as they are physically moving forward and away from their personal tragedies, the two continue to reflect, to think of what they have been through together and, alternatively, of what might have been. "Oh, Jake... we could have had such a damned good time together" Brett says, to which Jake replies, "Yes... isn't it pretty to think so?" (*Sun* 216). Even as the sun continues to rise and set above them and time continues to pass, Brett and Jake remain in the past, in thoughts of how their lives might have been different had they made other choices. In the end, after the showing-rather-than-telling of Hemingway's narrative, the protagonists now reflect on their own story. In *askesis*, Bloom says that each poem is an evasion of another poem AND of itself, meaning that every work "is a misinterpretation of what it might have been" (*Anxiety* 120). Here Hemingway's protagonists practice their own sort of poetic misinterpretation as they think of what they might have been had they chosen a different path. This is a manifestation of Hemingway's own agonistic struggle and antithetical evasion of his precursors in relation to *Sun* and his personal path to *apophrades*.

At the conclusion of *Indifferenti*, the protagonists Michele and Carla carry out a similar conversation during a taxi ride through Rome. Moravia's ending, like Hemingway's, is similarly ambiguous and without resolution. He physically positions his characters much like Hemingway's Brett and Jake, with Michele lying back in his seat while Carla sits close, occasionally jostled against her brother by the movement of the taxi. A similar tension, although in this case not the sexual one that existed between Jake and Brett, can be felt between the two. During the ride, brother and sister discuss Michele's "plot" to give Carla to Leo in return for his financial support of their family, a scheme which has left Michele guilty at having considered it, and he insists that Carla must not marry Leo under any circumstances. Carla, ashamed and repulsed that her brother would treat her as an object to be bartered and sold, dismisses her brother's words and assures him that she will indeed accept Leo's proposal of marriage. As the taxi propels the two forward, Carla speaks internally, saying, "Così finivano la giornata e la sua vecchia vita: con una domanda alla quale era impossibile rispondere; dove si va di giorno o di notte, con l'oscurità e la pioggia o in piena luce? Nessuno lo sa," (*Indifferenti* 338).¹³

Hemingway's novel also concludes with a question to which there is no answer, but Brett's question differs from Carla's in that it reflects upon the past and events already accomplished, rather than looking towards an unknown future. Bloom says that the largest irony of *apophrades* is that the later poet "confronting the imminence of death" attempts to subvert the precursor's immortality as if his own life can be prolonged by undermining the power of the other (*Anxiety* 151). Moravia accomplishes this subversion through his *misprision* and reinterpretation of Hemingway's ambiguous, unhappy ending. Like Jake and Brett, Michele and Carla are afraid, but it seems that Hemingway's characters are more afraid of what might have

¹³ "So the day was finishing and, with it, her old life—finishing with a question to which there was no answer. Where is one going, by day or by night, in darkness and rain or in full daylight? No one knows" (*Time* 293).

been, while Moravia turns the focus of his characters to a fear of what is to come, a crucial change which seems to weaken the precursor in the stasis of his protagonists; Hemingway, like his characters, will continue to live in the past, while Moravia, along with Michele and Carla, will continue on into the future.

During the cab ride, the narrator says of Carla that “[V]olle restringere la sua meta, rimpicciolire il suo mondo, vedere tutta la sua esistenza come una stanza angusta,” (*Indifferenti* 338).¹⁴ Bloom says, similarly, that the strong poet’s love of his poetry must “exclude the reality of all other poetry, except for what cannot be excluded, the initial identification with the poetry of the precursor,” (*Anxiety* 147). Just as Carla wishes to exclude all other possibilities and restrict her existence to narrow confines, Moravia, in order to achieve *apophrades*, must similarly exclude the reality of all other works, leaving in existence only himself and the original precursor, Hemingway. When precursors return in *apophrades* they will impoverish the work of the *ephebe* with their presence, unless “they return in our colors, and speaking in our voices, at least in part, at least in moments, moments that testify to our persistence, and not to their own” (*Anxiety* 141).

Hemingway’s return is clear in the conclusion of Moravia’s novel, but it seems now that Moravia has dressed his precursor’s work in his own colors and adapted Hemingway’s words to his own voice in order to express his unique message and testify to his own persistence. As Carla resists Michele out of her own sense of self-preservation, Moravia also resists Hemingway’s influence in order to bring the wheel full-circle (*Anxiety* 15-16). Through the revisionary ratios Moravia has accepted and absorbed the influence of Hemingway, internalizing it to such an extent that Hemingway’s instincts have begun to seem like his own. From the crucial quotation

¹⁴ “She was afraid; she wanted to restrict her aims, make her world smaller, see her whole existence as a narrow room” (*Time* 293).

in the first chapter of *Indifferenti*, when Carla's words make reference to *Sun* and the epigraph from Ecclesiastes that is the basis of that novel, Moravia has gone on to "misinterpret" and replace the epigraph with another, transforming the themes of futility and boredom, the tragedy, the ambiguity, and the moral relativism of Hemingway's work. Now in *apophrades*, as he stands in solitude and opens his work to the precursor text, Moravia manages to subvert and capture his precursor "even as he appears to accept him more fully," by no longer doubting, reflecting, looking back as Hemingway does, but instead looking *forward*, not in optimism, but in indifferent acceptance (*Anxiety* 145).

The "uncanny effect" of *apophrades* is that the achievement of the new poet reverses the natural direction of influence, making it seem as though the *ephebe* has somehow influenced the writing of the precursor text (*Anxiety* 15). Moravia parodies this uncanny effect through Michele's final thoughts on the future and the marriage of Carla and Leo. "'Ecco' mi dissi, 'tutto è avvenuto come avevo pensato, come non avrei dovuto pensare,'" (*Indifferenti* 341).¹⁵ The "magic of *apophrades*" according to Bloom, is that the *ephebe* wishes to fulfill the prophecies of the precursor by "re-creating those prophecies in his own unmistakable idiom" (*Anxiety* 152). In the conclusion to *Indifferenti*, Moravia does just that, and thus makes one final evasion of Hemingway as precursor. In *Anxiety*, Bloom quotes Antonin Artaud, who said, "Let the dead poets make way for others. Then we might even come to see that it is our veneration for what has already been created... that petrifies us," (*Anxiety* 154). Even as he resisted and denied the influence of Hemingway, in *Gli indifferenti* Moravia has venerated the great American author and his work *The Sun Also Rises*. Through his use and reinterpretation (conscious or unconscious) of the precursor text, Moravia is no longer petrified, but is able to triumph over his own anxiety of influence.

¹⁵ "Now, I said to myself, everything's turned out as I thought, as I ought *not* to have thought" (*Time* 295).

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Ernest Hemingway's contribution to modern literature is not a matter of dispute, and this work is not meant to further prove his importance or to insist on the evidence of his influence in the writing of this or that author. Rather, I hope that the authors and texts chosen for this study offer an interesting and instructive look into the way that influence, as considered from a Bloomian perspective, transforms and manifests itself through time as the poet lifecycle begins again with each new writer, yet also overlaps and intersects with the lifecycle of others. With Hemingway as a base, and moving chronologically from the earliest to the latest of the authors whose interaction with Hemingway is examined here, it is possible to see this overlap and intersection take place over a span of more than 80 years, from the publishing of Guy de Maupassant's "La Maison Tellier" in 1881 to Moravia's essays in *L'uomo come fine* in 1963.

Over the course of those 80 years literary movements evolved, industries developed, technology advanced, and world wars were fought, and these changes transformed the world. The reality in which Guy de Maupassant lived and wrote his short stories, which in turn would influence Hemingway, Quiroga, and Moravia, differed dramatically from the world in which the latter writers lived and wrote, and yet the impact of these early works was profound. Maupassant's *contes* made their way into the American high school curriculum, where they were read by Hemingway, and traveled as far as South America, where Horacio Quiroga was inspired by them. Quiroga, Hemingway, and Moravia, although their timelines overlap, likewise lived distinct realities, coming as they did from diverse backgrounds on 3 different continents. But

because they were living and *reading* at the beginning of the 20th century, they had greater access than ever before to world literature and literature in translation, and this unique position in history allowed them to share mutual influences in a way that might not have been possible even 50 years earlier.

In examining the relationship between each of these authors and Hemingway, it is interesting to note how certain similarities, both stylistic and temperamental, are common to them all. All four writers began their literary careers in journalism, a detail that cannot be entirely coincidental, as it encouraged their affinity for the abbreviated, condensed form of the short story, and helped develop the economy of style that is a hallmark of their work. Since *The Anxiety of Influence* is not only a study of *poetry* but also of *poets*, it is interesting to note that in their personal lives the writers shared many similarities. The fascination with death exhibited in their writing was present in their lives as well, as is seen by fact that each man, apart from Moravia, either died at his own hand or attempted to take his own life. A competitive nature was also shared between the four writers, which plays well into the Bloomian study of influence in their work, where the literary scene is considered a battle field and every *ephebe* views his precursor as an opponent and rival. Lastly, each man was as much a reader as a writer, a trait that is also relevant to the application of Bloom's theory of influence to their work, since the reading and *mis*-reading of *clinamen* are the necessary first step through the revisionary ratios.

Maupassant, Quiroga, Moravia, and Hemingway avidly read the work of other writers, both their precursors and contemporaries, conscientiously studying and honing their craft. They were active among their respective literary circles and interacted with other writers who acted as their mentors and editors through the writing process. For Maupassant it was Flaubert who served as advisor, for Quiroga, the poet Leopold Lugones would become a lifelong friend and

mentor. Hemingway had the help of Gertrude Stein and F. Scott Fitzgerald, among others, who helped him develop the style that would become synonymous with his writing, and Moravia was acquainted with many great Italian writers of his day, even marrying another celebrated Italian author and short story writer, Elsa Morante.

In letters, essays, and personal writings, each of the authors examined here spoke openly of the influence of others on their work. Hemingway was characteristically direct in acknowledging the influence of Maupassant, and even specifically addressed the correspondence between “La Maison Tellier” and “The Light of the World.” Although it was impossible for Quiroga and Hemingway to read or make specific reference to each other’s work, both men created similarly didactic essays which sought to establish guidelines and offer insight into the art of short story writing, and also catalogued a list of influences that shows the many common literary influences the two shared. In the case of Hemingway’s influence on Moravia, the latter was outspoken in his dislike for the former, expressing his thoughts on the subject in the obituary he wrote for Hemingway in 1961.

By recognizing the influences on their work, Hemingway, Quiroga, and Moravia consciously drew the reader’s attention to certain authors and texts, and by so doing encouraged comparison between them. This effort on the part of the writer to strategically direct the reading public’s attention to their influences is another aspect of influence-anxiety within their work, since Bloom says that in *clinamen*, the act of *misprision* and the corresponding corrective movement on the part of the *ephebe* that follows this misreading is simultaneously an intentional and an involuntary movement (*Anxiety* 45). Their awareness of the influence of their precursors required a response on their part, and their initial reaction to this influence-anxiety was to *intentionally* recognize certain influences and encourage certain comparisons between their

works and those of certain other writers. This, however, is less a revelation of true influence-anxiety than an attempt to refocus the reader's attention in the direction preferred by the author, thereby distracting them from other more telling instances where influence-anxieties are revealed, namely those embedded within the text.

Studying each work in detail, applying the revisionary ratios, and uncovering the unconscious or subconscious evidence buried within the text is telling in the instances of influence that it reveals. In the relationship between Maupassant and Hemingway it was *askesis* that best illustrated Hemingway's attempt to undermine the Maupassant presence in his text and create his own literary space, using his iceberg theory as the basis of his "sublimation." By curtailing the instinct to say more, Hemingway purged the text of all that he found unnecessary and superficial in the earlier Maupassant work and achieved the state of "self-sustaining solitude" (*Anxiety* 131-132) that is the goal of the *ephebe*.

In relation to Hemingway and Quiroga it is *kenosis* that links the writers in their agonistic rebellion against mutual influences. In their movement towards discontinuity from their precursors, both Quiroga and Hemingway utilized the discontinuity inherent in cinema by incorporating techniques inspired by this new technology into their writing. In this way, they were able to break away from their precursors, re-using the themes that their work had inspired while also *emptying* these same themes of the meaning previously attached to them. Lastly, between Moravia and Hemingway, the *tesserae* of the earlier Hemingway work, appearing repeatedly throughout Moravia's own text, offered the key to his struggle with influence-anxiety. The biblical title and epigraph to Hemingway's novel are found almost verbatim in Moravia's own, and in this way the latter retains the terms of the earlier novel while meaning them in a

different sense, offering “a token of recognition” of the precursor while at the same time antithetically completing his work (*Anxiety* 14).

Hidden in the body of the text is the best evidence of influence and the true manifestation of the writers’ influence-anxieties, “for poems arise out of the illusion of freedom, out of a sense of priority being possible. But the poem... is a made thing, and as such is an *achieved anxiety*” (*Anxiety* 96; italics mine). In an examination of literary influence, the text itself is the ultimate representation and manifestation of its author’s influence-anxieties, as it is the final achievement of such anxiety. In the study of influence-anxieties, only the *ephebe* who emerges victorious from the agonistic struggle with his precursors is himself recognized as a strong poet, and so each of the writers compared in this study are “strong poets” in the Bloomian sense, having established themselves in the world literary canon. Their works are now purposely held open to those of their precursors by critics and students of literature like myself, revealing the ways in which they borrowed, stole, and reinvented the material that inspired them. The presence of the precursor is not a flaw in the belated writer’s work, but rather is required by Bloom in order for influence to come to completion and anxiety to be achieved in *apophrades*.

This is the wheel that comes full circle and continues to spin and overlap in a sort of Venn diagram of poetic influence, with each successive writer influenced in turn by those who preceded him. The very evidence of this influence and presence of the precursor is, antithetically, the *ephebe*’s liberation from that same precursor. It reveals the strength of the *ephebe* relative to the parent-text and also lends a sense of priority to the *ephebe*’s work when it is now approached by a new writer and becomes influential in its own right. Maupassant, Quiroga, Moravia, and Hemingway each represent this continuation of the poetic lifecycle as their works both stand alone and overlap to reveal simultaneously their individual strength and their debts of influence

to the writers who came before them. Bloom says that “Criticism is the art of knowing the hidden roads that go from poem to poem” (*Anxiety* 96). By following Hemingway’s road through literary history a richness of influence and a depth of interconnectedness between languages and literary traditions is revealed that is both fascinating and instructive, and will remain relevant with each successive *ephebe* who is influenced by the writers who came before him.

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