

This Report committee for Brian Scott Mothersole
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Documentaries, Salves, and Slaves
Different Receptions of Physicality in Erich Maria Remarque's *Im Westen nichts Neues* and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*

APPROVED BY

SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:

Supervisor: _____

Sabine Hake

Thomas Garza

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Different Receptions of Physicality in Erich Maria Remarque's *Im Westen nichts Neues* and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*

by

Brian Scott Mothersole, B.A.

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Documentaries, Salves, and Slaves

Different Receptions of Physicality in Erich Maria Remarque's *Im Westen nichts*

Neues* and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms

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Brian Scott Mothersole, M.A.

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SUPERVISOR: Sabine Hake

Published in 1929, Erich Maria Remarque's novel *Im Westen nichts Neues* details a semi-autobiographical experience of the First World War. Translated into English later that year, it achieved remarkable success in the United States. *A Farewell to Arms*, by Ernest Hemingway, attained a similar transatlantic popularity when it was translated into German in 1930. Both novels emphasize outward description and avoidance of inner, abstract thought in order to emphasize a physicality that draws on reportorial and objective traditions which attempt to attack a romantic sense of war. In privileging physical experience, both novels and their translations have the similar goal of criticizing propagandistic rhetoric. Despite these similar goals, each novel's reception in the other's country was different. Americans viewed Remarque as simply a writer of documentaries, while Germans saw Hemingway in a problematically primitive way, both viewing him as a salve to overblown European intellectualism and subjugating him to a larger European aesthetic scheme. This paper attempts to answer why these receptions differ, and offers the solution that European critics remained in modes of thought reminiscent of the nineteenth century and had a different horizon of expectations.

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Published in January 1929 by the Propyläen Verlag, eleven years after the end of hostilities in the First World War, Erich Maria Remarque's *Im Westen nichts Neues* represents an interesting cultural product of its German author's experience of the war. Although it was not the only book detailing a German soldier's experience, its international success, especially among Americans, made it unique. Its translation by A. W. Wheen for Little, Brown, and Company later that year made it available on a wide scale to the United States public. The same transatlantic success can be attributed to Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, which was serialized by *Scribner's Magazine* in May through October of 1929 and published in book form in September that same year. It was translated by Annemarie Horschitz for the Rowohlt Verlag in Berlin a few months later in 1930. In this paper, I will compare the two novels, their translations, and reception of the former in the United States and the latter in Germany. Although in terms of plot different books, Remarque's war journal and Hemingway's love story both make remarkable statements about the experience of war. Each novel's formal characteristics emphasize physical experience, a privileging which acts as an attack on propagandistic rhetoric. In this emphasis on the physical, which rejects the overblown, militaristic use of words, each novel attempts to develop a new way of "writing war." This physicality grounds itself in the larger traditions of an emphasis on description, the reportorial genre, and the documentary mode, bearing some relation to the notion of New Objectivity. Not only are they comparable for their close publishing dates, 1929-1930, but also for their themes of physicality, comradeship, a sense of being part of a "lost generation," and

joining with a realist, reportorial tradition in illustrating an attack on the overblown use of words in wartime propaganda.

By comparing the two from the perspective of translation and critical reception, I hope to show how American and German culture responded to these similar works in very different ways. The fact that these similar themes and messages, these similar attempts to fashion a new masculinity through physicality—not a valor espoused with words and empty rhetoric—came from a culture opposite one’s own, has an interesting effect of each country’s reception of this former “enemy’s” literature. The translations of the works were largely accurate and true to the original sense of establishing a dominant physicality, as I will show, so what I hope to gain by comparing them by looking at critical reviews is an attempt to answer the question of why their reception, while both generally positive, was so different. The American reviews generally focused on the experience of war as portrayed by Remarque’s novel, and while generally praising the author’s technique, focus largely on the book as a documentary, aligning him with a reportorial tradition. They define the book’s function as purely reflective, a report of the war.

Hemingway’s German reviewers, however, take a different tack. They are dominated by a legend of Hemingway that initially confuses them. Hemingway’s carefully manipulated masculine, earthy image served as their horizon of expectation in their reading of his novel, and his image came to dominate their interpretation of his work. They then manipulate this Hemingway legend and its specifically “American” physical quality so that *A Farewell to Arms* becomes for them a solution to overblown

European intellectualism, not just a documentary but a medicine. That is, rather than treating the book as simply descriptive, for them it becomes prescriptive. While generally praiseworthy, Hemingway's book for them not only reflects an image of the war but offers a way out of it. This response, different from American views on Remarque's "documentary" novel, allows for a subtle manipulation of Hemingway's "solution" of physicality. That is, German reviewers manipulate Hemingway's novel in two contradictory ways; they acknowledge the positive nature of Hemingway's move forward in dealing with the experience of the war while also subsuming this "solution" to a larger European cultural production context. Hemingway's "physicality," his emphasis on outward description and reportorial technique, becomes both salve and slave to European cultural superiority. Why this German response to an American novel is so different from the American response to this German novel is the question this paper hopes to answer.

First, I shall look at the earliest translations of each novel, noting the way each novel attempts to reinforce the physicality emphasized in the texts' original languages. I shall look at various important passages dealing with masculinity and its redefinition as a revolt against words through an emphasis on physicality. Then, after the spirit of each translation is confirmed, I will move on to each novel's reception in the other's country, hoping to point out the differences.

Essential to both texts and their translations is the establishment of the physical world as being superior to the world of words. This physicality draws on the traditions of describing the world with concrete terms, a realism that rejected the romantic notions that were once associated with battle and in some sense had a relation to the larger trend of

New Objectivity. Each novel relates experience through a deliberate insistence on the materiality of objects; there is a need to explain the world through physical means as opposed to abstract concepts, which can be manipulated in the service of war. Paul Bäumer in *Im Westen nichts Neues* and Frederic Henry in *A Farewell to Arms* are united in how they process the world: through the materiality of physical objects. While one may theorize that this transmission of experience is grounded in trauma from the war, both emphasize the physicality of objects as something preferable to the words which led them to war. While volumes can be written on Remarque's and Hemingway's establishment of physicality, I shall constrict the scope of this paper to four main points. Each of these points, although working as different narrative strategies in the novels, are united in how they are mobilized against abstract motivations. Each novel and its translation uses food, the main character's killing of another soldier, brief inner monologue, and a final withdrawal from the main character's interior thoughts to establish this physicality. How each novel regards food, a theme, places the primary motivation in the physicality of the stomach. The narrative element of the main character's killing of another soldier is used to demonstrate how cognition has deteriorated in war from rational, abstract thought to simple, physical stimuli and responses. The characters' inner monologues, a formal device normally affirming the primacy of abstract thought, is used specifically to refute that primacy. And by narrational withdrawal, I mean the way in which each novel leaves the reader without access to Bäumer's and Henry's thoughts; in essence, one is cut off, forced to perceive the final scene only in physical particulars, which again rejects abstract thought.

One way each novel establishes this physicality is through its description of food. In addition to constantly complaining about the lack of food at the front and persuading the cook to pass around more portions of beans, Paul Bäumer in *Im Westen nichts Neues* sits down to a “communion” of sorts when eating a stolen goose with Kat. The pleasure of eating is what brings them together. Despite the “Tacktack von Maschinengewehren [Tack-tack of machine guns]¹” outside their solitary camp, it is the physicality of how the “Hände trieft Fett [grease drips over the hands]” (98) that brings them into a communion. In the light of the fire they are “nahe mit [ihren] Herzen [near with their hearts]” (98). Thoughts about each other fall secondary to thoughts of the goose: “was weiß er von mir – was weiß ich von ihm, früher wäre keiner unserer Gedanken ähnlich gewesen – jetzt sitzen wir vor einer Gans und fühlen unser Dasein und sind uns so nahe, daß wir nicht darüber sprechen mögen [what did he know of me – what did I know of him, earlier we wouldn’t have a single thought in common – now we sit before a goose and feel our existence and are so close to each other, that we dare not even speak about it]” (95). It is the physical sharing of the goose that brings their “Dasein [existence]” together; notably, even words feel inadequate here. After all, they dare not speak. It is the goose that brings them together.

When’s translation does a good job reinforcing this physicality, even if there are a few inconsistencies. The “grease drips from [their] hands,” and the goose still plays the central role “between” them, drawing them into an “intimate” space of “unison” (95). In some respects this emphasis on the stomach serves as a revolt against words; the scene is

¹ All English renditions in brackets, except when noted as official translations, are my own.

silent; nothing needs to be said. The reader is privileged to Bäumer's interiority, but the mystery that brings them together is encapsulated in the actual object of the goose, not in that interiority.

Hemingway also emphasizes Henry's physicality through his stomach. "I was not made to think. I was made to eat" (249), he mentions at one point, privileging his body over his intellect. A discussion of the ground's ability to grow potatoes versus its hallowedness serves the suggestion that a focus on simple physicality rather than intellect would have kept men out of war; in fact, eating is more of a communal than individual activity. Eating is often described in detail, and this detail is juxtaposed against the distant artillery fire outside. In a scene near the beginning of the novel, just before Henry is hit by an enemy shell, he "sucked and snapped in the ends, and chewed, then took a bite of cheese, chewed, and then a drink of the wine" (57). Note the specificity and repetition here, especially in contrast with the vagueness of the war happening around them; while the soldiers eat together, "something landed outside that shook the earth" (57). The description of the food is precise, while the danger is abstracted in vague terms. Just after this, Henry is struck by a mortar shell, yet he remains remarkably calm; as another Italian soldier who has been hit screams out loud, Henry, unruffled, moves toward him. The shock of the event barely registers. He continues to function even through the moment of shock. The German translation follows this physical description; he "saugte und schnappte nach den Enden und kaute, dann nahm ich einen Bissen Käse, saugte, und dann einen Schluck Wein [sucked and snapped the ends and chewed, then I took a bite of cheese, sucked, and then a drink of wine]" (65). Perhaps the German "Schluck

[swallow]” even further emphasizes this physicality, suggesting the act of gulping or swallowing. There are many instances where a focus on the soldiers’ stomachs is prevalent in both novels, but these two examined sequences are perhaps the most illustrative for a privileging of physicality.

The second way physicality is emphasized is through a scene where the main character must kill a man. When a French soldier slips into Bäumer’s temporary refuge in no man’s land, Bäumer “denk[t] nicht [doesn’t think]” (215); he just feels his body act. He also characterizes the man he stabs through distinct physical parts: “der Körper zuckt und dann wird weich [the body convulses and then becomes limp]” (215). Although Bäumer will later regret his instinct, it is his instinct here which compels him to consider this foreign body—and it is very much a body rather than a person, which carries more intellectual weight—a threat. The English translation once again expresses this physicality well. He “do[es] not think at all,” and the body “convulses, then becomes limp” (219).

When Henry must shoot an Italian soldier, the act is depicted with a similar concreteness, and its translation follows in this vein. Henry’s mind is blank, so much so that the narration of his action of pulling out the gun feels very sudden and external; he gives no thought to shooting the man. After ordering the deserting men to halt, he simply “opened up [his] holster, took the pistol, aimed at the one who had talked the most, and fired” (218). Not pausing to consider his actions, he “shot three times and dropped one” (218). The use of “dropped” here gives extra physical weight; rather than using “killed” or “shot,” verbs with connotations of morality, he almost denies any sort of moral

causality. He shot, and the man “dropped.” A causality linking the two events is avoided, as this thought might digress into moral quandaries. Even after he runs out of bullets in his clip, he does not pause to “put in another clip” (218). Horschitz’s German translation keeps his mind blank and simple; he “öffnete [seine] Tasche, nahm den Revolver, zielte auf den, der am meisten gesprochen hatte und feuerte [opened his bag, took the revolver, aimed at the one who had talked the most and fired]“ (228). Horschitz also avoids using the verbs “to kill [töten]” or “to shoot [schießen],” instead choosing, after Henry fired three times, the phrase “brachte einen zur Strecke [brought one to the ground]” (228). While there is more of a connection between the acts of shooting and bringing him to the ground, the externality of the way the act is described still avoids thought. The automatic nature of both of these killings again separates the exterior from the interior, at least initially privileging the former through action.

The third way physicality is privileged is, ironically, through an interior monologue, which with its disgusted narrative voice denies the primacy of abstract thought. At many points throughout battle, Bäumer thinks to himself about the meaning of words, especially those related to the war. “Trommelfeuer, Sperrfeuer, Gardinenfeuer, Minen, Gas, Tanks, Maschinengewehre, Handgranaten—Worte, Worte, aber sie umfassen das Grauen der Welt [Bombardment, barrage, curtain-fire, mines, gas, tanks, machine guns, hand grenades—words, words, but they contain the horror of the world]“ (133). These words for war, signifying dangerous things, may seem innocuous, *but*—and the contraction “aber [but]” here is important—they hold the most powerful horror for the world. These words have very real consequences, as Bäumer emphasizes. These

consequences have physical effects on the men; their faces become “verkrustet [encrusted],” they are “totmüde [dead tired],” even their thoughts, an abstract entity, carry a physical consequence of these words, as “verwüstet [ruined, desolate, turned into a desert]” (136). Physical consequences are further enforced by the fact that the eyes are “entzündet [inflamed],” hands “zerrissen [tear],” knees “bluten [bleed],” and their elbows are “zerschlagen [smashed]” (136). Sometimes one must even hit his comrade in the face to wake him up and get him to go along on an attack (136). Although words, when spoken, relate to abstract concepts, they have very real consequences.

The English translation maintains this physicality, following Bäumer’s thoughts with precise diction and sentence structure. These words still hold the very “horror of the world” (133). Faces are “encrusted,” bodies “weary to death,” eyes “burnt,” hands “torn,” knees “bleed,” and elbows are “raw” (133). Perhaps the only real shortcoming of the English translation is its inability to truly capture the word “verwüstet;” “devastated” is an accurate metaphorical denotation, but the word also carries the physicality of “to turn into a desert.” On the whole, however, the translation successfully re-emphasizes the danger of words and their very real physical consequences. It is not left to question the obvious rhetorical response required by the reader to distrust war words; this move is spelled out later by Hemingway as well.

Evident in this prose of Hemingway’s *A Farewell to Arms* is an understated style. One interpretation of this style is that it is a deliberate revolt against the overblown propaganda seized upon in wartime. Frederic Henry’s monologue in chapter 27 reinforces this thrust; after a discussion turns from potatoes to the thought of losing ground “in

vain,” Henry remarks in his typical, simplistic way that he was “embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain” (196). Referring to various instances of pro-war word-slinging, the “shouted words” and words “on proclamations that were slapped up by billposters over other proclamations, now for a long time,” Henry has “seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices were like the stockyards at Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it” (196). The reference to the Chicago stockyards is a visceral counterpart to the instigation of words. Words that men die for have lost their meaning to him; only physical things can hold significance. “Abstract words such as glory, honor, courage, or hallow, were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates” (196). This rejection of abstraction in favor of physicality plays an integral role in the development and portrayal of Henry’s masculinity, as well as in his own understated style. Man, when beholden to the pristine world of ideas, was not man. Rather, only in embracing the physical did man embrace a bodily understanding of subjectivity and pierce the pristine world of ideas.

Horschitz’s German translation is largely accurate in portraying this simplistic emphasis on the physical. Although the sentence, “Mich verwirrten immer Worte wie heilig, ruhmreich und Opfer und der Ausdruck umsonst [Words always confused/embarrassed me like holy, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain]” (206) does reorder the original subject-predicate orientation—words embarrass *him* rather than the passive construction “I was embarrassed by the words”—the content of the

passage seems largely well translated. The pro-war words are “lauteste Worte [loudest words],” (206) which is perhaps a slight exaggeration of “shouted words” (185), but “proclamations” are still “Proklamationen [...], die von Zettelanklebern über andere Proklamationen angeklappt wurden [proclamations that were slapped up by note-posters over other proclamations]” (206). The word order of German grammar makes the style difficult to express exactly, but Horschitz comes close. Henry still “hatte nichts Heiliges darin gesehen [had seen nothing holy in that]” (206), only the adding the “darin [in that]” implied in the English. Continuing on, the “ruhmreichende Dinge waren ohne Ruhm und bei Opfer mußte ich an die Schlachthöfe in Chicago denken, wenn das Fleisch zu nichts benutzt, sondern begraben wurde“ [glorious things were without glory and with sacrifices I must think about the slaughterhouses in Chicago if the meat was used for nothing except to bury it]” (206-7). This last sentence is translated almost verbatim, except for the addition of the I-thinker who “must” think in the latter half of the sentence, which seems to be no great embellishment. In the key sentence of the paragraph, Horschitz again copies almost verbatim in order to capture Hemingway’s simple style: “Abstrakte Worte wie Ruhm, Ehre, Mut oder heilig waren obszön neben konkreten Namen von Dörfern, Namen von Flüssen, Nummern von Regimentern und Daten” [Abstract words like glory, honor, courage, or sacred were obscene next to concrete names of villages, names of rivers, numbers of regiments and dates]” (207). The translation successfully imitates Hemingway’s terse style in this instance.

Key to this terseness is the development of masculinity, in the development of a moral code in which a man will face down a largely unchangeable circumstance, as

Henry faces down the war that originally enveloped him. In chapter 34, while Frederic and Catherine are in Switzerland, another of Frederic's rare mental insights provides another key passage for the development of his moral code.

If people bring so much courage to this world the world has to kill them to break them, so of course it kills them. The world breaks every one and afterward many are strong at the broken places. But those that will not break it kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry (267). In taking on the calm power of the world, a man develops strength at "broken places." The world will do its worst, but what is implied in this passage is that the attitude one has when facing injury or death is what is important. One cannot hem and haw intellectually but rather must stoically and physically face down this threat. This fatalism, this sense of one man stoically taking on whatever the world throws at him, even death, is accurately conveyed in the German as well:

Wenn Menschen soviel Mut auf die Welt mitbringen, muß die Welt sie töten, um sie zu brechen, und darum tötet sie natürlich. Die Welt zerbricht jeden, und nachher sind viele an den zerbrochenen Stellen stark. Aber die, die nicht zerbrechen wollen, die tötet sie. Sie tötet die sehr Guten und die sehr Feinen und die sehr Mutigen; ohne Unterschied. Wenn du nicht zu diesen gehörst, kannst du sicher sein, daß sie dich auch töten wird, aber sie wird keine besondere Eile haben [If men bring so much courage to the world, the world must kill them in order to break them, and so it kills them of course. The world breaks everyone, and

afterwards many are strong in the broken places. But those who do not want to break, (those) it kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle/delicate and the very brave indiscriminately. If you do not belong to these, you can be sure that it will also kill you, but it will have no special hurry] (279).

Other than a few eccentricities, these passages are largely the same. Both set up Henry's masculine, physical code of surviving in the world, despite the world.

Henry continues with this theme of what it means to be a man facing overwhelming circumstances near the end of the novel when he uses the metaphor of the ants. In chapter 41, after he expresses no connection to his stillborn son, he notes that "they" will have "killed you in the end" (350). "You could count on that" (350). It was like a memory he had where "once in camp I put a log on top of the fire and it was full of ants" (350). When the log began to burn, the ants "swarmed out and went first toward the center where the fire was" and then, realizing that it was too hot, "turned back and ran toward the end" (350). As they clumped on the end they fell off the log and into the fire. Beginning to muse about his relationship to the ants and the fire as a hypothetical god's relationship to the world, he remarks with laconic indifference, "Some got out, their bodies burnt and flattened, and went off not knowing where they were going. But most of them went toward the fire and then back toward the end and swarmed on the cool end and finally fell off into the fire" (350). Henry repeats his words in simplistic sentences here, using empty phrasing to caricature god in negative terms. He then thinks about what it would be like to be a "messiah" and "lift the log off the fire and throw it out where the ants could get off onto the ground" (350). He continues callously, implying god's

callousness with his own unfeeling tone, “But I did not do anything but throw a tin cup of water on the log, so that I would have a cup empty to put whiskey in before I added water to it. I think the cup of water on the burning log only steamed the ants” (350). God is a callous camper with no relation to his subjects, even making them suffer more so that he can have a touch of whiskey. In portraying God with such callousness, Henry implies that the only moral code is the one that man sets up for himself.

Horschitz once again copies Hemingway’s words well. “Einmal, als ich kampierte, legte ich einen Balken ins Feuer, der voller Ameisen war [Once when I camped I laid a log in the fire that was full of ants]“ (362). Other than the elimination of the conjunction “and,” this sentence is largely the same. It still conveys the tone of Henry’s words. The passage continues with the same similarities: “schwärmten die Ameisen aus und gingen zuerst nach der Mitte, wo das Feuer war; dann wandten sie sich zurück und rannten dem Ende zu [the ants swarmed out and went first to the middle, where the fire was; then they turned back and ran to the end]” (362). In the same callous, distanced, simple tone, Henry thinks, “Manche kamen raus mit verbrannten, flachen Körpern und gingen los und wußten nicht wohin. Aber die meisten gingen ins Feuer und dann zurück zu den Enden und schwärmten auf dem kühlen Ende und fielen schließlich ins Feuer [Some came out with burned, flat bodies and went off and didn’t know where [to go]. But most of them went into the fire and then back to the end and swarmed on the cool end and fell finally in the fire]“ (362-3). When he thinks about being “den Messias [the Messiah],” Horschitz slightly exaggerates the English “be” with “spielen [play],”

perhaps giving god a more misanthropic viewpoint, but the distance is still maintained (363). He could

den Balken aus dem Feuer zu heben und ihn dorthin zu werfen, wo die Ameisen den Boden erreichen konnten. Aber ich tat nichts dergleichen, sondern goß eine Blechtasse mit Wasser auf den Balken, um die Tasse leer zu haben, um Whisky hinein zu tun, bevor ich Wasser dazu gab. Ich glaube, daß die Tasse Wasser auf dem brennenden Balken die Ameise dämpfte [lift the log out of the fire and throw it over there, where the ants could reach the ground. But I did no such thing but rather poured a tip cup with water on the log, in order to have the cup empty so I could do whiskey inside it before I gave water to it. I believe that the cup of water on the burning log steamed the ants] (363).

This impersonation of a callous god watching his “ants” suffer so also further emphasizes the physical realm; if this impersonation is true musing, then one must morally prefer no god. In this rejection of immaterial theology, Henry emphasizes the immanent.

This callousness’s relation to physicality and masculinity is something that is echoed in Remarque’s work, as well as with his translation. He echoes again and again that the German soldiers are “gefährliche Tiere [wild animals]” (116) or “Automatentums [automatons]” (118). He heightens this negative aspect of “humanity” by contrasting it ironically as the foreground to the “braune Erde [brown earth]” “fettig unter den Sonnenstrahlen schimmernd [greasy under the shining sun’s rays]” (118). Despite the promise that these positive aspects of the world offer, humanity persists in becoming automatons through war, lips “trocken [dry]” and heads filled with images of the

“zerrissene, zerborstene Erde [broken, burst Earth]” (118) holding, oddly, “zuckenden und toten Soldaten, die da liegen [convulsing and dead soldiers that lie there]” (119). These bodies, almost like fouled plants crushed beneath the feet of war, bear a remarkable resemblance to the ants Henry so callously considers. The only response Bäumer can have, it seems, is to simply jump over them. “Wir haben alles Gefühl füreinander verloren, wir kennen uns kaum noch, wenn das Bild des anderen in unseren gejagten Blick fällt [We have lost all feeling for one another, we hardly recognize each other any longer, if the glance of another falls into our hunted glance]” (119). They become “gefühllose Tote [feelingless dead men]” who “durch einen Trick, einen gefährlichen Zauber noch laufen und töten können [through a trick, a dangerous magic, can still run and kill]” (119). The war has made them insensitive to moral capacity; perception of the physical is the farthest that thought can travel, and Bäumer’s descriptions reflect this fact. Moral considerations are not allowed.

The English translation practically follows this scene to the letter and effectively conveys the physical response to callousness. The “brown earth, the torn blasted earth, with a greasy shine under the sun’s rays” is still the “background” to this “gloomy world of automatons” (115). The restatement of the earth image added with the scars and “convulsed and dead soldiers, who lie there” anticipate Bäumer’s feeling of helplessness and callousness. The soldiers still become “insensible, dead men, who though some trick, some dreadful magic, are still able to run and kill” (115). The monologues of both novels, rarer in Hemingway than in Remarque, serve to reject interiority because of the pain associated with it due to experiencing the war. Any consideration for the war that uses

something interior to justify it—propaganda, a god—must be rejected in favor of a simple physical coping mechanism.

The last way physicality is set up to be examined in this report is through a narrational withdrawal at the end of each novel. The final image we have of Paul Bäumer is his face, which had “so einen gefaßten Ausdruck, als wäre er beinahe zufrieden damit, daß es so gekommen war [such a calm expression, as if he was almost satisfied that it had come this way]“ (288). The image that we have here is external; the most access we have to Bäumer’s thoughts is a possible interpretation from another character who has come to turn him over. The insignificance of his death emphasized in this final couple of paragraphs from a third-person point of view further accentuates externality; what purpose does one have to learn more about him, especially since he fell “an einem Tage, der so ruhig und still war an der ganzen Front, daß der Heeresbericht sich nur auf den Satz beschränkte, im Westen sei nichts Neues zu melden [on a day that was so quiet and still on the whole front, that the army report was reduced to the single sentence: in the West there was nothing new to report]” (288)? Also interesting about the development of externality is the fact that, despite his internal monologue in the final chapter leading up to the jump in narration that occurs with his death, he chooses to let external objects express his thoughts just as much as he chooses to narrate internally. While he does philosophize about hoping that his youth was not extinguished in the atrocities of war, he notes curious details in the land surrounding him: he stands “wieder unter den Pappeln [under the poplars again]” and listens to “dem Rauschen ihrer Blätter [the sound of their leaves]” (287), and when he does this, everything “was [er] denk[t], nur Schwermut und

Bestürzung, [...] fortstäubt [that he thinks, only melancholy and dismay, flies away as dust]" (287). His last physical act, separated from the paragraphs around them, is to stand up, mirroring these trees, suggesting some sort of connection. Some of the final details he notes are external: "Die Bäume hier leuchten bunt und golden, die Beeren der Ebereschen stehen rot im Laub, Landstraßen laufen weiß auf den Horizont zu [the trees here light colored and golden, the berries of the rowan stand red in the leaves, country roads run white to the horizon]" and in a further emphasis between man and nature, like his to his trees, "die Kantinen summen wie Bienenstöcke [the canteen buzz like beehives]" (287). The translation once again performs well when conveying this physicality. The sentence "I stand up" (291) is still separate from the other paragraphs, and the action is well mirrored by the descriptions of the trees, and a connection between him and nature is once again emphasized. The "poplars" are still prominent as Bäumer listens to their leaves, and the trees "show gay and golden" and the berries are "red among the leaves" (290).

Henry's mental state at the end of the novel, after Catherine's death, is also worth looking at for its laconic masculinity. Henry is bereft of inner dialogue as he walks away in the rain, his simple sentences serving to inform us of his grief and anger but also his resolve to face down the world as a broken man. As he says, "There's nothing to say" (355). What can a man say against the world? In the room with Catherine's corpse, he notes the further inefficacy of words: "It was like saying goodbye to a statue" (355). The objective physical is the only realm in which any expression is left to Henry; he walks away without interior monologue. Horschitz does a satisfactory job mirroring this

objective, physical masculinity: “Man kann nichts sagen [One can say nothing]” (367), and saying goodbye to Catherine is once again like saying goodbye to a “Statue [statue]” (367). One gets the sense that only the immediate physical can hold meaning for Henry, and as he walks away in the rain, one wonders if he will forget the memory of Catherine once he is no longer in physical contact with her.

A few extra notes on the translation of Hemingway’s *A Farewell to Arms* are necessary because of, in contrast to the large agreement on Whelan’s translation of Remarque’s *Im Westen nichts Neues*, the supposed controversy surrounding the accuracy of Horschitz’s translation. As I have hopefully shown, her translation does justice to the importance of physical description in the novel, and even Hemingway approved, as I shall soon discuss.

The translation of *A Farewell to Arms*, performed by Annemarie Horschitz for the Ernst Rowohlt Verlag’s version, the first German edition, in 1930, is generally faithful to the spirit of the original regarding laconic masculinity. Its title, *In einem andern Land* [*In Another Land*], seems at first quite curious until one recognizes that it was suggested by Hemingway himself. While a line-by-line full translational analysis would require the space of a dissertation for full justification, and indeed, Christopher Dick devoted a chapter to it in his own, submitted in 2009 to the University of Kansas, this report has attempted to look at a few key passages, and it will take into consideration Hemingway’s own knowledge of German and his knowledge of his work’s translation to come to the conclusion that, despite Dick’s claims of Horschitz’s exaggeration, which are minimally

acknowledged here, the translation is largely true to the original in establishing physicality and understatement as masculine.

Questions of “accuracy” in translations are often difficult to judge. Christopher Dick, in “Transforming Frederic Henry’s Narrative: *In einem andern Land* and Translational Embellishment,” the fifth chapter of his dissertation *Shifting Form, Transforming Content: Stylistic Alterations in the German Translations of Hemingway’s Early Fiction*, considers this question and argues that Annemarie Horschitz tends to exaggerate Hemingway’s understated style and in this embellishment, seen as an attempt by Horschitz to fit Hemingway largely into the *Bildungsroman* and *Künstlerroman* anti-war novel tradition of the Weimar Republic in the later 1920s, she negates Hemingway’s attack on the overblown rhetoric of wartime propaganda. Dick correctly points out many instances whereby Horschitz does not get the degree of specificity quite right or tends to overemphasize the more extreme version of certain words. He also examines the many ways in which Horschitz makes Hemingway’s often passive syntactical structures more active. However, despite these important claims, Dick exaggerates somewhat their significance on the text as a whole, and his methodology of picking out words and sentences here and there is perhaps a little myopic. We have discussed several key passages as a way of supplementing his method and as a way of recontextualizing his claims, thus grounding them.

However, it is important to consider Hemingway’s knowledge of German. In his chapter, Dick neglects to acknowledge this, and I think it helps to lead to his embellishment of what he calls “translational embellishment.” As Hans-Joachim Kann

makes plain in his essay “Ernest Hemingway’s Knowledge of German,” Hemingway was no stranger to the German language. As Kann points out, sometimes exhaustively, Hemingway uses a variety of German terms in his work, and there are several instances in his life which belie his knowledge. He traveled extensively in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland (226). Although his travels in themselves do not necessarily correlate to learning German, the facts that he wrote a review of a play by Hans Sachs and as well as was offered a job as a skiing instructor at Schrunz, Austria (227), both point to at least a general command of German. Most interesting is an excerpt from a letter Kann cites as written from Hemingway to his German publisher, Ernst Rowohlt, on February 19th, 1930, where his command of German is not fantastic but not novice either:

Ich werde aus Deinem Vertrag nicht schlau; habe kein Wörterbuch hier und bin daher nicht sicher, ob ich alles richtig verstehe. Aber auf dieser Insel [Key West] gibt es niemand, der mehr Deutsch versteht als ich. Ich habe Deine Briefe zu einem alten Mann gebracht, der Sprachstunden gibt... und der erklärt, diese Art Deutsch verstehe er nicht. So schicke mir bitte daher doch immer gleich eine englische Übersetzung mit, wenn du mir schreibst [I can’t make sense of your contract; I don’t have a dictionary here and am therefore not sure if I understand everything correctly. But on this island there is no one who understands more German than I. I have brought your letter to an old man who gives conversation lessons... and he explained that he didn’t understand this kind of German. So please always send me also from now on an English translation when you write to me] (226).

While the German portrayed in this letter is not perfect, it certainly is not that of a beginner as well. Kann also suggests that Hemingway was able to translate a speech from Gustav Regler for his movie script *The Spanish Earth* (228). Hemingway would tend to downplay his knowledge of German, however, even using his “ignorance” as comic fodder for his American readers. In the *Daily Star*, Hemingway uses his knowledge of German for comic effect: “Us, Mr. Bird...and myself, speak: “Bitte, Herr Burgomeister. We wollen der fish karten. We wollen to gefishen goen” (227).² Using German in this way does not signal a lack of command of German; rather, it presents German in a stereotypical, American-viewed way. If anything, using the American stereotypes of German language in this way demonstrates Hemingway’s cultural as well as linguistic command.

Clearly, then, Hemingway was competent enough in German to be able to comment on the German translations of his various works. In a letter once again to Ernst Rowohlt in 1930, he discussed the various merits and objections to various titles for *A Farwell to Arms*, “Krieg und Liebe, [War and Love]” “Vorbei mit Krieg und Liebe,

² The rest of this passage is worth quoting, I think, for its comic merit, and for displaying the image that Hemingway was trying to portray of both himself and of Germans and the German tongue:

The burgomeister looks at us and says, “Nix. Nein.” That was the only understandable point of his discourse.

“Das fischen karten,” we explain sweetly.

“Nix,” he says, “nein,” and points to the door.

“Ve wischen der fishen karten,” I said, bowing low.

The burgomeister looked at me over his steel-rimmed spectacles.

“Ja?” he said.

“Ve wischen der fishen kartenk comme sa,” I said very firmly, showing him the yellow card the friend had loaned us to locate the water.

“Ja,” he said, examining the card. “Das ist gut Wasser.”

“Can we gefishen in it?” I asked.

“Ja, ja,” answered the burgomeister.

“Come on, Bill,” I said. “Let’s go” (Kann 227).

[Gone/Past with War and Love]” “Farwohl [*sic*], Krieg und Liebe! [Farewell, War and Love]³,” “Liebe im Krieg [Love in War],” and even “in eine andere [*sic*] Land [In Another Country],” which later became its German book-form title under the translation of Horschitz (Kann 228). As mentioned above, at first this choice of title seems out of place until one checks the epigram of the German 1930 Rowohlt edition, which takes an excerpt from Christopher Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta*, in the original English: “*Barnadine*: Thou hast committed--/ *Barabas*: Fornication: but that was in another country; and besides the wench is dead” (Hemingway 6). Further regarding his German translations, Hemingway approved. In another letter to Rowohlt, this time after the Second World War, dated December 18th, 1946, he writes: “Please write to Anne Marie Horschitz for me and tell her I look forward to having her translated my works again. She was the finest translator I had in any language” (Kann 228). Hemingway clearly had enough knowledge of German to be able to comment informatively, and he approved of the way his prose translated in its own style.

Horschitz’s translation is effective in setting up, as with Wheen’s translation of *Im Westen nichts Neues*, the physical, objective nature of masculinity and the war’s effects on it. While these translations are largely accurate in this respect, the receptions of these translations attempt to perform different actions with these works. While both sides recognize Remarque and Hemingway as using their laconic physical masculinity as a revolt against overblown wartime appropriation of words, American reviewers attempted

³ It is not entirely clear what Hemingway meant with “Farwohl.” It resembles the English “farewell,” as if Hemingway is saying goodbye to war and love, but it has the odd German particle “wohl,” which does not make sense in this context. Either Hemingway made a mistake or he was attempting to make another joke, the effectiveness of which would be uncertain in the German context.

to portray Remarque's novel as a poignant, gripping, physical documentary of the war, while Hemingway's German reviewers went beyond this interpretation, falling prey to the legend of Hemingway and using his physical masculinity for contradictory purposes in a proscriptive, rather than documentary, way. German reviews tout Hemingway's physical descriptions as a rejection of war words while also problematically subsuming them as inferior to European intellectualism. This confusing two-pronged attempt to interpret Hemingway's style was symptomatic of a cultural need to move forward from the trauma of war as well as reclaim some sense of cultural agency. Hemingway may have been talented in German eyes, but he still had to fit into their traditional structure of aesthetics.

First, I shall consider the American reviews of Remarque. His American reviewers clearly focused on the content of the novel, framing it in the realm of the "physical" and avoiding a discussion of the author.

Interestingly, *Time Magazine* chooses not to focus on the author so much as recreating the experience of the book in its review. After echoing the *Manchester Guardian*'s acclaim for *All Quiet on the Western Front* being "the greatest of all war books," the review proceeds in an odd narrative voice, seeking to recreate in a voyeuristic manner the "interest of the scene" even before the "interest of the story" (57). The magazine continues assuming the "we" and "I" first-person narration as if one were in the story itself, seeing out across the trenches: "We feel the Front in our blood. Shells whistle, our senses sharpen. We feel the animal in us. We want to hide in the earth" (57). In short, sporadic sentences meant to convey the jarring nature of the front, the inability

to have a coherent stream of thought, this inhabitation continues: “We are in our dugout. The Front cages us in. The barrage gets heavier. An attack must be coming. Shells howl, flash, bang” (57). In a further impersonation of the book’s style, the review continues impressionistically, noting how a new recruit, one of many “mere children,” has “a fit, runs outside. Result: the trench gets plastered with lumps of flesh, bits of uniform” (57). The purpose of this strange conveyance of feeling seems to be laudatory, praising Remarque’s ability to distill from his writing “feverish horror” (57). However, any mention of the author is absent until three-quarters of a way through the review. This fact seems curious, given the German insistence on placing the author Hemingway at the fore of each of his reviews. Remarque is praised in the review for offering the “horror” of being “destroyed spiritually” and for doing so with a style that “sometimes achieves the beauty of bald statement”—another curious comment which draws interesting parallels to German discussions of Hemingway’s style—but absent is the legend of Remarque, in contrast to the legend of Hemingway that German reviewers would insist upon. A brief biographical sketch is offered, but it paints the author in certain inglorious terms as a happenstance, mercenary writer. “When peace came, he carelessly turned his hand to whatever offered, became teacher, organist, business executive, automobile dealer, theatre critic. Money won at roulette enabled him to travel. Money gone, he wrote this book. Now he may resume his travels[...].” (57). These short sentences hint flippantly at a sense of vagabond nature, perhaps implying a brotherhood with Hemingway, but the lack of explicit, direct association of Remarque with authorship, even a legend of authorship, starkly contrasts with the reviews of Hemingway. This lack of acknowledgment,

combined with the voyeurism expressed earlier in the article, presents interesting questions. It seems to focus the novel's function in conveying experience, a static documentary. By not focusing on a discussion of the author, as most German reviewers do, the review denies agency to the writer—how could he write anything more than a documentary? In any case, the review confirms *Im Westen nichts Neues*'s physical experience.

In “Glorious War,” published in *The Nation* on July 10, 1929, Joseph Wood Krutch correctly notes Remarque's insistence upon the physical, and concludes that this insistence comes from real experience from the War. While he does make comparisons to other authors, he in no way subsumes Remarque's technique to an American aesthetic scheme, as German reviewers would do of Hemingway. In fact, Krutch's praise of Remarque's technique, which is “the result, not of too little experience, but of too much” (43), is nothing but honorable and universalizing. *All Quiet on the Western Front* is the equivalent of “Latzko, Barbusse, and Dos Passos” and “inferior to none of the others;” in fact, the reviewer recommends taking them all “in conjunction” (43). He establishes no problematic hierarchy, as German reviewers do.

In *The New Republic*, T.S. Matthews writes in “Bad News” that Remarque's book is written “with simplicity and candor” about “something that nobody likes to talk of too much:” namely, writing in a blunt style he sees as mirroring the book he's reviewing, “It is about what happens to men in war” (130). Matthews is fitting Remarque to a larger tradition of news reporting, and he recalls the narrator's emphasis on physicality once again, as well as the growing gulf between those who have gone to war and those who

have stayed at home. Unlike an “experimental artist,” Remarque has “nothing new to say; but he says it so honestly and so well that it is like news to us” (130). Remarque’s main concern seems to be simple, honest documentary; this focus is further emphasized by the title of the review. Matthew’s review also contains a bit of vague universalizing in his comparisons to other authors, and he notes the explicit binary of “victor” nations and “Germany” (130). But again, there is no hierarchy here; “No, the War did no good to anybody” (130).

The New York Times Book Review of June 2, 1929, continues this documentary trend and again refuses to place the book into a larger hierarchy of artistic works. Even in Louis Kronenberger’s subtitle, he notes that it is an “extraordinarily vivid document” (5). Central to Kronenberger’s assessment of the novel as documentary is his perception of the novel’s physicality. The war “in all its physical horror” passes before Bäumer’s eyes, and “in ‘All Quiet’ we have a picture of that physical horror unsurpassed for vividness” (5). It is a “picture, a document, an autobiography,” an “objective book” with a slight amount of humanity (5). Kronenberger associates the book with a few other war novels, but as a physical documentary, it fills a niche, although this niche is not a part of a hierarchy.

What is immediately noticeable about the reviews of *A Farewell to Arms*, in contradistinction to the American reviews of Remarque, is the elevated emphasis on Hemingway the man rather than his work. While the work is still treated, it is largely interpreted through the lens of his biography. The European reviews of Hemingway focus on a few key issues. First, on the whole, European critics, as we shall see, did not know

how to interpret his characteristic understated, terse style. They saw in his style a disproportionate lack of thinking, of contemplation, with respect to the traumatic experience of war, tying him to the larger trend of New Objectivity, which emphasized hard fact, objectivity, and practical engagement with the world. With this lack of inner thought European critics were quick to connect two things: that it was a welcome relief from the overly metaphysical, overbearing weight of European intellectualism, a sort of healing salve from the memory of the First World War; and that it was distinctly *American*. Indeed, as I shall argue, this view of Hemingway's simplistic *American* style was problematic, for it both acted as a cure and, in a sense, a way of reasserting European aesthetic dominance. At the very least, Hemingway came to represent a synthesis that re-incorporated European form with American exuberance. Europe both relied on Hemingway and used his image as American, a stereotype, to its own ends.

It is worthwhile to consider French novelist, short story writer, and conservative political essayist Pierre Drieu La Rochelle's review of Hemingway's novel as a way of setting up the German response. It articulates several strains of thought consistently upheld in German reviews. He relied heavily upon American stereotypes in his preface to the French translation of *A Farewell to Arms* published in 1933. A biographical sketch figures heavily into La Rochelle's interpretation of the novel's simplicity and understatedness. As we shall see later with German reviewers, the explanation to Hemingway begins with "a knowledge acquired first by using his senses, and later by exercising that capacity for feeling and reason created by the balance of all five senses" (148). This grounded world may lack "intellectual elaboration," but it is a world "one can

reach out and touch” (148). In a vague, almost paradoxical way, this physical world provides a way forward through “suggestion” (148). This groundedness providing a way out will later be paralleled in other critiques. La Rochelle also provides a brief story of his meeting with Hemingway the man, and he uses this as a reference later to explain the dialogue in *A Farewell to Arms* as imbued with “Hemingway’s spirit,” defined “not of humor or irony but of health” (149). Referring once again to his physicality, La Rochelle places Hemingway with the “shoulders of a porter and the soul of a hunting-dog” and links this to his indomitable spirit, “pursuing every quarry with a tender and implacable desire” (149).

Dominant in La Rochelle’s preface is this insistence to see an American spirit bound with the earth, how to negotiate the difference between an American spirit and that of a European, and how each responds to the other with respect to this earthiness.

I have often doubted whether Americans are ever young; but I think they are when I read Hemingway (and some others). You immediately feel a force, in contact with the earth and nature, big enough to bear the heavy apparatus of society and industry; it crosses the old, stone Europe and iron America like a joyful rhinoceros who has taken its morning bath and rushes to its breakfast (149). America is set up as something primordial, having a connection to the earth, and although one could certainly interpret Hemingway’s understated prose with this “contact with the earth and nature,” one must also wonder to what extent stereotypes of America shape the European interpretation of Hemingway. What attracts La Rochelle to men like Hemingway is “that they know the great uninhabited spaces of their continent where the

exposed towns are swamped by the wilderness” and that they “know how to return there” (150). This assertion is curious, given the specifically Italian setting of *A Farewell to Arms*. Although a wilderness is present in Hemingway’s novel, La Rochelle seems to be overgeneralizing. I would like to suggest that La Rochelle is primitivizing Hemingway’s writing for another agenda: a way of reclaiming some European aesthetic agency. La Rochelle is quick to point out the pessimism that pervades Hemingway’s work; interestingly, this is in response to a specific question about European pessimism. Avoiding an indictment of his own European culture, La Rochelle equates American writers, Hemingway included, as equals in this pessimism. In fact, pessimism is “the prerogative of strength and youth” (150). He sets up an odd dynamic between America and Europe for the young, “tragic” writers like Hemingway; “they dash from America to Europe and to Asia, looking for something of value everywhere and finding it nowhere” (150). Hemingway is one of a lost generation, echoing Fadiman’s later suggestion; America provides him with the raw power, the focus on the senses, the earthiness, but Europe holds a promise for him as well. “They want to be and are Americans,” La Rochelle says, “and yet they still need Europe badly” (150). This dynamic is symbiotic, to some extent. The art the Americans create is “robust, direct, anxious, full of new, yet confident rhythms”; indeed, Europeans “need them” (150). These new artistic rhythms may provide a way out of the memory of the war; if nothing else, they provide a youthful energy. However, La Rochelle reasserts some European aesthetic agency.

We trade, with the Americans, our form for their raw life. We need the healthy excess they send us, to revive our form; but they still need our form to contain and

direct their outpourings. Hemingway is well aware of this happy exchange. An anxious barbarian, subtle and delicate (like all barbarians), he is also a happy barbarian, who knows how to keep his strength and leave Rome with his booty intact (150)

La Rochelle conflates the terms “American” with barbarian, setting up a cultural exchange that feels remarkably colonialist: “our form for their raw life.” Although he admits a certain symbiotic need for the American aesthetic sense as embodied by Hemingway, and as we shall see, other Germans see this as a healing sense, he still portrays Europe as the partner which will provide “form to contain and direct their outpourings.” Europe, although devoid of its creative energy, at least has some directive agency in this arrangement.

Contemporary German criticism is often more muted but still contains strains of this arrangement. Irene Seligo characterizes Hemingway in 1932 in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* as the “most mature and most representative American author,” and then she deliberately uses that stereotype to make a statement about cultural exchange, noting that Hemingway, in a sort of backhanded slap to all other American authors, “is the first who can claim a definite influence of America back on European literature” (Springer 83). Note the assumption of a previous and constant European authority; Hemingway is the “first” to actually offer something of value to European art. She also evokes a sense of threat from his challenge. “No doubt, the young European authors want to write like Hemingway because the simple suggestiveness of his style is contagious” (83). Perhaps

the insecurity resulting from this “contagion” was one of the unconscious factors behind the development of this aesthetic hierarchy noticeable in German criticism.

Hans Fallada, prominent journalistic novelist famous for his promotion of New Objectivity, although very appreciative of the quixotically simple style of Hemingway, also subsumes him. He recognizes the physicality and simplicity of Hemingway’s work, saying he has a good relationship to the “guten greifbaren Dingen [good tangible things]” (674). When “er Apfel sagt, so meint er Apfel [he says apple, he means apple]” (675). Hemingway gives only the “Notwendigste [most necessary]” (675), and Fallada generally praises him for this. However, he also subtly criticizes him by calling his style “unerhört primitiv [unheard-of primitive]” (674). Parodying his writing, he compares it to the Bible: “Erst tat er das, dann tat er das [...] er ging hin und nahm ein Weib [first he did that, then he did that [...] he went there and took a wife⁴]” (674). Hemingway has a simple style, which is good, but simple.

Klaus Mann, aspiring novelist and literary critic, as well as the son of Thomas Mann, gives a very positive review of Hemingway’s *A Farewell to Arms*, and while he believes that the work can stand on its own merits, he also somewhat problematically subsumes Hemingway into a useful stereotype. He begins, like other German critics, with both praising and puzzling over Hemingway’s unique style. Heralding his entrance onto the European stage, Mann presents Hemingway as “fully incomprehensible, an inexplicable, a disconcerting phenomenon” (159). In short, Hemingway has brought, as

⁴ “Weib” generally has a slightly negative connotation in German. A more normative word might be “Frau,” which is why I read subtle criticism coming from Fallada in this review.

all great authors do, “nothing short of a miracle;” the world “is transformed under the creative gaze” of Hemingway’s work. Once again, as with the other critics, Hemingway’s simplicity and understandability are positively emphasized; Mann seems genuinely appreciative of Hemingway’s style, but by the end of the article, he unconsciously reincorporates him into the arrangement described above. Hemingway, specifically “American” once again, has a unique ability: to be able to grasp the very “kernel” of life (159). Mann grants Hemingway insight in the way he “appears to grasp life in its externals” while at the same time “penetrates its hidden center” (159). Hemingway seems to be a master of discovering the mystery behind simple physical facts of life; “the most factual statements lie like trapdoors over depths which plunge God knows where” (159). His style has a “thorough and therefore a sophisticated artlessness” (159), which once again hints at the primitivism of other reviews. Mann’s recognition of Hemingway’s writing as “male” reconfirms Hemingway’s stereotypical image of “toughness,” but Mann couches this stereotype in flattering, sophisticated terms: “the reticent, mysterious veiling of the heart; reserve, economy, withdrawal, which scarcely impinges, where others would blatantly intrude” (161). “It gives to his whole world the mystical dignity of an unapproachable secret kingdom, where everything stands joined in an hierarchical order of worship. An ambiguous, special sense dwells in everything” (161).

Despite this acknowledgment of Hemingway’s talents, Mann still heavily relies on stereotypes of what is American: “Hemingway is an Anglo-Saxon, and hence is more relaxed, more worldly. He is no secret priest but remains an American boy, albeit one with knowing eyes” (161). In relation to the mystical, religious sense of the world,

Hemingway is “primitive,” although this is not necessarily an overt critique, for it is contrasted with the “arcane mysteries of worship” (161). Being American is specifically linked to feeling and mystery; “Hemingway feels—he is American—the mystery of this world; he does not concern himself with the other” (161). This feeling of mystery is specifically linked to the “most trivial facts;” “the *mysterium* is immanent in the phenomenon of life” (161). Mann also points out that there is a primal fear that comes from this simplistic understanding of the mystery of the universe. Hemingway, according to Mann, recognizes that “to be alive is to be guilty,” and he invokes the senselessness of Catherine’s death at the end of *A Farewell to Arms* as a brilliant portrayal of the fear of life. Implied is the background of World War I, and it can be inferred that Mann is implying that this fear is something that Europeans can ultimately relate to, especially when one considers his next point: that Hemingway’s primal perceptions of the world can also offer a way out of this trap. Paraphrasing his sense of Hemingway, Mann has as a prescription for Europeans “Life is frightening, but we know nothing more beautiful” (161). This prescription is confirmed when he explicitly considers Europeans’ attraction to Hemingway:

The great attraction which Hemingway exercises upon the most fastidious young Europeans probably lies in his mingling of fresh vitality and mystery. He preserves the powerful feeling of a young American, while his soul seems experienced and at home in other regions, the most remote ones. Mere complexity, abstract mysticism, discourage and exhaust us easily: likewise mere strength. His robust complexity, his vital melancholy fascinate (161-2).

In considering the frame of Europe as a whole, Mann offers Hemingway's writing as both a salve and yet once again a primitive force. Granted, Mann's portrayal of Hemingway's talent seems glowing in his emphasis on Hemingway's powerful nuance, but his "mingling of fresh vitality and mystery" plays off of typical American stereotypes seen in other reviews; Hemingway is once again the useful stereotype, both panacea and subject. He is once again subsumed into a European search for agency. As Mann states near the end of his essay,

He has the best American qualities contained with our own virtues. One ought not to say that he is a Europeanized American. He has remained too profoundly and essentially American for that. He is a typical American but with the inner experiences of a European. He sees this world with the freshness of his youthful race and at the same time with the slyness of our old one (163).

This passage has the most distinct echoes of La Rochelle. The honest comparison here belies many stereotypes; "qualities" are contrasted with "virtues;" he is a "typical American but with the inner experiences of a European." Once again in a primitive sense, his "profoundly and essentially" American vision is fresh, youthful, while Europe is sly, old. Hemingway's style, while praised, is being subtly "conquered" because of the very fact that makes it so fresh to its German audience: its primitiveness, its physicality, its masculinity.

Although it postdates much of the criticism discussed above, Clifton Fadiman provided an influential article on the formation of the Hemingway myth, and one notes in it currents of thought hinted at above. "Ernest Hemingway: An American Byron" was

published in *The Nation* on January 18, 1933, and so representative of the myth of Hemingway was it that it was translated and republished in *Der Querschnitt* in April later that year. In his brief article, Fadiman attempts to describe the social function that Hemingway plays. In contrast to most of Hemingway's German reviewers, Fadiman places Hemingway's quality of writing as secondary to his social function; "had he written half as well, but in the same manner and about the same subjects, his dominance would have been as notable. The fact is that he has triumphed more as hero than as artist" (63). Whereas most German critics seem to use his style as a vehicle for pointing out his primitiveness and thus his social function as salve and subject, as a useful stereotype, Fadiman approaches his historicization first: "he is the unhappy warrior that many men would like to be. About him has sprung up a real contemporary hero-myth" (63). He is this hero that "apparently creates a new tradition for those who have rejected all the old ones"; he "provides a modern and more violent romanticism to replace the sickly and worn-out romanticism of the nineteenth century" (63). He offers a different salve for the generation "defeated" and "betrayed," one, so the implication goes, simpler than "the easy salve of sophistication" (63), and once again, Hemingway is set up as an alternative to culture: "The values with which they have been inoculated they discover to be false. The culture which they have been instructed to flaunt as the badge of their superiority proves hollow. Since most of the grand words have collapsed, they throw them all overboard" (63). Hemingway's works become the bastion of instinct, physicality. The modern reader

cultivates to the point of fetishism those primal emotions which cannot betray him, as his hands and feet cannot betray him. [...] In the last analysis he worships his reflexes, tending to exalt any activity which the act of introspection cannot corrode. He reverts, however subtly, to the primitive and even the brutal, because on these levels he finds no echo of the culture which has cheated him. [...] Having forsworn both his national and his class roots, he is at home in all countries. He puts his faith in simple things rather than in complicated words and shakes off all phrases that smack of the metaphysical or the moral. He seeks the companionship and tries to share the experiences of booze-fighters, killers, athletes, and sportsmen, men who lead careers of physical sensation, superficially insulated from the main current of the life of their time. He may even cultivate a special interest in the reactions of animals, creatures unspoiled by the general infection of the world (63).

The German journal *Querschnitt* translated and republished this article so quickly because it epitomized and substantiated their view of Hemingway. It embraces Fadiman's view of Hemingway's words as rejecting "complicated words" and "phrases that smack of the metaphysical or moral" because the article gives voice to the German interpretation of Hemingway as a useful stereotype.

Hemingway is the modern primitive, who makes as fresh a start with the emotions as his forefathers did with the soil. He is the frontiersman of the loins, heart, and biceps, the stoic Red Indian minus traditions, scornful of the past, bare of sentimentality, catching the muscular life in a plain and muscular prose. He is the

hero who distrusts heroism; he is the prophet of those who are without faith (63-4).

Although Fadiman seems to be speaking in a transnational sense, the fact that this article was so quickly absorbed by a major German journal less than half a year later seems to point to an embrace of its core concepts. This review is the only one translated and reprinted in a major German magazine; to some extent, it seems as if its concept of Hemingway being “primitive” was a salient point for the German audience.

So why were there such different responses in regard to the similar ways these two novels set up an objective physicality? Several strains of thought offer suggestions for thinking about this question, all intertwined. First, the European interpretation of Hemingway seems to be stuck in the nineteenth century. By this I mean two things. First, the interpretation resembled a colonial exchange. Just as the all former colonies offered raw materials in exchange for European production, so too did Hemingway offer his “exuberance,” physicality, and raw sense for European intellectual aesthetics. Hemingway would be incorporated into the fold of European superiority. And secondly, the European interpretation of Hemingway seems to be Romantic, in the sense that they unite artist and art in a sort of genius aesthetics. Although Hemingway carefully manipulated his masculine image, Europeans insist on this image as a way of interpreting his art. The fact that they accept Fadiman’s biographically comparative thesis that Hemingway is the “new Byron” further confirms this willingness to conflate artist and art.

Thus, America and Europe each had different cultural expectations. Constant in the German reviews was a need to view Hemingway as American, and consequently he became natural and simplistic. His portrayal of Henry's exterior physicality, interpreted correctly as a revolt against war propaganda, became simultaneously identified as quintessentially "American" and also associated with a larger trend of New Objectivity. According to these reviews previously examined, the American stereotype was linked to nature, which was problematically appropriated as a natural cure for dealing with the overblown intellectualism associated with the wartime propaganda Hemingway was attacking. Not being German, Hemingway was perceived as a legitimate way out of guilt, a foreign source of essential nature. The confusion between the Hemingway legend and its natural, physical masculinity and Hemingway's writing style further complicated this issue; by interpreting the text through the myth of the man, his texts became more than just documentary. His novels became solutions. However, once they transgressed this line from static documentary to dynamic solution, they became fair game for critique. One cannot critique a statement so easily as a suggestion. It is easier to disagree with someone when they report how things *should be* rather than how they *are*. American reviewers saw Remarque's *Im Westen nichts Neues* in the latter way, stopping with hailing it as an exceptional physical documentary. German reviewers went further, praising Hemingway's suggestion while subtly critiquing it by subsuming it into European aesthetics. Conversely, it is also interesting that Americans did not interpret Remarque's novel, a relatively similar book, in a *suggestive* way. Does this indicate in itself a sense of superiority in American thought as well? Perhaps they refused to see Remarque's novel

as suggestive because they thought a German novelist could offer no solution, but could rather offer only a documentary to the trauma and pain of war.

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