

Tribhuvan University

Impact of Commercialism in Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English, T.U.

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Arts in English

By

Dhan Singh Budha

Symbol No.: 280672

TU Reg. No.: 6-2-820-33-2013

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

July 2024

## Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Impact of Commercialism in Earnest Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, by Dhan Singh Budha has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

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Dr. Mani Bhadra Gautam

Internal Examiner

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Asst. Prof. Dinesh Kumar Bhandari

External Examiner

---

Prof. Dr. Dhruba Bahadur Karki

Head

Central Department of English

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Acknowledgments

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis supervisor Dr. Mani Bhadra Gautam, Lecturer of English at the Central Department of English, for making this work possible. His intellectual guidance, critical comments, and genuine suggestions carried me through the entire stages of writing the paper.

I would also thanks to Prof. Dr. Dhruva Bahadur Karki, the Head of the Central Department of English, for official help and good guidance. I am grateful to him for his valuable suggestions and guidance. I would like to convey my special thanks to my teachers and friends who motivated and supported me in preparing this thesis.

Finally, I would whole heartedly thank my parents for support in all the difficulties. I experienced their guidance, continuous support, and understanding when undertaking research and writing my project. It is your prayer that sustained me this far.

July 2024

Dhan Singh Budha

## Impact of Commercialism in Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*

### Abstract

*This thesis studies the impact of commercialism in Ernest Hemingway's iconic work, The Sun Also Rises, by analyzing consumer-driven narratives that shape the characters' identities and experiences. In the models of representation and cultural studies, the research critically engages with Stuart Hall's concept of representation. It is close to Walter Benjamin's ideas on reproducible art, and Judith Butler's exploration of the materiality of the body. The methodology involves a detailed analysis of the text through the aforementioned lenses, showing how commercial forces shape characters, plot dynamics, and cultural themes in Hemingway's narrative. The complicated narratives of the text exhibit the nexus between commercialism and its literary representation, shedding light on characters behaviors shaped by broader socio-cultural milieu. This study holds significance in enriching our understanding of the complicate relationship between literature, commercial influences, and cultural dynamics, providing valuable insights into the ways in which narratives reflect and support prevailing materialistic ideologies.*

Keywords: Commercialism, Representational art, Culture, War, Impact, Pleasure, Literature, Lost Generation.

This thesis studies the profound impact of commercialism in Ernest Hemingway's seminal work, *The Sun Also Rises*. As literature often serves as a reflection of societal values and cultural shifts, this study endeavors to solve the complicate threads of consumerism woven into the fabric of Hemingway's narrative. With a focus on models of representation and drawing from theoretical frames of cultural studies, this research aims to understand the nuanced ways in which commercial forces shape characters, themes, and the overall ethos of the novel.

This thesis argues with the extensive problem of commercialism, seeking to elucidate how it exposes and influences the narrative landscape of *The Sun Also Rises*. The study delves into the complicate web of symbols and motifs employed by Hemingway to convey the commodification. The theoretical frameworks drawn from cultural studies, particularly the concepts of representation proposed by Stuart Hall, provide a lens for the study. It analyzes the novel's socio-cultural implications. Additionally, Walter Benjamin's ideas on reproducible art and Judith Butler's exploration of the materiality of the body enhances the theoretical application. The theory helps to comprehensive understanding of how impact of commercialism spreads throughout various dimensions of the text.

This thesis adopts a qualitative approach, involving close textual analysis and theoretical engagement, to unveil the complicate layers of meaning embedded in the novel. By interrogating the interplay between commercial forces and literary representation, the research aims to contribute to a broader understanding of how literature reflects and interacts with prevailing cultural ideologies. Ultimately, this exploration into 'Impact of Commercialism' seeks to shed light on the intellectual implications of consumer-driven narratives, offering valuable insights into the intersecting of literature, culture, and commerce.

*The Sun Also Rises* is a novel written by American author Ernest Hemingway. It was first published in 1926. The novel is frequently considered as a defining work of the Lost Generation, a term used to describe the disillusioned generation that came of age during World War I. The story is narrated by Jake Barnes, an American journalist living in Paris, and revolves around a group of migrants who travel from Paris to the Festival of San Fermin in Pamplona, Spain.

The plot is characterized by a sense of displeasure and the search for meaning

in a world deeply impacted by the consequences of war. The characters, including the protagonist Jake Barnes and his girlfriend Lady Brett Ashley, face the physical and emotional wounds left by the war. The novel explores themes of masculinity, love, identity, and the impact of war on the human psyche.

In the context impact of commercialism, the novel provides a rich ground for examining the influence for commercial forces on the characters and the narrative. The characters' seeking of pleasure and their desire to escape in a Post-War World can be analyzed through the lens of consumerism, shedding light on how commercialism shapes their relationships and experiences. The novel's exploration of the displeasure of the Lost Generation also arranges with the socio-cultural implications of commercialism, providing a compulsory backdrop for the analysis.

Wolfgang E. H. Rudat's article, "Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*: Masculinity, Feminism, and Gender-Role Reversal" explores the nuanced exploration of gender dynamics in Ernest Hemingway's iconic novel. Published in the journal *American Imago* in 1990, Rudat's analysis examines closely the representation of masculinity and femininity, as well as the instances of gender-role reversal in novel. The author employs a critical lens to analyze Hemingway's characters, particularly focusing on the protagonist Jake Barnes and his complex relationship with Lady Brett Ashley. Rudat argues that the novel challenges traditional gender norms, offering a unique perspective on masculinity and feminism during the post-World War I era. In his examination, Rudat argues that Jake's impotence and Lady Brett's willpower contributes to a reversal of traditional gender roles. He writes, "Hemingway's portrayal of Jake's emasculation and Brett's aggressive pursuit of sexual satisfaction not only challenges traditional gender roles but also serves as a commentary on the broader societal shifts in gender dynamics during the aftermath of the war" (48).

Through this critical lens, Rudat's article provides a thought-provoking analysis that adds depth to the understanding of gender representation in Hemingway's work, arranging with broader discussions on the novel's exploration of identity, love, and the impact of war on notions of masculinity and femininity.

Likewise, in Todd Onderdonk's article, "Bitched: Feminization, Identity, and the Hemingwayesque in *The Sun Also Rises*" published in *Twentieth Century Literature* in 2006, the creator offers a compulsory investigation of the theme of feminization and its impact on identity within Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*. Onderdonk examines closely the characters in the novel, especially Jake Barnes, and investigates how the impotence of the protagonist contributes to a deeper understanding of the Hemingwayesque style. The author argues that Jake's inability to consummate his relationship with Lady Brett Ashley who leads to a complex negotiation of gender roles and identity. Onderdonk argues that the term 'bitched,' frequently used in the novel, takes on a versatile significance, reflecting not only the frustration of sexual impotence but also a broader exploration of the challenges of identity in the post-war era. As Onderdonk asserts:

Hemingway challenges the traditional association of masculinity with physical and sexual prowess, using Jake's emasculation to question established norms of identity. The term 'bitched' encapsulates the broader theme of feminization, contributing to the Hemingwayesque style that transcends mere literary technique, becoming a lens through which to examine the intellectual complexities of gender, identity, and the aftermath of war. (83)

Onderdonk's analysis provides a thought-provoking contribution to the understanding of the novel, shedding light on the complicate ways in which Hemingway engages with gender dynamics and identity in the post-World War I context.

However, William Adair's article, "*The Sun Also Rises: A Memory of War*," featured in *Twentieth Century Literature* in 2001, gives an insightful investigation of the theme of war in Ernest Hemingway's classic novel. Adair argues that the impact of war, especially World War I, resonates as a powerful tendency throughout novel influencing the characters' perceptions, relationships, and overall experiences. The author analyzes the ways in which the characters, deeply affected by the war, face with its consequences, and he emphasizes the role of memory in shaping their responses to the post-war world. Adair's exploration goes beyond the literal events of the war, delving into the psychological and emotional landscapes of the characters, adding a layer of complexity to the narrative. Adair argues:

Hemingway's novel serves as a literary testament to the enduring memory of war, capturing not only the physical scars but also the psychological aftermath that lingers in the consciousness of the characters. The novel becomes a poignant exploration of how war shape's identity and permeates the collective memory, leaving an indelible mark on the post-war generation. (75)

Through Adair's analysis, readers gain a deeper understanding of the intellectual ways in which the memory of war becomes an integral aspect of the novel, influencing the characters' relationships and contributing to the broader thematic richness of Hemingway's work.

In William Cloonan's contribution to "Freres Enemies: The French in American Literature, Americans in French Literature," he focuses on *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway, analyzing the migrant experience as depicted in the novel. Published in 2018, Cloonan's analysis explores into the complexities of the migrate idyll, examining the portrayal of American and French characters in Hemingway's work. The author underscores the significance of the expatriate setting

in Paris and its surrounding locales, highlighting how the characters guide the interplay between cultural identities. Cloonan argues that the novel reflects a hint exploration of the expatriate condition, offering insights into the tensions, friendships, and conflicts that arise when different cultures converge. He asserts:

Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* serves as a literary lens through which the expatriate idyll is scrutinized, revealing the complicate dynamics between American and French characters. The novel captures the essence of cultural exchange and the challenges inherent in navigating a shared expatriate experience, shedding light on the complexities of identity and belonging in a foreign setting. (124)

Cloonan's analysis contributes to a broader understanding of the novel's socio-cultural implications, emphasizing the role of the expatriate backdrop in shaping the narrative and character interactions. Furthermore, Cloonan's work serves as a valuable contribution to the exploration of transatlantic literary relationships, providing a hint examination of how American authors describe the French experience and vice versa. Through this lens, readers gain insights into the cultural nuances and exchanges that improve the tapestry of *The Sun Also Rises*.

Furthermore, Ira Elliott's article, "Performance Art: Jake Barnes and Masculine Signification in *The Sun Also Rises*," published in *American Literature* in 1995, offers a special point of view on the character of Jake Barnes and his performance of manliness in Ernest Hemingway's novel. Elliott investigates the idea of performance art as it relates to Jake's identity, arguing that Jake's activities and behaviors can be seen as a consider and conscious performance of a certain type of manliness. The author argues that Jake's character engages in a complex interplay of signification, where his actions and interactions become a means of constructing and

communicating a particular form of masculinity within the post-World War I context. Elliott writes, “Jake Barnes engages in a form of performance art that challenges traditional notions of 'masculine' signification. His actions, expressions, and relationships can be viewed as deliberate performances, reflecting the complexities of constructing and communicating a sense of masculinity in the aftermath of war” (92). Elliott’s analysis sheds light on the layers of meaning embedded in Jake’s character, adding depth to the understanding of masculinity in the novel. The concept of performance art becomes a lens through which readers can analyze the deliberate choices made by Jake in expressing his identity. Moreover, Elliott’s exploration of the performative aspects of masculinity contributes to a broader understanding of gender dynamics in Hemingway’s work. By examining the deliberate nature of Jake’s actions, Elliott provides a nuanced perspective on how the characters in *The Sun Also Rises* face with and redefine traditional gender roles in the post-war era.

Collectively, Wolfgang E. H. Rudat’s article highlights how the characters’ relationships, particularly Jake Barnes and Lady Brett Ashley’s, can be analyzed through the lens of consumer-driven narratives. Todd Onderdonk’s work on feminization and identity adds depth to the research by illustrating how the characters’ struggles with gender roles connect with broader socio-cultural influences. William Adair’s examination of war’s memory in the novel provides a foundation for understanding the psychological landscape of the characters, as they face with the consequences of war. The memory of war becomes a crucial element in the exploration of identity. William Cloonan’s exploration of the expatriate idyll enriches by illustrating how cultural exchanges in a foreign setting contribute to the novel’s socio-cultural fabric. Ira Elliott’s analysis of Jake Barnes as a performer of masculinity complements by providing a lens through which to understand how

commercial forces may shape the characters' deliberate performances, influencing the construction and communication of gender identities.

Taking the point of departure from above-described critics and writers, this research focuses on the analysis of this novel through the lens of commercialism. This thesis explores the impact of commercialism by examining how the novel portrays the interplay between commercialism, the consequences of war, and the expatriate experience. The analysis focuses on the characters' interactions and identities, revealing how these elements reflect broader societal shifts. By investigating these themes, the research aims to provide a clearer understanding of how commercial influences shape literary representation in *The Sun Also Rises*.

In order to demonstrate the impact of materialism as reflected in *The Sun Also Rises*, utilizing Stuart Hall's concept of representation, Walter Benjamin's idea of reproducible art, and Judith Butler's notion of materiality of the body are used as the theoretical perspective. Within the context of culture and representation, the American ethos, twist around with the significance of the physical body and economic success, necessitates an exploration of these cultural critiques. The concept that the female protagonist's body symbolizes a commodifiable entity that the male protagonist can obtain through financial means appropriates with the notion of reproducible art as elaborated by Benjamin.

To begin with, Stuart Hall seminal work on representation provides a foundational framework for understanding how meaning is constructed and conveyed within cultural contexts. Representation is a dynamic process through which shared meanings are created, negotiated, and spread, shaping our understanding of the world around us. Hall emphasizes that representation is not a mere reflection of reality but it is an active process that involves the production of meaning through language and

symbolic systems. “Representation is the process by which members of a culture use language (broadly defined as any system which deploys signs, any signifying system) to produce meaning” (61). Hall’s framework allows for an examination of how commercial materialism is represented within the narrative of *The Sun Also Rises*. It provides a lens through which to analyze how the characters, plot dynamics, and cultural themes in the novel are influenced by and reflective of broader commercial forces. Hall’s concept of representation becomes instrumental in understanding how the novel communicates the impact of commercialism on the material and cultural dimensions of the story. The emphasis on language and symbolic systems arranges with the thesis’s exploration of how commercialism is symbolically portrayed and communicated in the literary work. Moreover, Hall’s ideas on representation open access for exploring the power dynamics involved in the construction of meaning. By scrutinizing how economic focus is represented, the research can delve into the ways in which certain ideologies, values, and narratives are privileged or disputed within the novel. This approach provides a comprehensive framework for unpacking the complicated relationship between literature, commercial influences, and cultural dynamics in *The Sun Also Rises*.

Similarly, Walter Benjamin’s concept of reproducible art, as said clearly in his paper “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” is a key theoretical lens for understanding the impact of mass production and technological advances on artistic forms. According to Benjamin, the traditional aura surrounding an artwork, linked to its uniqueness and authenticity, is diminished with the advent of mechanical reproduction. Reproducible art, in various forms like photography and film, detaches the work from its singular, ritualistic context, making it accessible to a wider audience. “The authenticity of a thing is the essence of all that is transmissible from

its beginning, ranging from its substantive duration to its testimony to the history which it he experienced” (221). Benjamin’s framework provides a lens through which to analyze how commercial materialism is represented in a reproducible manner within the narrative of *The Sun Also Rises*. The novel’s status as a mass-produced literary work invites an exploration of how its themes, characters, and cultural commentary are distributed to a broad audience. Benjamin’s ideas become instrumental in understanding how literature, as a form of reproducible art, reflects and potentially supports the commercial forces at play in society. Furthermore, Benjamin’s perspective prompts an investigation into the commodification of art and culture. In exploring how novel operates as a reproducible work, the research can delve into the ways in which the novel is commodified and consumed within a commercialized literary marketplace. Benjamin’s ideas open up ways for analyzing how mass production and reproducibility contribute to the novel’s engagement with commercial materialism, connecting the literary work to broader socio-cultural and economic contexts.

Judith Butler’s exploration of the materiality of the body, particularly in her influential work “Bodies That Matter,” challenges essentialist notions of gender and identity. According to Butler, bodies are not passive entities but are actively constituted through performative acts and discursive practices. The materiality of the body, in Butler’s framework, is not a fixed or pre-given essence but a constantly evolving and socially constructed phenomenon. “There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender... identity is performatively constituted by the very ‘expressions’ that are said to be its results” (48). Butler’s concept of the materiality of the body provides a critical lens through which to analyze how gender identities are represented and performed within the narrative of *The Sun Also Rises*. The characters’

bodies and their interactions can be scrutinized as performative acts influenced by broader cultural and commercial forces. Butler's ideas become instrumental in understanding how commercial materialism is not only reflected in the external world of commodities but also inscribed on and through the bodies of the characters in the novel. Moreover, Butler's perspective prompts an examination of how the materiality of the body intersects with commercial representations and societal expectations. By exploring how characters in the novel represent and perform gender in relation to commercial influences, the research can solve the ways in which commercial materialism shapes not only external cultural expressions but also the very materiality of the characters' bodies. This approach adds a layer of complexity to the analysis of the novel, linking the commercial forces depicted in the narrative to the embodied experiences and performances of the characters.

Ernest Hemingway's novel *The Sun Also Rises* is a masterpiece that captures the Post-World War I displeasure and the Lost Generation's struggle to find meaning and purpose in life. Stuart Hall's concept of representation provides a valuable framework to analyze how the novel portrays its characters, events, and themes. According to Hall, representation involves the process of meaning-making and the creation of a shared understanding within a cultural context. One noteworthy aspect of representation within *The Sun Also Rises* is the depiction of Jake Barnes, the hero, who faces with impotence, both physically and emotionally, due to war-related injuries "Under the wine I lost the disgusted feeling and was happy. It seemed they were all such nice people" (135). This covers the dual nature of Jake's experiences of the post-war era. The phrase 'such nice people' hints at the fake of happiness and friendship that hides the deeper struggles faced by the characters. This internal conflict within Jake's character becomes a significant element in the novel's

representation, emphasizing the contrast between surface appearances and underlying turmoil, reflecting the broader societal displeasure of the Lost Generation.

Hall's idea of representation emphasizes that meaning is not inherent but constructed through language and symbols. In this light, Jake's impotence becomes a symbol of the larger societal impotence and loss of direction felt by the post-war generation. The novel, through Jake's character, represents the struggles and confusion of the Lost Generation within the results of the war. Hall's asserts, "Representation is the process by which members of a culture use language (broadly defined as any system which deploys signs, any signifying system) to produce meaning" (61). In the context of novel, this means that the novel is not merely a reflection of reality but a construction of meaning that invites readers to engage with and interpret the characters and their experiences. Hemingway's representation of characters like Jake and his circle invites readers to think the broader societal implications of their struggles.

Mary R. Gordon explores the economic and social themes in Hemingway's work, suggesting that the characters' seeking of pleasure and escape reflects a broader cultural shift towards materialism. "Hemingway's characters, in their pursuit of pleasure and excess, mirror the rising commercialism of the post-war era" (559). In relation to this, the novel itself offers a representation of commercialism through the characters' hedonistic seeking in Paris and later in Spain. The lavish lifestyle, the focus on pleasure, and the constant search for excitement represent a society grappling with a sense of emptiness and the need for distraction. Narrator in the novel reflect, "It's funny, I said. It's very funny. And it's a lot of fun, too, to be in love. I don't mean fun that way. In a way it's an enjoyable feeling ... Oh, go to the Select. Cafe Select, I told the driver" (32). This scene exemplifies the broader theme of the

novel, where the characters' indulgence in material pleasures and relentless quest for new experiences reflect their underlying existential despair and the pervasive influence of commercialism in their lives. The novel's representation of these aspects arranges with Hall's notion that representation is a dynamic process that influences and is influenced by the cultural context.

*The Sun Also Rises* utilizes Stuart Hall's concept of representation to explore how the novel constructs meaning in the context of post-World War I displeasure. Through the analysis of characters like Jake Barnes and their experiences, as well as Mary R. Gordon's article, the research explores into the representation of commercialization in the novel. It demonstrates how the characters' seeking of pleasure and escape reflects broader cultural shifts and societal challenges, contributing to a hint understanding of the novel's portrayal of the Lost Generation's struggles.

The predominant distrust and aimlessness of the characters is articulated within the novel: "How did you go bankrupt?" Bill asked. "Two ways," Mike said. "Gradually and then suddenly" (127). This covers the deep erosion of stability and the abrupt collapse that mirrors the economic and moral bankruptcy of the post-war era. Hall's perspective on representation focuses the process of meaning-making, highlighting that meaning is constructed through language and symbols. In the context of the novel, this dialogue emphasizes the gradual decline of societal values and the sudden, harsh realization of the consequences. The characters' bankruptcy becomes symbolic of a larger societal solving, and the representation mirrors the extensive displeasure of the Lost Generation.

Representation involves acknowledging and embracing the inherent cultural relativism between different societies. It recognizes that not all concepts and

perspectives are universally equivalent, necessitating the use of translation when navigating the unique mindset or conceptual framework of each culture. This acceptance of diversity highlights the importance of understanding and bridging the gaps between various cultural perspectives to foster effective communication and mutual respect. Hall asserts, "Representation is the acceptance of a degree of cultural relativism between one culture and another, a certain lack of equivalence, and hence the need for translation as we move from the mind-set or conceptual universe of one culture or another" (42). The analysis extends to the symbolic nature of cultural relativism related to materialism in the novel. An article by cultural critic Susan Beegel, contributes to the exploration of commercialism in Hemingway's work. Beegel argues that "Hemingway's characters are not just individuals but representative of a larger societal trend toward commercialism and hedonism" (228). Examining the novel through this lens, Hemingway's depiction of characters like Brett Ashley, who satisfies in a hedonistic lifestyle, embodies the societal shift toward materialism. The characters' seeking of pleasure and elusion serves as a representation of the broader cultural values of the time. Narrator asserts, "Here. And after it shut, we went over to that other cafe. The old man there speaks German and English.' 'The Cafe Suizo.' 'That's it. He seems like a nice old fellow. I think it's a better cafe than this one.' 'It's not so good in the daytime,' I said. 'Too hot. By the way, I got the bus tickets'" (95). This exchange between characters highlights their continuous movement from one place to another in search of a better experience, yet finding only temporary satisfaction. The mention of the Cafe Suizo and the preference for it over another cafe suggests an ongoing search for an ideal place, which ultimately proven elusive. The characters' discussion about the quality of cafes, the weather, and the bus tickets serves as a metaphor for their transient lives,

where deeper connections and meaningful experiences are substituted with superficial choices and constant travel. This relentless pursuit of novelty and distraction points to a deeper existential void, emblematic of the Lost Generation's struggle to find purpose and meaning in a post-war world dominated by commercialism and materialism.

Stuart Hall's concept of representation is used to explore how the novel constructs meaning within the context of cultural relativism. Through a fresh analysis, the research explores into the novel's portrayal of bankruptcy as a metaphor for societal decay and explores how Beegel's article, enrich the understanding of cultural and commercial understanding in Hemingway's work. The analysis underscores how the novel's representation of characters and events becomes a lens through which to scrutinize the broader cultural shifts and challenges faced by the Lost Generation.

The underlying sense of emptiness in *The Sun Also Rises* is further highlighted by Bill Gorton's critique: "You're an expatriate. You've lost touch with the soil. You get precious. Fake European standards have ruined you. You drink yourself to death. You become obsessed by sex. You spend all your time talking, not working" (109). This reflects the migrant experience and the characters' detachment from their roots. According to Stuart Hall's concept of representation, meaning is constructed through language and symbols, and Bill's words symbolize a critique of the Lost Generation's disillusioned existence, emphasizing the consequences of disconnection and the pursuit of superficial pleasures. The novel's symbolic representation of capitalism shows how meaning is produced and exchanged within the framework of cultural materialism. Michael Reynolds further explores Hemingway's depiction of materialism, arguing that "the novel's characters engage in a hedonistic seeking of pleasure as a coping mechanism for the emptiness they feel in the post-war world"

(213). This illustrates how commercialism and materialistic pursuits serve as temporary distractions from deeper existential voids. This aligns with Hall's assertion that representation is an active process that shapes and reflects cultural meaning, described before.

All this explanation explores the characters' detachment and critiques their seeking of pleasure as symbolic of a broader societal shift towards materialism. Reynolds contribute to a hint understanding of market-driven economy after world war in Hemingway's work, reinforcing the idea that the novel's representation of characters and events mirrors the cultural challenges faced by the Lost Generation.

A dialogue between the protagonist, Jake Barnes, and Lady Brett Ashley unfolds: "I don't want to go through all that. Last night was all right. Last night was fine. It's all been very fine, but I don't want to go through it all again" (31). Jake's sentiment covers the temporary nature of pleasure and excess pursued by the characters. Hall's perspective on representation underscores that meaning is constructed through language and symbols. In this instance, Jake's hesitation to relive the experiences of the previous night symbolizes the transient satisfaction derived from satisfaction and mirrors the broader societal critique of the era's materialistic seeking. Susan Beegel argues that "Hemingway's characters embody the cultural shift towards materialism and hedonism as a response to the post-war disillusionment" (231). Brett Ashley's constant pursuit of pleasure and escapism serves as a microcosm of the cultural values prevalent in the post-war society depicted in the novel. This is encapsulated in the novel as, "he knew that the sincerity of his own bull-fighting would be so set off by the false aesthetics of the bull-fighters of the decadent period that he would only have to be in the ring ... Things were not the same and now life only came in flashes" (194). Here, the decline of genuine

experiences in favor of superficial thrills mirrors the characters' own lives, where true emotional fulfillment is overshadowed by fleeting moments of sensory indulgence. Brett's hedonistic behavior and the characters' collective search for temporary highs illustrate how Hemingway uses their stories to critique the materialistic and escapist tendencies of the time, reflecting a broader societal shift towards valuing immediate gratification over deeper, more meaningful experiences. This aligns with Hall's notion that representation is a dynamic process that shapes and reflects cultural meaning. It explores Jake's reluctance as a symbol of the transient nature of indulgence, reflecting the broader societal critique of materialistic seeking, reinforcing the idea that the novel's representation of characters and events mirrors the cultural challenges faced by the Lost Generation.

Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* presents a rich canvas for textual analysis through the lens of Walter Benjamin's concept of reproducible art, as outlined in his essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." The novel mirrors the cultural shifts and the advent of commercial materialism. A contemplative exchange between the hero Jake Barnes and his companion Bill Gorton unfolds: "It is awfully easy to be hard-boiled about everything within the daytime, but at night it is another thing" (38). This encapsulates the characters' struggle to maintain a layer of toughness in the face of the displeasure that extends their lives. It underscores the internal conflicts faced by the characters in the novel, revealing the fragile emotional landscape beneath their daytime toughness. It also contributes to the novel's exploration of the Lost Generation's response to a changing world, and within the thesis framework, and also provides insight into the characters' reactions to commercial materialism and societal disorientation.

Benjamin's theory of reproducible art, rooted in the rise of mass media and

technology, argues that the aura of an artwork diminishes with its reproducibility. The nighttime setting serves as a metaphor for the intangible loss of authenticity in a society increasingly dominated by commercial seeking, mirroring Benjamin's concerns about the impact of mechanical reproduction on the authenticity of art. "The authenticity of a thing is the essence of all that is transmissible from its beginning, ranging from its substantive duration to its testimony to the history which it has experienced" (221). The analysis extends to the novel's exploration of materialism. Beegel argues that the characters in Hemingway's work embody the broader cultural trend of pursuing immediate satisfaction and pleasure.

The characters in novel become symbolic of the reproducible nature of desires in a commercialized world. The seeking of pleasure and the transient relationships reflect the commodification of experiences and relationships. This arranges with Benjamin's argument that mass media and technology devalue the authenticity of art, and in this case, the characters' seeking is reproduced and commodified, contributing to the erosion of genuine human connections. Benjamin's concept of reproducible art is very crucial to analyze how the novel captures the diminishing authenticity of experiences in the age of commercial materialism. The characters' struggle to maintain authenticity in a society marked by mechanical reproduction is explored. It also enhances the understanding of commercial materialism in Hemingway's work, reinforcing the notion that the novel's representation of characters and events mirrors the cultural challenges faced by the Lost Generation.

A revelatory conversation between Jake Barnes and Lady Brett Ashley unfolds this: "Oh, Jake," Brett said, 'we could have had such a damned good time together.' 'Yes. Isn't it pretty to think so?' (222). This captures a sense of unfulfilled potential and a longing for an idealized past. Lady Brett expresses regret over the

unfulfilled possibilities of their relationship, stating, ‘Oh, Jake, we could have had such a damned good time together.’ Her words are laden with a nostalgic longing for a different outcome, a sentiment that echoes the broader themes of lost opportunities and shattered aspirations extensive throughout the novel. The phrase ‘Isn't it pretty to think so?’ reflects a poignant resignation to the impracticality and impossibility of what Brett envisions. The use of ‘pretty’ suggests that the idea of them having had a great time together is an aesthetically pleasing but ultimately unrealistic notion. It also exemplifies the characters’ struggle with the commercialization of experiences and relationships. The yearning for an idyllic past becomes a commentary on the unattainability of authentic connections in a world increasingly driven by material seeking. The characters’ dialogue serves as a universe of the novel’s surrounding critique of an era marked by the commodification of desires and the erosion of genuine human connections.

In the context of Benjamin’s concept, it reflects the characters’ yearning for authenticity in an age marked by mechanical reproduction. The repeated emphasis on what ‘could have been’ underscores the novel’s exploration of the unattainability of genuine experiences in a commercially driven world. “The uniqueness of a work of art is inseparable from its being embedded in the fabric of tradition” (223). It extends to the novel’s thematic exploration of materialism. In this connection, T.J. Clark’s insights, contribute to the discourse, discusses how the reproducibility of art alters its traditional role and diminishes its aura, a notion applicable to the novel’s portrayal of fleeting pleasures and the commodification of experiences. The characters’ seeking of pleasure becomes emblematic of reproducibility, reflecting the broader societal shift towards materialism. The commercialization of relationships and the transient nature of experiences underscore the novel’s critique of an era dominated by mechanization

and commercial values. In this context, the characters' yearning for an idealized past becomes a poignant commentary on the loss of authenticity in the face of mechanical reproduction.

The characters' seeking of pleasure as a commodity, mirroring Benjamin's concern about the loss of aura and authenticity in the age of mechanical reproduction is clearly seen in the novel. "People went to Spain because they wanted to have a good time. Why not?... They thought they would have a good time there even if they were a rotten crowd. Well, that's what they think. And besides, it's like being in a war. Everybody you see has a medal on" (182). The reference to Spain and the comparison to a war evokes the novel's broader themes of displeasure and the commodification of experiences, suggesting that even seeking of leisure are approached with a mindset shaped by war-related disorientation. It also covers the characters' hedonistic approach to life, their acknowledgment of their own flaws, and the commodification of experiences in the post-war landscape. The comparison to war highlights the characters' perception of pleasure as a form of conquest, reflecting broader societal shifts and challenges faced by the Lost Generation.

The characters' seeking of pleasure becomes similar to the reproducibility of images, suggesting a loss of individuality and authenticity. The commodification of experiences, evident in the characters' desire for a good time, aligns with Benjamin's concerns about the devaluation of art in a culture dominated by mass media and commercial values. "Today the cult value would seem to demand that the work of art remain hidden" (225). The texture of tradition provides context, influences, and cultural depth that contribute to the distinctive character of an artwork. This concept is reflected in the novel, where the characters grapple with the erosion of traditional values in a modern world. "You make me very happy, my dear.

But it isn't true. Don't be an ass. You see, Mr. Barnes, it is because I have lived very much that now . . . You must get to know the values," (61) encapsulates a critical reflection on the nature of experience and value. The count's assertion that living fully allows for the deeper enjoyment of life underscores the importance of rich, lived experiences in understanding and appreciating values. However, the advent of mechanical reproduction, as discussed by Walter Benjamin, challenges this uniqueness by detaching the work from its traditional context, leading to a reevaluation of the nature and value of art in the modern age. Just as the characters in Hemingway's novel navigate a world where traditional values are questioned and redefined, the view highlights the tension between authentic experiences and the superficiality of modern life, mirroring the broader cultural shifts of the time.

Cultural critic Andreas Huyssen's insights, "the characters' pursuit of pleasure can be seen as a manifestation of the culture industry" (90), Huyssen describes the commodification of culture in capitalist societies. Linking the characters' seeking of pleasure to the concept of the culture industry underscores how their hedonistic endeavors reflect and are shaped by the commodification and standardization of experiences in a society marked by commercial materialism. The characters, in seeking pleasure, become participants in a cultural landscape where immediate gratification and standardized forms of enjoyment are extensive. The characters, like consumers of mass-produced cultural products, seek pleasure in a commodified and standardized manner. The novel becomes a commentary on the extensive impact of materialism on human interactions and aspirations. Jake Barnes reflects on the essence of the Lost Generation, encapsulates the extensive displeasure. "The world breaks everyone, and afterward, some are strong at the broken places" (201). This reflection on strength emerging from adversity captures the characters' resilience in

the face of a shattered world, yet it also reflects a sense of brokenness inherent to the post-World War I generation. Jake's reflection on the world breaking everyone and some finding strength at the broken places encapsulates the novel's exploration of resilience in the face of adversity. It becomes a bitter commentary on the human condition and, in the context of the research, an insightful lens through which to examine the characters' responses to a world influenced by trade. In this connection, Benjamin argues, "mechanical reproduction of art changes the reaction of the masses toward art" (234). It extends to the novel's thematic exploration of materialism and its tremendous impact upon the characters. In the broader context of contemporary culture, this transformation has implications for how people engage with images, symbols, and cultural artifacts. The reproduction of images through various media has led to a fullness of visual culture, influencing how individuals perceive and interpret art.

The characters' experiences in the novel reflect the changing reactions toward art in an era marked by business orientation and mechanical reproduction. The characters' seeking of pleasure and their transient relationships may mirror a society where experiences, like reproduced images, lose some of their original authenticity and meaning. "The characters' brokenness can be seen as a result of living in a hyperreal, simulated environment" (154). Jean Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality suggests that the boundaries between reality and simulation blur in a society dominated by commodification, leading to a sense of disorientation and fractured identities. The experiences become akin to the reproducibility of images, where the authenticity of emotions and relationships is compromised. The seeking of pleasure, as seen in the characters' hedonistic endeavors, reflects a commodified approach to fulfillment, mirroring Benjamin's concerns about the loss of aura and authenticity in a

culture driven by mass production. This all reinforcing the novel's representation of a culture caught in the disorienting web of commercial materialism.

Judith Butler's concept of 'the materiality of the body,' as articulated in her essay 'Bodies That Matter,' provides a lens through which to examine the physical and symbolic dimensions of the characters' experiences in broader sense. The embodied struggles of Jake Barnes, the hero, and his complex relationship with Brett Ashley pass on the message that Butler need to justify in her paper: "I can't stand it to think my life is going so fast and I'm not really living it" (17). It encapsulates Jake's mental sense of detachment between the temporality of his life and the lived experience of it. Within the framework of Butler's theory, the materiality of Jake's body, marked by war-inflicted impotence, becomes a central aspect influencing his understanding and experience of time. The physical limitations of Jake's body shape his perception of life passing by, highlighting the inseparable connection between the materiality of the body and the subjective experience of time.

The novel's exploration of how bodies, specifically Jake's, carrying cultural and historical significance can be seen in 'Bodies That Matter' which argues that "bodies are not only attributed with cultural and historical meanings, but acquire these meanings through the very gestures that constitute their materiality" (49). Jake's war-wounded body becomes a locus of cultural meanings, impacting not only his personal experiences but also shaping the dynamics of his relationships, particularly with Brett. Butler's notion of performativity emphasizes the active role bodies play in acquiring cultural and historical meanings through their gestures and actions. Applying this concept to characters like Jake Barnes in *The Sun Also Rises* deepens the understanding of how bodies actively participate in the construction and negotiation of cultural identities, contributing to a hint analysis of the characters'

experiences within the context of consumerism.

Drawing on cultural theorist Elizabeth Grosz's insights, "the materiality of Jake's body can be seen as a site where cultural norms, expectations, and desires converge" (301). Grosz's exploration of material inscriptions emphasizes how bodies become inscribed with cultural meanings, and Jake's body, in its impotent state, embodies a cultural narrative of loss and dislocation emblematic of the post-war era. Examining the novel through this lens, the characters' bodies become sites of struggle, resistance, and negotiation within a society marked by mercantilism. The seeking of pleasure, especially for Jake and Brett, reflects attempts to assert agency and meaning in the face of bodily and societal constraints. The characters' bodies and cultural meanings, contributing to a deeper understanding of their struggles in a world marked by profit motive. Grosz's perspectives, enrich the analysis, emphasizing the embodied nature of cultural inscriptions and the characters' negotiations within a changing societal landscape.

Jake's attempt to escape the discomfort associated with his war-inflicted impotence and the broader displeasure of the post-war generation through the numbing effects of alcohol can be clearly seen in the novel. "Under the wine I lost the disgusted feeling and was happy. It seemed they were all such nice people" (135). This highlights the physical and emotional toll of war on the protagonist Jake Barnes. The protagonist Jake Barnes seeks solace and escape from the burden of his war-inflicted impotence and the prevailing displeasure of the post-World War I era. The act of losing himself 'under the wine' reflects a deliberate attempt at self-medication, using alcohol as a means to numb the disgusted feelings associated with his physical and emotional wounds. The shift from discomfort to happiness underscores the temporary relief alcohol provides, allowing Jake to perceive those around him as

‘nice people’. This moment encapsulates the characters’ collective seeking of pleasure and escapism, portraying a society grappling with the consequences of war through the lens of temporary joy and camaraderie facilitated by substances.

Hemingway’s narrative thus explores into the complexities of coping mechanisms and the transient nature of happiness in a world marked by loss and disorientation.

The novel’s exploration of how bodies actively engage with and respond to the commercial materialism prevalent in the post-war society can be seen in Butler’s ‘Bodies That Matter,’ which argues that “bodies are not passive recipients of cultural meanings but active agents in the production of those meanings” (16). This analysis extends to Jake’s body, marked by impotence, becomes a locus where cultural expectations, desires, and attempts at happiness converge. The performative acts surrounding his engagement with pleasure, drinking, socializing, and seeking temporary escape actively contribute to the ongoing process of embodying cultural and historical meanings.

Drawing on cultural critic Pierre Bourdieu’s insights, “Jake’s bodily practices reflect not only individual agency but also the influence of social structures and cultural capital” (95). Jake Barnes’s bodily practices in *The Sun Also Rises* serve as a hint reflection of both individual agency and the extensive influence of social structures and cultural capital. Hemingway crafts Jake’s character against the backdrop of post-World War I societal norms and expectations. While Jake’s impotence is a deeply personal challenge, his responses to it, his seeking of pleasure, his coping mechanisms mirror broader societal trends. The hedonistic seeking of the Lost Generation, of which Jake is emblematic, are not merely individual expressions but are complicatedly woven into the fabric of cultural expectations and responses to the disorienting consequences of war. Jake’s attempts to navigate pleasure and

relationships embody a negotiation between personal agency and the broader cultural landscape, illustrating how individual bodies become arenas where social structures and cultural capital manifest in tangible ways. Bourdieu's concept of habitus, encompassing the ingrained dispositions and behaviors shaped by one's social context, enriches the understanding of Jake's performative acts as both personal expressions and responses to broader societal expectations. This all enhances the analysis by highlighting the interplay between individual agency and societal structures in the characters' seeking of pleasure amidst commercialization.

Hemingway complicatedly weaves the complexities of representation, especially that of the protagonist Jake Barnes, into the narrative fabric. These lays bare the complication of Jake's internal struggles: "I did not care what it was all around. All I wanted to know was how to live in it. Possibly if you found out how to live in it you learned from that what it was all about" (137). Jake's lack of engagement in solving the complexities of life's meaning echoes the post-World War I displeasure prevalent in the novel. Instead, Jake's focus on the practicality of living implies a search for personal agency and a means to navigate a world filled with uncertainty and disorientation. This introspective stance arranges with a broader theme in the novel, illustrating the characters' desperate attempts to find purpose amidst the societal upheavals of the time. Hemingway captures not only the characters' existential search but also the including sentiment of a generation grappling with the consequences of war, encapsulated in Jake's pragmatic desire to simply understand how to live in a world whose deeper meaning remains mysterious.

Considering a different facet of Butler's essay, her exploration of gender performativity contributes to the analysis. She emphasizes how "gender is the repeated stylization of the body" (5). This aids in understanding Jake's negotiation of

masculinity, particularly in the absence of traditional markers of virility due to his impotence. Jake's bodily practices, from his interactions with others to his seeking of pleasure, become performative acts through which he faces with societal expectations surrounding gender roles. It encapsulates a fundamental concept in her theory of performativity. This statement underscores the idea that gender identity is not an inherent trait but rather a set of behaviors and expressions that individuals enact repeatedly, shaping their identity and conforming to societal norms. Jake's war-inflicted impotence challenges traditional notions of masculinity, and his repeated actions and interactions become a performative expression of gender. By examining the characters' behaviors as stylized enactments of gender norms, Butler's theory enriches our understanding of how gender identity is constructed and contested within the narrative, particularly in a post-war society marked by shifting norms and expectations.

Richard Hoggart insights on literature and society enrich the analysis, as a reflection and critique of societal structures arranges with the exploration of Jake's embodied experiences within the broader theme of commercial materialism. "Texts can both reflect and critique the prevailing ideologies and conditions of their time" (283). Jake's struggle to find meaning in a rapidly changing world becomes a microcosm of the societal disorientation characteristic of the post-war era. Jake Barnes' struggle in a rapidly changing world within Hemingway's novel becomes a microcosm, emblematic of the broader societal disorientation characteristic of the post-war era. Hoggart's broader assertion that literature serves as a mirror and a critique of societal structures arranges seamlessly with the exploration of Jake's embodied experiences, providing a theoretical framework to understand the novel's engagement with the theme of commercial materialism.

The existential difficulty faced by the protagonist; Jake Barnes serves as a gateway to analyzing Jake's embodied experiences within the theoretical framework of Butler. "You can't get away from yourself by moving from one place to another" (18). Its insight not only underscores the inescapability of one's internal struggles but also speaks to the broader theme of post-war displeasure. Jake's physical displacement, reflective of the Lost Generation's aimless wanderings, serves as a metaphor for the uselessness of seeking peace in external changes. It captures the essence of a generation grappling with the consequences of war, emphasizing the enduring impact of internal conflicts and the inherent inability to escape the self, no matter how far one roams geographically. Hemingway employs Jake's experiences to articulate an intellectual commentary on the futile seeking of meaning in a world marked by uncertainty and disorientation. It speaks to the inescapability of one's own identity, emphasizing the corporeal nature of selfhood. Butler argues that "matter is not mere passive facticity but rather that which forms and unforms, enables and constrains, produces and dissolves" (49). This extends to Jake's body as a dynamic site of agency and constraint, actively involved in the construction and contestation of societal norms.

Integrating again, the insights of cultural critic Stuart Hall enriches the analysis of Jake Barnes' character in Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* and overall theories that explained, particularly in the context of broader societal disorientations among capitalism. Hall's concept of representation as a dynamic process of meaning-making within a cultural context becomes instrumental in understanding Jake's embodied experiences. In the novel, Jake's physical and emotional struggles, arising from war-related impotence, serve as a representation of the post-war generation's collective disorientation. Hall's framework allows for a hint

exploration of how Jake's body operates as a symbol, embodying societal anxieties and encountering with the challenges posed by the emerging commercial materialism of the time. By considering Jake's experiences within the broader cultural environment, Hall's perspective provides a valuable lens through which to understand the complicate interplay between individual embodiment and societal shifts in the consequences of World War I. Therefore, all are interrelated to each other to justify the research as Judith Butler's concept to solve the complicate relationships between bodies, societal expectations, and commercialism. It highlights Jake's struggle with selfhood, and the analysis extends to how his embodied experiences contribute to and challenge cultural norms. Incorporating Stuart Hall's insights deepens the exploration of representation and cultural meaning within the broader theme of capitalism in the novel.

Overall, the theoretical framework is grounded in three key perspectives: Stuart Hall's representation, Walter Benjamin's concept of reproducible art, and Judith Butler's exploration of the materiality of the body. These theories serve as critical lenses through which the thesis interprets the characters' interactions with commodities, images, and their own bodies. Stuart Hall's representation theory is applied to scrutinize how material possessions become symbolic representations of identity and status for the characters. Walter Benjamin's notion of reproducible art is utilized to analyze the commodification of experiences and the impact of mass culture on individual subjectivities. Judith Butler's perspective on the materiality of the body is employed to explore how the characters negotiate their sense of self in a consumer-driven society, scrutinizing the ways in which their bodies become commodified entities. The textual analysis is not merely descriptive but seeks to solve the deeper layers of meaning embedded in the narrative, uncovering the complicate ways in

which commercial materialism exposes and shapes the characters' identities and relationships. The connection between textual analysis and uncovering the deeper layers of meaning in the narrative lines in exploring how commercial materialism influence and molds character's identities and relationships within the story. Textual analysis delves beyond surface descriptions to reveal how commercialism impacts characters' motivations, behaviors, and interactions.

Therefore, the research synthesizes the insights collected from the theoretical frameworks and textual analysis, offering a hint understanding of impact of commercialism in the novel. The research not only contributes to the scholarship on Hemingway but also engages with broader discussions on the intersections of literature, consumer culture, and commerce. By incorporating diverse theoretical perspectives, the research enriches our comprehension of the complexities inherent in Hemingway's exploration of commercialization and its intellectual implications on the existential themes within the novel.

In conclusion, the research achieves a powerful synthesis of its components, navigating the complicate interplay between commercialism and literary representation with finesse. From the clear abstract that succinctly encapsulates the core focus on consumerism within *The Sun Also Rises* to the illuminating introduction that contextualizes the post-World War I era, the research sets the stage for a hint exploration. The integration of theoretical frameworks, including Stuart Hall's representation, Walter Benjamin's reproducible art, and Judith Butler's materiality of the body, serves as a conceptual compass, guiding the analysis through layers of meaning embedded in the text. Through detailed textual analysis, this thesis unveils the subtle ways in which commercialism influences the characters, shaping their identities and relationships.

Ultimately, serves as a fitting conclusion, emphasizing the broader implications of the study on both the literary work and societal contexts. It underscores the significance of this research in enriching our understanding of the complicate relationship between literature, commercial influences, and cultural dynamics. Shedding light on how narratives reflect and support prevailing materialistic ideologies, this study also paves the way for further scholarly exploration into the ways commercialism shapes not only literary works but also our understanding of cultural shift and social dynamics.

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