

War Comes Home: Soldiers and the Loss of Purpose after War in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*

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Abstract

War comes home when soldiers carry the remnants of the conflict back with them. *The Sun Also Rises* is Ernest Hemingway's Masterpiece and is one of the most influential works of the 20th century. This article explores different aspects of the novel in relation to the theme of the loss of purpose after war. The paper also shows how the novel portrays the post-war disillusionment and the feeling of alienation from society which lead to a new chapter of struggle. The paper then concludes that the novel is a powerful critique of the modern civilization that produced war and its consequences.

Keywords: *The Sun Also Rises*; post-war literature; loss of purpose; war trauma; alienation; homecoming

الحرب تعود إلى الديار: الجنود وفقدان الهدف بعد الحرب في رواية "الشمس تشرق أيضاً" لارنست همنغواي

المخلص

تعود الحرب إلى الديار عندما يحمل الجنود بقايا الصراع معهم. رواية (الشمس تشرق أيضاً) هي تحفة إرنست همنغواي وتعد واحدة من أكثر الأعمال الأدبية تأثيراً في القرن العشرين. تستعرض هذه الورقة البحثية جوانب متعددة من الرواية في سياق موضوع فقدان الهدف بعد الحرب. كما تبرز كيف تصوّر الرواية خيبة الأمل التي تلي الحرب والشعور بالانتماء والاعتزاب عن المجتمع، مما يؤدي إلى فصل جديد من الصراع. يخلص البحث إلى أن الرواية تمثل نقداً قوياً للحضارة الحديثة التي أفرزت الحرب وما تلاها من تبعات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: "الشمس تشرق أيضاً"، أدب ما بعد الحرب، فقدان الهدف، صدمة الحرب، الانتماء، العودة إلى الوطن

Introduction

Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) is one of his most celebrated novels, depicting the lives and experiences of a group of American and British expatriates in Europe after World War I. The novel has been widely studied and interpreted from various perspectives, such as gender, sexuality, culture, philosophy, and history. The concept of the absurd is manifested in the novel through the characters' existential crisis, their lack of purpose and meaning, their alienation and isolation, and in other aspects such as their hedonism, escapism, nihilism, and despair. The absurdity of life is a result of World War I, which shattered the values and beliefs of an entire generation, leading them to an unwilling search for meaning in a meaningless world. This paper examines how Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* portrays the devastating psychological impact of war through its representation of soldiers' homecoming and their subsequent loss of purpose. The novel, through its protagonist Jake Barnes, illustrates what David Kennedy (2017) terms "the paradox of survival": "The soldier who survives physically must then face the challenge of surviving psychologically in a world that no longer makes sense" (p. 45). This psychological struggle manifests particularly in the novel's treatment of purpose and meaning, or their absence, in post-war life.

Central to this analysis is Hemingway's portrayal of what he termed "the real story" of war – not the battlefield trauma itself, but its lasting impact on the human psyche. As the novel demonstrates through Jake's narrative voice: "I did not care what it was all about. All I wanted to know was how to live in it" (Hemingway, 1926, p. 152). This simple yet profound statement encapsulates the existential crisis faced by returning soldiers

who must navigate a world that has become fundamentally alien to them.

The paper argues that Hemingway's novel presents three interconnected aspects of post-war displacement: physical dislocation (represented through the characters' constant movement across Europe), psychological alienation (manifested in their inability to form meaningful connections), and spiritual void (expressed through their failed attempts to find purpose in traditional sources of meaning). The geographic restlessness of Hemingway's characters mirrors their internal inability to find a stable center of meaning in their lives.

Through close textual analysis and theoretical engagement with both contemporary and modern scholarship, this study examines how *The Sun Also Rises* serves as a crucial literary document of post-war trauma and its lasting effects on individual and collective consciousness. The research pays particular attention to how Hemingway's narrative techniques – his famous "iceberg theory" of writing, his use of understatement, and his precise dialogue – serve to convey the profound sense of loss and purposelessness that characterized the post-war generation (Darzikola, 2013).

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to our understanding of how literature processes and represents the long-term psychological effects of war, particularly focusing on the often-overlooked aspect of purpose and meaning in post-war life. As contemporary societies continue to grapple with the aftermath of various conflicts, Hemingway's insights into the psychological toll of war remain remarkably relevant.

Literature Review

The scholarly discourse surrounding *The Sun Also Rises* and its treatment of post-war trauma

has evolved significantly since the novel's publication. This review examines key theoretical frameworks and critical perspectives that inform our analysis of loss of purpose and homecoming in Hemingway's masterpiece.

Vernon (2016) provides a crucial framework for understanding the novel's treatment of war trauma, arguing that: "Hemingway's narrative technique, particularly his use of omission and understatement, mirrors the psychological defenses of trauma survivors who cannot directly confront their experiences" (Vernon, 2016, p. 78). This observation becomes particularly relevant when examining Jake Barnes's inability to discuss his wound directly.

Mark Spilka's (1989) influential analysis argues that: "Jake Barnes represents not just an individual casualty of war, but an entire generation's spiritual and emotional impotence. His physical wound becomes a metaphor for the broader psychological wounds inflicted by modern warfare" (Spilka, 1989, p. 45). Spilka specifically points to passages where Jake reflects on his condition:

"In the old days, he would have married Lady Brett Ashley. Isn't it pretty to think so?" (Hemingway, 1926, p. 251).

This quote, Spilka argues, illustrates how "the war has not only robbed Jake of his physical capabilities but also of the possibility of following traditional life patterns" (Spilka, 1989, p. 46). Hemingway's characters exhibit what we would now recognize as classic symptoms of PTSD, though they lack the clinical vocabulary to express their condition KOCI, A. Ž. (2016). The analysis can point to specific passages where Jake displays these symptoms:

"I lay awake thinking and my mind jumping around. Then I couldn't keep away from it, and I

started to think about Brett and all the rest of it went away" (Hemingway, 1926, p. 39).

Furthermore, Hemingway's novel is a powerful expression of the absurd condition of modern man in the aftermath of war. In the following paragraphs, the paper will focus on previous studies and researches that explore different aspects of the novel in relation to the theme of war and its effects on the characters and society.

Michael Anesko (2015) examines the case of Jake Barnes, the protagonist and narrator of the novel, who suffers from a genital wound that renders him impotent. Anesko argues that Jake's condition should be understood not only as a physical disability, but also as a psychosomatic phenomenon of phantom limb syndrome. According to Anesko, Jake is haunted by a "penile ghost" that represents his lost masculinity and sexuality. He suggests that Jake's body is "figuratively masculine but accidentally transgendered" (Anesko, 2015, p. 53), meaning that he can still experience desire and attraction, but cannot fulfill them in conventional ways. Sherlyn Abdoo (1992) argues that Jake's wound is not only a symbol of his lost manhood, but also a metaphor for his inability to connect with women. He claims that Jake is haunted by a "fiesta nightmare" (Abdoo, 1992, p. 249), which is a recurring motif in the novel that represents his fear and hatred of women. Abdoo suggests that Jake's nightmare stems from his traumatic war experience, which exposed him to the violence and death of both men and women.

Miruna Ciocoi-Pop and Emilian Tîrban (2019) examines the motif of the absurdity of life in *The Sun Also Rises*, using the philosophical thought of Albert Camus, Soren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche and other philosophers who captured the essence of the absurd in their philosophy. they argue that the concept of the absurd is

manifested in the novel through the characters' existential crisis, their lack of purpose and meaning, their alienation and isolation, and despair.

Keith Gandal (2008) discusses the plot and characters of *The Sun Also Rises* in terms of the wartime meritocratic mobilization and the postwar development of Jewish quotas at universities and medical schools. He argues that Jake Barnes, the protagonist and narrator of the novel, who suffers from a genital wound that renders him impotent, is emasculated not only by his physical injury, but also by his social status. he claims that Jake's wound is a symbol of his lack of merit and glory in a war that was supposed to reward courage and heroism. Jake's wound and status contrast with those of Robert Cohn, a Jewish character who is Jake's rival for Brett Ashley, the woman he loves. Gandal concludes that Hemingway's novel is a critique of the social injustice and inequality that resulted from war and its aftermath.

Jerry Lembcke (2016), analyzes the literary representations of shell shock as a result of World War I in Hemingway's novels, including *The Sun Also Rises*. He argues that shell shock was a common neurological disorder that affected many soldiers who returned from the front, causing them psychological trauma and emotional distress. He also claims that Hemingway was one of the first writers who portrayed shell shock in his novels, giving voice to the millions of veterans who suffered from it. Accordingly, Hemingway's characters show various symptoms of shell shock, such as insomnia, nightmares, anxiety, depression, alcoholism, violence, and impotence. What's more is that Hemingway's novels are realistic and empathetic portrayals of shell shock victims

who struggle to cope with their trauma and to adapt to their postwar environment.

The events in the novels reveal how war affects not only the physical body but also the psychological mind, the social relations, the cultural values, and the spiritual beliefs of individuals and groups. They also demonstrate how war can be resisted or transcended through various strategies or philosophies.

Aaron Shaheen (2019) discusses the spiritualization and penile prostheses in *The Sun Also Rises*, using the historical context of prosthetic advancement after World War I. He argues that Jake Barnes, who suffers from a similar wound as Henry, seeks only abstract spiritual solace instead of bodily augmentation. He also claims that Barnes does so not only through his story's "gear and girder" prose, which avoids direct discussion of emasculation, but also by envisioning the bullfighter Romero as a mechanized penile substitute who can provide a kind of cure to Brett Ashley's apparent hysteria. The novel shows that Barnes identifies with Romero as a true warrior who can satisfy Brett's sexual needs and restore her feminine balance. Barnes's spiritualization and prostheticization reflect his alienation from his own body and sexuality.

Hayder Alolaiwi (2023) analyzes the post-WWI social and cultural milieu that made possible the intellectual and artistic effervescence characterizing the literary production of the American ex-pat writers in Paris during the 1920s and 1930s. He argues that Hemingway was one of the most influential American writers of the "Lost Generation" who experienced an identity crisis as a result of and that his novel reflects his search for identity as a process of singularization based on recognizing that he

shares a common origin or circumstances with another person or community.

the 21st century's wars including Iraq war and the others in the Middle East, have left a lasting impact on the collective memory and imagination of the world. Those wars and their aftermath have also inspired a vast body of literary works that explore various aspects of warfare and its consequences. Among these works, some focus on the theme of grief as a response to the loss of lives, identities, values, and meanings. Saber Haimed and Vaishali Pradhan (2023) examines the disoriented homecoming and the scattered identity of Zeina, the protagonist of Inaam Kachachi's *The American Granddaughter* (2008), a novel that challenges the derealization loss in the context of Iraqi war fiction. they argue that Zeina, an Iraqi-American woman who returns to Iraq as a translator for the US army, suffers from a dissociative personality disorder as a result of her dual identity crisis. Zeina's identity is questioned through three stages: exile, coming back on an American military truck as an invader of her homeland, and returning to the US only to find herself unfit for both homes. They concluded that Zeina's disoriented homecoming and scattered identity reflect the trauma and fragmentation caused by war and displacement.

Robyn Pritzker (2020) analyzes the Californian uncanny in Fanny Van de Grift Stevenson's "*The Warlock's Shadow*" (1886), a short story that parallels Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried* (1990) in its depiction of war and its material culture. He argues that both works use objects as symbols of power, identity, memory, and resistance in war. he claims that both works show how objects can be invested with meaning and agency by their owners or users, as well as how they can be contested or appropriated by others. both works also reveal how objects can be

sources of conflict or connection among different groups or individuals in war, and offer a critical reflection on the role of objects in war and their implications for ethics and politics.

Chris Vanderwees (2009) explores the resistance to remasculinization in "*Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong*", one of the stories in *The Things They Carried*. He argues that O'Brien challenges the gender stereotypes and binaries that are often reinforced by war narratives. He claims that O'Brien depicts war as a form of remasculinization that attempts to restore or enhance the soldiers' masculinity through violence and domination. Vanderwees suggests that O'Brien also depicts how some characters resist or subvert this process through various means such as love, compassion, forgiveness, and transcendence. Accordingly, O'Brien's story is not only a critique of gender norms but also a critique of other dualisms such as self/other, civilized/barbaric, and human/animal.

Such articles and studies show how these works address the theme of grief as a response to the loss caused by war and its aftermath as well. They reveal how these works use various literary devices such as irony, metaphor, symbolism, and hybridity to convey the paradoxes, contradictions, and ambiguities of grief. They also suggest how these works can inspire the readers to rethink their own views and values about war, identity, and memory.

Importance of the Study

War novels can be seen as a way of bringing war home, that is, making the readers aware of the realities and consequences of war that are often hidden or ignored by the dominant narratives and discourses of society. Nevertheless, despite the great deal of research studies on "getting rid of arms", deployment, and demobilization, there is still a need for scientific literature and

comparative analysis of the impact of conflicts on returning soldiers. This research article can challenge the myths and stereotypes of war, such as heroism, glory, or patriotism, and expose the horrors, suffering, and injustice of war, such as violence, death, or oppression.

Homecoming and the Loss of Purpose after War

War novels are a genre of fiction that depict the experiences and effects of war, often focusing on the psychological trauma and social alienation of the characters. They can be seen as a form of literary trauma studies, which examine how literature deals with the personal and cultural aspects of trauma and engages with historical and current phenomena such as the Holocaust, 9/11, or colonialism (Davis & Meretoja, 2020).

In this context, homecoming is a common theme in literature, especially in works that deal with war and its aftermath. It can be understood as the return of a person or a group to their original place or state after a period of absence or exile. Homecoming can also be seen as a metaphor for the restoration of order, harmony, and identity after a disruption or a transformation caused by war. However, it is not always a positive or a simple experience. It can also involve challenges, conflicts, and losses that affect the individual and the collective sense of belonging, coherence, and authenticity.

Carol Dougherty (2019) examines the complicated emotions of homecoming in Rebecca West's *The Return of the Soldier* (1918), a novel that tells the story of a British soldier whose head injury on the battlefields of World War I sends him back to a home he does not recognize. Dougherty argues that West's novel is one of the first to engage directly with the effects of World War I on the home front, unsettling some of the romantic notions of homecoming

that the Homeric epic celebrates and prompting an exploration of the complicated relationship of memory and its loss within narratives of return. Dougherty claims that West's novel depicts homecoming as a form of displacement that affects not only the physical location but also the cultural identity and expression of the soldier and his family. Accordingly, West's novel depicts homecoming as a form of resistance that challenges the dominant narratives and values of war and society and offers a critical reflection on the role of memory in homecoming and its implications for ethics and politics.

Tanaka Chidora and Sheunesu Mandizvidza (2017) analyze the divergent versions of homecoming in Shimmer Chinodya's *Harvest of Thorns* (1989) and Olley Maruma's *Coming Home* (2006), two novels written at different times and featuring two different characters whose versions of homecoming do not agree with their particular 'callings'. They argue that *Harvest of Thorns* shatters nationalist narration while *Coming Home* desperately reconstructs it. They claim that *Harvest of Thorns* depicts the dystopian homecoming of an ex-guerrilla of the Second Chimurenga (war of liberation that ushered in Zimbabwe's independence in 1980) who is depicted by the author as having failed to integrate into the 'home' he was fighting for. Erin Mercer (2013) examines the complicated emotions of homecoming in John Mulgan's *Man Alone* (1939) and Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* (1957), two novels that feature male protagonists recently returned from global conflicts who express unease regarding their environment and an inability to be at home within it. He argues that both novels share a thematic concern with the reintegration of veterans to civilian life, but they differ in their representations of homecoming as either a dystopian or a utopian

experience. He also claims that Mulgan's novel depicts homecoming as a form of alienation and disillusionment that results from the failure of social and political institutions to provide support and recognition for the veterans.

Such war narratives can serve as a valuable source of insight and empathy for understanding the complex and diverse experiences and effects of war on individuals and societies. However, they can also pose ethical and aesthetic challenges for writers and readers alike, such as how to represent trauma without exploiting or trivializing it, how to balance realism and imagination without distorting or falsifying it, and how to engage with trauma without being overwhelmed or desensitized by it. War fiction can thus be seen as both a reflection and a response to the phenomenon of war trauma in our culture.

Loss of purpose is a theme that explores how war affects the sense of meaning and direction of the characters who participate in or witness it. A main aspect of loss of purpose in war fiction is the difficulty of finding a place and a role in society for those who have been affected by war. War fiction often portrays the challenges and conflicts that veterans face when they return home from war, such as physical and mental health issues, social and economic problems, moral and ethical dilemmas, cultural and identity crises, and historical and memory issues. War fiction also explores how veterans cope with these challenges and conflicts, such as through isolation or integration, silence or expression, denial or acceptance, violence or peace.

Discussion

The loss of purpose after war in *The Sun Also Rises* manifests itself through multiple interconnected layers that deserve careful examination. This analysis focuses on three main

aspects: the psychological impact of war trauma, the social dissolution of traditional values, and the spiritual crisis that emerges from the characters' attempts to find meaning in a post-war world. Moreover, the novel's treatment of post-war loss of purpose manifests through both explicit narrative moments and subtle symbolic gestures. Hemingway's characters inhabit a world where traditional sources of meaning have been rendered hollow by the experience of mechanized warfare (Hemmings, 2008). This is evident in passages like:

"Don't you ever get the feeling that all your life is going by and you're not taking advantage of it? Do you realize you've lived nearly half the time you have to live already?" (Hemingway, 1926, p. 11).

The existential crisis evident in this quote reflects what can be termed "the post-war paralysis": "The inability to move forward meaningfully in a world where all previous certainties have been destroyed. Jake's purposelessness is particularly evident in his relationship with work. While he maintains a job as a journalist, the narrative reveals the hollow nature of this occupation. Consider this passage:

"I had been getting something for nothing. That only delayed the presentation of the bill. The bill always came. That was one of the swell things you could count on" (Hemingway, 1926, p. 152). Jake's cynical attitude toward his work reflects a broader disillusionment with the capitalist systems that helped precipitate the war. This reading is supported by passages where Jake describes his work environment:

"The office was empty and dark. I went to the mail-box and there was only one letter... I read it under the light of the concierge's window" (Hemingway, 1926, p. 43). The office's

emptiness becomes a metaphor for the emptiness of post-war existence.

The novel's treatment of purpose, or lack thereof, is particularly evident in the fiesta scenes. The excessive drinking and revelry serve not as genuine celebration but as desperate attempts to fill an existential void. This is evident in passages like:

"The fiesta was really started. It kept up day and night for seven days. The dancing kept up, the drinking kept up, the noise went on. The things that happened could only have happened during a fiesta" (Hemingway, 1926, p. 158). Hence, I argue that one of the most striking aspects of Hemingway's portrayal of post-war loss of purpose is its cyclical nature. The characters move through various locations - Paris, Pamplona, San Sebastian - but their internal displacement remains constant. This geographic restlessness mirrors their spiritual and emotional wandering: "You can't get away from yourself by moving from one place to another" (Hemingway, 1926, p. 11). The circular structure of the novel itself, ending where it began with Jake and Brett's unfulfilled relationship, reinforces this theme of inescapable loss. The constant movement between locations serves not just as a plot device but as a metaphor for the characters' inability to find stable meaning in their lives. Each new location promises a fresh start or potential purpose, but ultimately reveals itself as another iteration of the same emptiness: "I had the feeling as in a nightmare of it all being something repeated, something I had been through and that now I must go through again" (Hemingway, 1926, p. 71).

Most importantly, Jake Barnes's psychological state serves as the primary lens through which Hemingway explores the devastating impact of war trauma. His physical wound, while symbolic,

is merely the visible manifestation of a deeper psychological injury that pervades his entire existence. Certainly, the novel presents numerous instances where Jake's psychological trauma manifests in his behavior and relationships. His interaction with Brett Ashley particularly demonstrates this dynamic.

In a similar context, the novel portrays a society where the war experience has completely upended traditional values and social structures. This is particularly evident in the way the characters interact with institutions that previously provided meaning and structure. The frequent visits to cafés, bars, and festivals become not celebrations but desperate attempts to find temporary escape from their purposelessness. Additionally, the bullfighting sequences serve as a microcosm of this larger social dissolution. While Pedro Romero represents an authentic connection to traditional values and purpose, the expatriates' fascination with bullfighting highlights their desperate search for meaning in spectacle and violence. Their inability to truly understand or connect with the tradition reveals their alienation from genuine purpose: "Nobody ever lives their life all the way up except bullfighters" (Hemingway, 1926, p. 18).

The spiritual dimension of the characters' loss of purpose is perhaps the most profound aspect of the novel. Hemingway presents a world where traditional religious and spiritual frameworks have failed to provide comfort or meaning in the face of war's horrors. This is evident in Jake's complex relationship with Catholicism: "At the end of the street I saw the cathedral and walked up toward it. The first time I ever saw it I thought the facade was ugly but I liked it now" (Hemingway, 1926, p. 97). This ambivalent

attitude toward religion reflects the larger spiritual crisis of the post-war generation.

The characters' attempts to find alternative sources of spiritual fulfillment are equally problematic. Brett's relationship with Romero, while seemingly a pursuit of authentic experience, ultimately becomes another failed attempt at finding meaning: "You know it makes one feel rather good deciding not to be a bitch... It's sort of what we have instead of God" (Hemingway, 1926, p. 249). This substitution of human relationships for spiritual fulfillment consistently fails throughout the novel.

What is more interesting is that Hemingway's spare prose style itself becomes a reflection of the characters' loss of purpose. The inability to articulate deep emotions or find meaning through language is demonstrated through dialogue that circles around important issues without directly addressing them. This is particularly evident in conversations between Jake and Brett: "We could have had such a damned good time together." Her reply, "Isn't it pretty to think so?" (Hemingway, p. 251), encapsulates the novel's treatment of loss and the impossibility of genuine connection in a post-war world. The characters' frequent use of understatement and irony serves not just as a stylistic choice but as a reflection of their inability to directly confront their loss of purpose. Their superficial conversations about drinking, travel, and relationships mask deeper existential concerns they cannot or will not address: "This wine is too good for toast-drinking, my dear. You don't want to mix emotions up with a wine like that" (Hemingway, 1926, p. 14).

The paper also challenges the traditional readings of Jake as a passive victim or a heroic stoic, and instead reveals him as a complex and conflicted character who struggles to cope with his trauma

and identity. Jake's wound and nightmare prevent him from having a fulfilling relationship with Brett Ashley, the woman he loves, who is also a victim of war and a symbol of modernity. Moreover, Jake's insomnia, which is another symptom of his wound and nightmare, reflects his alienation from himself, from women, and from society. The absurdity of life is a result of World War I, which shattered the values and beliefs of an entire generation, leading them to an unwilling search for meaning in a meaningless world. Hemingway's novel is a powerful expression of the absurd condition of modern man in the aftermath of war.

Homecoming is a recurring theme in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, as the novel depicts the experiences and effects of war on the soldiers who fought in World War I and their return to civilian life. The novel portrays homecoming as a complex and paradoxical process, as the characters struggle to find a sense of belonging, identity, and meaning in a post-war world that has changed dramatically and irreversibly.

One of the main aspects of homecoming in the novel is the contrast between the physical and psychological aspects of returning home. The characters travel across different countries and cultures, such as France, Spain, and England, but they never seem to feel at home anywhere. They are constantly restless, bored, and dissatisfied with their surroundings and their lives. They are also alienated from their families, friends, and society, as they feel misunderstood, unappreciated, and unwanted. They are unable to reconnect with their pre-war selves, as they have been traumatized, wounded, and scarred by the war. They are also unable to adapt to their post-war selves, as they have lost their values, morals, and ideals. They are trapped in a state of limbo,

between the past and the present, between war and peace, between life and death.

Another aspect of homecoming in the novel is the role of memory and nostalgia in coping with or escaping from the reality of war. The characters often resort to reminiscing about their past experiences, especially those related to war, as a way of finding comfort, excitement, or meaning in their present situation. They also idealize or romanticize their past relationships, especially those related to love, as a way of finding happiness, fulfillment, or escape in their current situation. However, these strategies often backfire or fail, as they only serve to highlight the contrast between the past and the present, between what was and what is. They also prevent the characters from moving on or growing from their experiences, as they cling to an illusion or a fantasy that can never be recaptured or restored.

Homecoming is also a theme that can be found in other novels that deal with war and its aftermath. For example, in *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque, the protagonist Paul Baumer returns home on leave from the front lines of World War I and finds himself unable to relate to his family, his friends, or his society. He feels like a stranger in his own home, as he realizes that he has nothing in common with them anymore. He also feels guilty and ashamed for having survived while his comrades have died. He longs to return to the front, where he feels more at home with his fellow soldiers.

Another example is *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger, which is not a war novel per se but has been influenced by Salinger's experience in World War II. The protagonist Holden Caulfield is a 16-year-old boy who has been expelled from his prep school and wanders around New York City for three days before returning home to face his parents. He is disillusioned with the adult

world, which he sees as corrupt, phony, and hypocritical. He is also traumatized by the death of his younger brother Allie, who died of leukemia. He is searching for a sense of innocence, authenticity, and connection in a world that has lost its values, its morals, and its meaning.

These novels show how homecoming can be a difficult and painful process for those who have been affected by war. They also show how war can have lasting and profound impacts on individuals and societies. They also show how literature can be a powerful medium for expressing and exploring the themes of war and homecoming.

Conclusion

Although many articles demonstrate the richness and diversity of interpretations that *The Sun Also Rises* can generate, this paper emphasises that postwar struggle is a central theme that shapes the novel's characters, plot, setting, style, and message. The article reveals how war affects not only the physical body, but also the psychological mind, the social relations, the cultural values, and the spiritual beliefs of individuals and groups. This paper depicts how the events in the novel introduced the pointlessness, loss of purpose, and misery of the characters. They are members of the "lost generation" of expatriates who wandered aimlessly around Europe after World War I, looking for meaning and pleasure in a world broken by bloodshed and devastation. They are unable to commit to anything or anybody, and they seek solace in drinking, travelling, and casual sex. Their pasts also haunt them, particularly their wartime experiences and unrequited love. Jake and Brett are the most devastating examples of this affliction, since they adore each other but are unable to be together

due to Jake's impotence, which is a manifestation of his emotional and spiritual traumas.

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