

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF
FICTIONALIZED AUTOBIOGRAPHY:
HEMINGWAY'S
UNDER KILIMANJARO

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Ernest wrote fiction mostly and the safari piece was fiction based
on facts, more fun than my facts [in my diaries].

—Mary Hemingway, *How It Was* (535)

INTRODUCTION

The genesis and evolution of Ernest Hemingway's theory of fictionalized autobiography is of consequence to his nonfiction works. In the following essay, I will extend what I have previously conceptualized as his alchemical nonfiction or creative nonfiction" to theory of fictionalized autobiography. This concept provides me with the basis for exploring its theoretical and practical implications.¹ Hemingway, in his Foreword to *Green Hills of Africa*, states there is a "fourth and fifth dimension that can be gotten" (26). His statement enables me to put forward fictionalized autobiography as the ground on which an authentic literary genre emerges. I shall then apply the components of it to *Under Kilimanjaro*, Hemingway's account of his second African safari.²

I shall demonstrate how the concept of fictionalized autobiography progresses, acquires its own structures, and yields its own dialectical effects. Moreover, I disclose how it synthesizes opposing aspects of the factual and fictional prose into multivocal figurative prose. Theoretically, fictionalized

autobiography makes available ways of altering objective reality by adding symbolic and imaginary dimensions to it as a fourth and fifth dimension.

In light of the above, one might say this new approach uncovers an in-between spacetime within autobiographical narrative prose. This in-between sphere reveals itself within the dialectics of the real and particular as well as the creative and general in lived experiences. It is the staging ground of innovative “lexicogrammatical” formation, to borrow linguist and semiotician Michael A. Halliday’s terminology. In turn, “lexicogrammatical” formation yields its own attendant multivocal signification processes. They set up their own lexical, syntactic, and semantic generative foundations. The transformative demands of fictionalized autobiography push Hemingway into tasks that mythology attributes to the complex, primal, and unpredictable character of the “trickster.” Artful, crafty, and shapeshifting, the “trickster” rises out of a mode of imaginal fifth dimension in prose and performs magical artistic acts.

As I see it, Hemingway’s efforts to find literary approaches of alchemizing the lead of mundane experiences into the gold of a mode of “prosaics,” to use Russian literary criticism. This effort brings about the marriage between the objective realities of the personal lifeworld and their magical imaginative potentials. Therefore, Hemingway differentiates what one may generally consider as autobiographical fiction, in which the name and function of the author, narrator, protagonist, and antagonist are different from the writer’s own. In contrast, in fictionalized autobiography they all merge. This literary algorithm makes possible the conjuring up of hidden but vivid poetics of an individual’s subjective day-to-day *creative presence and response* to the lifeworld.

From this perspective, Hemingway’s concept of fictionalized autobiography carries open-ended potentials and possibilities of creative interventions as inventions. It proffers on the writer and reader a daring, spirited literary gift as an enthusiastic flash of freedom. The Greek language denotes it as *thymos*. Within this spirited intermediate spacetime, which is neither entirely fact nor wholly fiction, our subjective experiences become spellbinding in their alliance with the subjective and fictional.

In their aggregate, these transformations will embrace endless modes of Hegelian concept of “particular-universal.” As such, they allow readers to reclaim the lifeworld at once objectively as well as creatively—as Alice does so wondrously in Lewis Carroll’s *Through the Looking Glass*. This foray into as-

yet undiscovered territories embodies an existential disclosure, or “*aletheia*,” (*Erlebnis*), a word dear to the late German philosopher Martin Heidegger.

The above justificatory clarifications prepare the way for getting deeper into the essential discussion of the conceptual aspects of Hemingway’s fictionalized autobiography.

THE ORIGIN OF HEMINGWAY’S CONCEPT OF FICTIONALIZED AUTOBIOGRAPHY

As early as 1935, in his brief but significant Foreword to *Green Hills of Africa*, Hemingway wrote:

Unlike many novels, none of the characters or incidents in this book is imaginary. Any one not finding sufficient love interest is at liberty, while reading it, to insert whatever love interest he or she may have at the time. The writer has attempted to write an absolutely true book to see whether the shape of a country and the pattern of a month’s action can, if truly presented, compete with a work of the imagination. (no page)

A Foreword of three sentences and the rest is silence. It is a profound silence, holding in its generative folds implications for writing and reading fictionalized autobiography. In this nuanced Foreword, Hemingway engages in a multileveled, conceptual formulation of his new literary genre. It is comparable in its suggestive minimalism to his well-known and oft-quoted “iceberg” theory of literature, or “theory of omission.” The theory claims that in practice the meaning-making power of the unsaid exceeds that of the said by implication. Hemingway declares, “Unlike many novels, none of the characters or incidents in this book is imaginary.” Page? He differentiates between *Green Hills of Africa* as a narrative of lived experiences and the novel as product of the imagination. He can do so since as human beings we are all situated within four-dimensional Einsteinian spacetime: three of space (length, width, and height), and one of time as duration. Hence, we experientially perceive our lifeworld through our senses in the midst of our objective surroundings and experience our active participation in it. The univocal nonfictive prose of autobiographical narrative perceives this world by firsthand Euclidean images embedded in the writer’s consciousness. Still, the writer might decide to write fictional prose narrative by employing these

primary perceptual images to create ancillary, multi-referential symbols and metaphors belonging to the imaginal.

To sum up: nonfiction unfolds within a referential, denotative prose narrative, which involves consciousness of the particular through an individual's senses. Alternatively, fictional prose might present a character engaging with situational realities of his or her life in *innovative* ways, making a frozen river of daily routines flow again. Fiction can, and most often does, imaginatively break away from the given constraints of human condition. By definition then, the fictional makes its own the potential creative alterations and methods to mold worlds of multi-significations.

The difference between the two approaches to autobiography as nonfiction and fiction is that the latter offers the reader a basis for unlimited interpretations. The reader's response to it exposes a horizon of unlimited speculative readings, which open up the horizon of its vast hermeneutics and heuristics. For the reader's free play in subliminally fulfilling conscious and unconscious fulfills repressed desires. Such autobiography does not reveal how it *really was* to the reader but rather how it might have been or even ideally should or should not have been.

In his Foreword's second sentence, Hemingway recommends, "Any one not finding sufficient love interest is at liberty, while reading it, to insert whatever love interest he or she may have at the time." Upon reflection, one wonders how this free choice becomes an option. How does it exactly realize itself in practice? Finally, why "love interest" among an unlimited number of interests? The answer is that consciously or subconsciously, the reader knows that the theme of love as *desire* in its various manifestations is one of the recurrent thematic ingredients of fiction. The freedom of choice to read prose narrative according to our desires or interests issues forth from the act of writing itself. Writing is never totally free from desire, and is never complete and whole without the complementary act of reading as desire. If never read, writing remains forever incomplete. Hence, the act of reading compels writers to activate elements of fiction, literary devices, and linguistic strategies to create satisfying visions to gratify the readers' instinctive, affective, conceptual, and epistemophilic desires.

As an indispensable intervention, reader response enables fiction to become "worldmaking," to use Nelson Goodman's terminology. Collectively, immersed as the readers are in their education, culture of reading, and interpretative abilities, they bring to literary prose narrative the immensities of

the creation of a world whole and entire in itself. In “The Art of Fiction,” in an interview with George Plimpton, Hemingway stated, “Read anything I write for the *pleasure* of reading it [emphasis added]. Whatever else you find will be the measure of what you brought to the reading” (215–239).

The final sentence of the Foreword is the longest. It also puts forth ideas that are more intricate and require scrutiny. The sentence introduces the writer’s attempt to write an “absolutely true book” about “the shape of a country and the pattern of a month’s action.” Hemingway emphatically declares that the book holds the promise of a writing that reveals the *absolute truth*. By definition, however, one thinks of truth as singular and inviolate. “Absolute truth” then appears to be redundant. Yet if one thinks of the relative truth of existential lived experiences rather than conceptual or mathematical truth, Hemingway’s statement makes sense.

Hemingway as a writer offers the reader what one might call a phenomenological description of what he calls in his Foreword to *Green Hills of Africa* quoted above, “the shape of a country and the pattern of a month’s action.” The shape of a country, as experienced geography, serves as the setting for successive carefully selected interventions by nonfictional characters and their actions, reflection, but with a touch of *invention*. Thus, the situational participation of the author-narrator-protagonist and other characters recreate “incidents” of considerable subjective objective intensities, which only the fictional can properly handle.

Essentially, this literary paradigmatic shift in genre makes clear how the world directly registers itself as images on the writer’s and other characters’ consciousness. However well integrated with the secondary recollected images, such narrative can “compete with a work of imagination.” It reveals how such dynamic processes transmute the lead of ordinary experience to the gold of fiction. In short, Hemingway makes a serious offer to all potential readers of *Green Hills of Africa*: if you read this book from within the totality of your own well-integrated emotional and intellectual experiences, you will find it responds to your own desires, whatever they might be. As he told his wife Mary, “a certain knowledge and appreciation of pictures, writing, and music makes a fine backlog of civilized understanding between people” (*How It Was* 535). It is a voluntary mutual agreement to a paradigm shift in writing and reading rather than an injunction. The writer and the reader enter into a state of joint mindfulness (*nepsis*). Through the literary text’s

mediation, both share an intuitive experience of one another's mind as an inexhaustible horizon of interpretations.

In his preface to his ostensibly autobiographical book, *A Moveable Feast*, published posthumously by his widow Mary in 1964, Hemingway reiterated, "If the reader prefers, this book may be regarded as fiction. But there is always the chance that such a book of fiction may throw some light on what has been written as fact" (page). Now one may better comprehend how Hemingway's nonfiction works such as *Green Hills of Africa*, *A Moveable Feast*, and *UK* might qualify as fictionalized autobiographies. From this perspective, *Green Hills of Africa* is Hemingway's first conscious attempt at writing an inextricable meld of the fictional and autobiographical as an "absolutely true book." It lays the foundation of a new genre in writing, in which facts pass from verifiable and quantifiable to qualifiable and therefore interpretable in the act of reading.

HEMINGWAY OFFERS THE POSSIBILITY OF A FIFTH DIMENSION IN PROSE

My explication of Hemingway's theory of fictionalized autobiography anticipates its application to *UK*. An analysis of his concept of a *fifth dimension* in prose will be a key element to my approach here. Early in *Green Hills of Africa*, Hemingway accidentally meets Kandinsky, an unexceptionally literate and inquisitive Austrian and former *shamba* (plantation) owner. They have a long and occasionally highly literary conversation. At a certain point in their discussion, Hemingway reflects on:

"The kind of writing that can be done. How far prose can be carried if anyone is serious enough and has luck. There is a fourth and fifth dimension that can be gotten."

"You believe it?"

"I know it."

"And if a writer can get this?"

"Then nothing else matters. It is more important than anything he can do. The chances are, of course that he will fail. But there is a chance that he succeeds." (16–27)

With the introduction of the concept of a fifth dimension of prose, Hemingway sketches a dynamic process for his experiments with a synthesis of

factual and figurative prose narrative in *Green Hills of Africa*. This dialectical merger continues to widen its scope and deepen its effects in *A Moveable Feast* and finally in *UK*. To grasp the prominence Hemingway accords to such prose, one needs to define its generative linguistic and narrative structures. I would define it as a dynamic synthesis of literal-nonliteral dialogic prose narrative, a difficult but attainable goal. The process makes a whole world entire to itself. Within this fundamentally dialogic world, a vital mode of communication opens up between the writer and anyone who can read. It is so because this particular type of communication contains a large package of correlated denotative *and* connotative lexicon to be unpacked and interpreted. Dialogic prose makes up the narrative of the objects of our consciousness. It constitutes the source of our reflections on ourselves, and the world we inhabit. One may consider it as the inextricable dimension of human evolutionary process and the ground of emergence of all human knowledge.

Hemingway's assertion that there is a fifth dimension of prose to "be gotten" might appear startling. However, it should not be entirely so. We know that his culture of reading was wide and interdisciplinary. His mind was constantly alert to all matters connected in any way to literature. He possessed an authentic intellectual's curiosity. The concept of a fifth dimension in prose manifestly alludes to Albert Einstein's 1905 special theory of relativity. Einstein declared that a basal four-dimensional spacetime constitutes all *conceivable* reality. Nevertheless, he theorized that time as the fourth dimension changes relative to the speed of a moving object and the observer's position in relation to it. The outcome of Einstein's theory is that all phenomena occur within the four-dimensional coordinates of spacetime. I will go as far as to say Hemingway justifiably took Einstein's theory of relativity a step further. He cryptically alluded to a fifth dimension of prose, but left it undefined, perhaps hoping that his own writing of prose as he does in *Green Hills of Africa* would define it in practice.

We already know that realism in literature and the arts relies on verisimilitude. Realism draws its claim to authenticity from producing analogues of reality, which is objectively exterior to consciousness, but reflected in it as images. By definition, realism tries to recreate within language an essentially designative and univocal narrative prose. What Hemingway conveys to us about a fifth dimension of prose in literature goes beyond such intuitively Euclidean realism. A fifth literary dimension indeed corresponds to Ein-

stein's theory of relativity and augments it. Yet one needs a sort literary critical cryptanalysis of Hemingway's creative if cryptic fifth dimension that would elucidate his proposed "prosaics."

I venture to advance the idea that Hemingway's fifth dimension of prose sets forth the conditions of possibility of creating the matrix of a mode of "Virtual Reality" (VR) in prose. Virtual reality is a term that has captured our imagination so much that it has necessitated its own metaphysics. For a serious practitioner of narrative prose, constructing such a world of interactive imagination is literally a dream come true. In my opinion, creative reconstructions of the world truly enhance Einstein's special theory of relativity by adding to it an intricate magical "fifth dimension."

Virtual reality, therefore, embeds the observer within the enhanced fabric of the real in a remarkably compelling way. For it enhances the observer's influence within Einstein's special theory of relativity. If the writer is "lucky" enough to bring it about, the fictionalized truth in prose bursts upon the here-and-now as virtual reality and amplifies its significations. Such interventions set in motion the ontological and metaphysical unity between the singularities of the lifeworld and the infinite pluralities of literary universals. Perhaps this is one way of comprehending Einstein's compelling assertion that "Imagination is more important than information" (*The New Quotable Einstein* 9).

UK AS FICTIONALIZED AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In the specific category of fictionalized autobiography, I place Hemingway's *Green Hills of Africa* (1935) and then the posthumously published *A Moveable Feast* (1964), and *Under Kilimanjaro* (2005). It is true that Hemingway left *UK* unedited and unfinished. The book's narrative begins in medias res and ends abruptly—incomplete. All the same, as nuanced fictionalized autobiography it conveys an unexpected unity and completeness, not unlike many narratives in our lifeworld. Perhaps this existential quality of *UK* compels the reader to complete this enigmatic work in any way he or she would deem desirable. For the most part, *UK* lends credibility to Hemingway's self-depiction as the protagonist in it.

From late 1954 to early 1956, Hemingway must have been going through a period of physical and mental stress. Just the same, he worked on *UK*, his account of his several months in late 1953 and early 1954 on a safari with his

wife Mary in Kenya. His safari ended with two plane crashes in East Africa in January 1954, with no mention of either of them in *UK*. Hemingway and Mary had survived the crashes, but not without bodily damage, serious in his case. He had suffered severe head injuries and internal damage to his kidneys and liver. While convalescing in Havana, Cuba, he wrote *UK*, which he referred to as “The African Book.” He allowed his powers of intuition and invention to guide his selection and depiction of events as they unfolded within a vivid African setting. His heightened sensitivities and remembrances of things must have also stimulated his fictive imagination. The reader reconstructs the writer’s remembered and fictively amplified experiences by vicariously living through his narrative prose as it develops and tries to appropriate it.

I believe that in every immersive act of reading *UK*, one finds passages that lend themselves to a sort of bibliomancy, which means opening a book by chance and finding an uncanny corpus of the text’s revelations. So chosen, I offer the following passage of Hemingway’s dream from *UK*. It provides an example of how he uses oneiric images to sharpen the sense of remembrances of things past altered by memory but captured as a fifth dimension of the real:

[O]n this night I dreamed that I was in an inn, or gasthaus rather, in the province of Vaud in Switzerland. The wife I had loved first [Hadley Richardson] and best and who was the mother of my oldest son was with me and we were sleeping close together to keep warm and because that was the best way to sleep if both people love each other and it was a cold night. There was a wisteria tree, or vine, that grew up the face of the hotel and over an arbor and the horse chestnut trees in bloom were like waxen candelabras. We were going to fish the Rhone canal and the day before the dream we had fished the Stockalper. Both streams were milky with snow water and it was the early spring. My first and best wife was sleeping soundly, as always, and I could smell every scent of her body and the chestnut trees as well and she was warm in my arms and her head was under my chin and we were sleeping as close, and as trusting, as kittens sleep. I had had bad dreams then as a residue or inheritance from a badly organized war and sleep, or his brother death, were all that interested me at

night. That was, of course, after we had slept together. But there was no problem, then, about knowing the night because we had known the night too well. But tonight, in the dream, I slept happily with my true love in my arms and her head firmly under my chin and when I woke I wondered about how many true loves to which you were faithful, until you were unfaithful, a man could have and I thought about the strange strictures of morality in different countries and who it was that could make a sin a sin. Now that we had the religion it was easy. Ngui, Mthuka, and I could decide what was a sin and what was not. (382)

The above passage demonstrates one of the many instances that autobiographical prose nods to contrapuntal interdependent poetics of the real and its subtle evocative oneiric and mnemonic transformations, among many others. The passage covers a remarkable range of subjects beyond the autobiographical melancholy narrative of the failure of Hemingway's first marriage to Hadley Richardson. It translates "parting is such sweet sorrow" into *Paradise Lost*. The loss is replete with intimations of life and death, everlasting danger of war and provisional peace, and their legacy of nightmares. Simultaneously, it speaks of paradisiacal peace, youth, innocence, conjugal love, and intimacy. Alas, that too is subject to eventual irredeemable loss and the inevitable necessity of learning how to cope with disillusionment as best as one can.

In the cited passage, Hemingway appears at once to be a reflective raconteur, fabulist, mythmaker, and a magisterial writer of figurative prose as autobiography. He intimates he has lived a *fabulous* life in war and peace, in love and loss in many countries and continents. He writes about them truly as a prose stylist who integrates different planes of reality that extends from precise objective observations and descriptions to the oneiric strangeness and mystery characteristic of fictive dreamscapes. Images in such prose induce in the reader a response, if not indeed a sense of eerie, oneiric visions. Such narrative prose transforms clock time or *chronos* and measurable space into lived experienced time and space, respectively as *kairos* and *charo* as ancient Greeks conceived it. Hemingway stimulates a sense of *kairos* in the passage that drastically alters the reader's perception of time past and renders it present. Similarly, Hemingway converts geographical space and topography to lived experience of them. He also assigns to lived experience of space

his autobiographical sense of sensations, perceptions and, impressions and descriptions. Even so, he renders them all more forceful in acuity and scope by what the French language calls *aide-mémoire* or mnemonic devices while at the same time letting the narrative advance toward the elements of fiction.

In reading the passage, Hemingway's dream seemed to engulf me. I made his dream my own and experienced it in the here-and-now. I went through its exaltation of love, the sorrow of its loss, and the despairing failure of idealistic commitments in the 20th century. I did so even though his dream had taken place in the pluperfect past of its events, and Hemingway's act of recollecting it at the time of writing it at his home in Havana, Cuba. I think that its considerable power resides in Hemingway retaining all of its dream qualities condensations, displacements, omissions, and additions, which were parts and parcels of his own fictional style.

Finally, Hemingway tells us that he wakes up and finds the reassuring presence of his wife Mary and the proximity of African friends such as Ngui and Mthuka, with whom he has developed a strong spiritual kinship. He fondly mentions the names of his newly acquired African friends. They have inspired him to have revelations of a new religion, which allow him to immerse himself imaginatively in the reality of the cosmos as a living, sentient, pulsating in its entirety. His view of the surrounding universe now represents more than a palliative to his losses and ensuing sorrows. Above all, in his post-oneiric state, Hemingway finds himself in the part of Africa situated in the lee of mythical Mount Kilimanjaro and Kimana River in Kenya. He finds solace in their primeval reality and the perplexities of his own creative mind. The mountain stands in the narrative for all of Africa and its exhilarating mysteries as the origin and history of human evolution while the river flows by, never again to be at the same place and time.

In *UK*, Africa seems to transmute the malefaction of Hemingway's losses into epiphanies, benefactions, and benignities, all mediated by the magic of his personal experiences and imagination. This mutation finds its way into *UK* through the wide expanses of prose, which offers the reader a lingual shell, as it were, within which the imagination secretes an extra protective layer as an added dimension. Within it, Africa and Africans emerge as "homely" (*Heimlich*) comfortable to be with, to use Sigmund Freud's language, rather than "unhomely" (*Unheimlich*) uncomfortable. Briefly put, *UK* is transracial and transnational. To do so, to some extent, Hemingway fic-

tionalizes it through the mediations of elements of fiction such as characters, point of view, setting, plot, style and so on.

THE USE OF ELEMENTS OF FICTION IN *UK* AS FICTIONALIZED AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Now I shall make use of some of Hemingway's techniques of selection, omission, addition, modification, and point of view as they manifest and how they affect his use of elements of fiction in *UK*. I begin with the point of view or the perspective the narrator chooses an important element of fiction in *UK*, and then setting, character, the plot, conflicts, symbols, and themes.

HEMINGWAY THE WRITER-NARRATOR-PROTAGONIST AS TRICKSTER

Ernest Hemingway, whose proper name appears as such on the cover of *UK*, is also the narrator and protagonist of *UK* as his fictionalized autobiography. He is the central character, whose perspective, or "focalization," as French literary theorist Gérard Genette calls it, plays a decisive role in his narrative. The triadic voices of the serious and yet often humorous autobiographer as author-narrator-protagonist constitute an intricate narrative focalization. Here, the intricacy derives from the synthesis of two seemingly contradictory concepts: the explicitly expected veracity of autobiographical details on the one hand and the implicit, vast, inventive work of fiction on the other. Accordingly, Hemingway often puts forth a constellation of reconciliatory efforts in *UK*, in which fact and fiction gain a salutary symbiotic existence. As a result, if readers would be so inclined, as I have been, they might find by inference a treasure trove of theological, metaphysical, psychological, literary, anthropological, and racial contemplations in *UK*. They will also uncover valuable allusions to myths, folklore, rituals, magic, alchemy, and even chthonic reflections on black magic in the nooks and crannies of this book.

An ensemble of micro-transformative acts of imagination empowers Hemingway to construct integrative planes of far-reaching consequences in *UK*. As a veritable language artist, he is a splendid literary dialectician. He innovatively succeeds in blending sharp binary oppositions in *UK*. A general list of such dialectical ideas includes Africa and its history, geography, culture, and politics versus those of Europe and North America. More particularly, it would comprise masculine versus feminine; young versus old; white versus black; African female versus American male; phatic or shared social language versus private language based on intuitive communication and un-

derstanding; colonial rule versus struggle for self-determination, and finally life versus death, and being versus nothingness.

Now the crucial question is how does Hemingway manage to engage in such profoundly dialectical narrative discourses so effectively? It presents us with an interesting paradox. The adjective paradoxical in its contemporary meaning accurately expresses the reader's impression of a conundrum in *UK*. In Greek, the prefix *para* among its other meanings also signifies "beyond." Added as such to *doxa*, it signifies transgressing a set of beliefs popularly believed in and adhered to as a series of accepted and inviolable standards of thought and behavior. Hence, the paradoxical essentially indicates transgressive or transformative acts of micro aggressions against established and accepted norms. Clearly, such acts are concurrently destructive *and* constructive. They offer possibilities of evolutionary and revolutionary changes, always considered as salvific but also problematic.

Wounded in World War I, Hemingway participated as a journalist in World War II and later won the Noble Prize for writing. On the other hand, as the creator of an original prose style and pioneer of approaches to the art of fiction and nonfiction, he crossed many social and artistic boundaries. It all conspired to make him a veritable North American myth worldwide. Even his personal way of life was highly unique. Therefore, he occupies a place among the propagators of international high culture modernists as well as being one of the protesters against slavish devotion to artistic traditions and elitist conventions. As such, he hauntingly approximates the status that the American Indian mythology bestows upon the figure of the Trickster. Paul Radin (1883–1959) tells us he is "known in ethnological literature as the Transformer, Culture-hero, and Trickster. The first term owes its origin to the fact that it is his rôle to transform the world into its present shape and to bestow upon mankind the various elements of culture" (*Primitive Man as Philosopher* 347).

In the common parlance of our time, the word trickster has a breadth of negative and pejorative connotations. The trickster variously stands for a swindler, cheater, pretender, fraud, sham, and con artist, among others. In its popular meanings, the trickster is then a profoundly amoral transgressor. Perhaps the noun con artist alone hints at the Trickster as a mythological archetype being both the devil and the good lord. Nevertheless, I must emphasize the dynamic figure of the transgressor-trickster equally possesses

uncommon redeeming intuitive and creative characteristics. In his book, *The Trickster: A Study in American Indian Mythology*, Radin writes:

The symbol which Trickster embodies is not a static one. It contains within itself the promise of differentiation, the promise of god and man. For this reason, every generation occupies itself with interpreting The Trickster anew. No generation understands him fully but no generation can do without him. Each had to include him in all its theologies, in all its cosmogonies, despite the fact that it realized he did not fit properly into any of them, for he represents only the undifferentiated and distant past, but likewise the undifferentiated present without within every individual. This constitutes his universal and persistent attraction (168–69).

What is striking in Radin's summation of archaic characteristics of the trickster is that he comes forth as a discoverer of the "undifferentiated"; that is to say, the *as-yet to be known, differentially recreated and reorganized*. The trickster-transgressor-culture-hero then deals with the differential calculus of the undifferentiated and the restructuring of it through a new *integral calculus* of differentiation. From this perspective, the trickster is a messenger of innovative change, the bearer of good news, which affects historical periods in their specific and general modes of living and thinking. This means that the trickster lives within the realm of transcendence throughout history, triggering new discoveries of original dialectical processes, and their revelations. Taking the creative and benevolent side of the trickster as a creative being and his less salubrious characteristics and propensities, Radin tells us, "There is much to be said for the theory that primary archaic figures like Trickster had two sides, divine culture-hero, and divine buffoon"¹ (*The Trickster: A Study in American Indian Mythology* 125). In his essay "On the Psychology of the Trickster-Figure," (from his own psychoanalytic perspective) Carl Jung also maintains "There is something of the trickster in the character of shaman and medicine-man, for he, too, often plays malicious jokes on people only to fall victim in his turn to the vengeance of those he has injured" (*Mother/Rebirth/Spirit/Trickster* 136). Jung's observations, too, attest to a complex psychology and metaphysics of the trickster-transformer figure and his, or less often, her actions.

I would propose that the reader consider Hemingway as a type of archetypal trickster-transformer-literary-hero in *UK*. He knew Radin's work, as he knew about so much else that never found its way directly into his writing.³ He juggles his roles with the dexterity of the trickster. His masterly use of the elements of fiction hammers the "undifferentiated" pulp of his day-to-day lived experiences in Africa into the highly "differentiated" form of the literary genre of fictionalized autobiography.

As the transgressive-transformative trickster in the high-culture literary world, Hemingway declares, "all a writer of fiction is really is a *congenital liar who invents from his own knowledge or that of other men*. I am a writer of fiction and so I am a liar too and invent from what I know and what I've heard. *I'm a liar*" (*UK* 113, emphasis added). Yet the intuitive and inventive acts that make Hemingway declare himself a "liar," put him also in the category of mythological trickster as a writer of fiction. His creative lying enables him to enter the verity of spacetime of the fifth dimension.

Hemingway further adds, "A man who writes a novel or a short story is a liar ipso-facto. His only excuse is that he makes the truth as he invents it truer than it would be. That is what makes good writers or bad. If he writes in the first person, stating it's fiction, critics will try to prove these things happened to him" (*UK* 113). The fictional lie then is not insidious or nefarious; it often aims at a higher truth than is commonly perceived as such. Such truth begets a distinctive, finely tuned recreation of what might or could have been otherwise. It fills a void at the very center of our being.

In *UK*, Hemingway's knowledge appears to be extensive. He is a novelist with a distinctly personal style known and imitated worldwide. He also has a keen grasp of matters geographical, topographical, and military. He is an expert hunter and angler, an inveterate traveler and a keen observer of cultures and politics. As a physician's son, he has an interest in medicine. During his second safari, he offers medical advice, dispenses medicine, gives injections, and can readily discuss various diseases. He pays close attention to natural phenomena: the particularities of climate, animals, birds, snakes, insects, grasses, and trees, always and everywhere.

Hemingway is highly sensitive to the inherent concealed poetics of what Heidegger calls the "world-at-hand." Besides, he has a well-developed sense of the spiritual, metaphysical, even the mystical, which includes receptiveness to the promptings of the unconscious. He is alert and receptive to memories, nocturnal and diurnal dreams, prophecies, magic, healings, and divinations.

He believes all that exists is sentient and therefore ontological. Wherever he is, he tries to live as fully as possible, even when it unfolds as a veritable nightmare of injuries, death, and destruction. As I have alluded to earlier, he is a type of shapeshifter in the high artistic sense of the myth. His shapeshifting actions primarily concern the different various identities he assumes.

1. Secondary, Tertiary Characters, and Setting in *UK* as Fictionalized Autobiography

Mary—Hemingway variously refers to his wife Mary Welsh Hemingway as Miss Mary, the Memsahib or more familiarly by the sobriquet Kittener. He credits her with personality traits that belong to the Jungian unconscious male archetypal pattern of animus, such as being courageous, strongminded, and resolute. Her portrayal offers her a pivotal position in *UK* because she has a psychophysical makeup that is in contrast to his own. Acknowledging her abundant feminine charm, Hemingway deepens Mary's characterization by highlighting her appearance as being diminutive and yet tomboyish, and resolute, even stubborn. These qualities accentuate her poise, confidence, and principled assertiveness. She repeatedly comes through as ethical, highly considerate, practical, disciplined, and calm under pressure. Mary is a fully sympathetic, multidimensional secondary character.

What I find fascinating and instructive about her is the manner in which Hemingway portrays her as a well-developed composite character at the crossroads of her real and fictionalized self. The reader learns as husband and wife, they have shared years of proximity, privacy, intimacy, devotion, and disagreements whether at home in Cuba or travelling in different countries and continents. They have a close conjugal understanding of one another's strengths and weaknesses, which appears to have its shared secrets, sexual and otherwise.

As presented to the reader, Mary is therefore a round and vital character. Her brush against Hemingway's imagination as a writer of fiction adds to her fictional verisimilitude. In his sharp sketches of her in various scenes, providing her with extensive parts in dialogues, verbal or nonverbal, Mary acquires a *living reality* of her own in the reader's mind. As far as the reader can discern, the fictional part of her characterization is all the more resonant because of the evident impact of the depth of Hemingway's subtle shades of marital relationship with her. Let me provide you with an exemplary case

of Hemingway's imaginative involvement with her, which subtly alters and calibrates his portrait of her in *UK*.

Hemingway tells us his gunbearer, tracker, bloodbrother, and drinking companion Ngui, "had asked me one day very brusquely if Miss Mary was from the same tribe that I came from." (*UK* 45–6). Hemingway replies, no, and explains, "She is from a Northern Frontier tribe in our country. From Minnesota" (*UK* 45–6). The response satisfies Ngui, who replies, "We have seen the tribal marks" (*UK* 46). It is a transient moment of dialogue, which is humorous but it also makes available a decidedly epiphanic moment in which the creative version of truth becomes manifest. It clearly exemplifies Hemingway's engagement in free-association, inventive conflation, and juxtaposition, which catches autobiography as it slides into fiction.

It is a known fact to Hemingway scholars that Mary was born Mary Welsh in the small town of Bemidji in Beltrami County, Minnesota. Bemidji has a long Indian tribal history. The town is near the Chippewa National Forest. It is still the vital hub of health services for three American Indian Tribes: Red Lake Indian Reservation, White Earth Indian Reservations, and the Leach Lake Indian Reservations. The name Bemidji naturally elicits many associative images of American Indian tribes, particularly for Hemingway who had an interest in all matters Indian American. Equally obvious is that Mary Welsh Hemingway has no tribal attributes whatsoever, except being of Welsh ancestry in distinction to Hemingway's English one.

Thus, attributing tribal distinction to Mary demands a clear stretch of imagination; and yet it works with Ngui and delights the reader as a light moment in the narrative. Regardless, it makes sense in a brilliant and radical fictional inventiveness and improvisation. Then there is the matter of the signifying "tribal marks," which Ngui assures Hemingway to have seen and seemingly drawn his own conclusion from it. Interestingly, in her autobiography, *How It Was*, Mary recalls that Hemingway "went over to the driver [M'thoka], not Ngui, to explain in his hilarious combination of Spanish, Italian, and Swahili that his, M'thoka's tribal scars were similar to those of Memsab's tribe in America, the Memsab being me. He did not mention that my tribe was the auto-accident tribe" (*How It Was* 344).

The automobile accident Mary refers to had happened shortly before her marriage to Hemingway in August 1946 while driving to Havana airport. The car skidded down and off the road, hitting a bank with Hemingway at the wheel. The accident left Mary with permanent facial scars. Again, the

sum total of all these inventive-associative- remembered activities culminate in Ngugi's declaration, "We have seen the tribal marks." This algorithmic transmogrification shows the subtle shades modifications and adjustment of fact and fiction that take place in *UK*.

Debba—Hemingway portrays a young Wakamba woman as a remarkable secondary character. He communicates with her mostly using a mixture of Spanish, Italian, and Swahili and signs and gestures of various kinds—a form of translanguaging. He calls her the "queen of the Ngomas" or parties. For him, she embodies an African primal feminine presence, drawn from what one might call meta-communications with her. Primarily, Hemingway and Debba share a visceral physical attraction for one another. Their relationship brings a touch of the incommunicable to the narrative of their liaison, which resists clear, denotative verbal expression.

Powerful emotional bonds always hinder communication anyway. At its most fervid pitch, it might approximate speechlessness. One has the feeling that for Hemingway Debba virtually is a formidable young feminine presence. She imparts to him a carnal knowledge of Africa and Africans. Their conversations go beyond common intelligibility toward a mode of forceful and sufficient body language. He tells us:

here [in Africa] I was with a wife that I loved and who loved me and tolerated my errors and referred to this girl [Debba] as my *fiancée*, tolerating because I was in some ways a good husband and for other reasons of generosity and kindness and detachment and wanting me to know more about this country than I had any right to know. (*UK* 39)

His elucidations sensitively touch on first-hand affective experiences. Accordingly, one better understands Hemingway's claim that his relationship with Debba constitutes a "sort of not too simple trust and something else. It is hard to say it" (*UK* 30). Hemingway and Debba, affianced, have an ostensibly tacit but keenly felt intimacy and budding genuine trust. True, they communicate in a type of translanguaging. Perhaps one could understand it best as an inscrutable metacommunication of elemental desires, daydreams, unconscious phantasies, and carnal feelings, and discoveries so rich they never reach denotative language. Mary relegates their unusual

language to the status of an “Unknown Tongue” (*How It Was* 240). Thus, to put a linguistic spin on it, one could call it metalanguage. Of necessity, such language needs various adjustments of the qualities of voice such as pitch, volume, tone; and gestural, facial, and tactile contacts, all of which convey various emotions and states of mind.

One can say then Hemingway’s contacts with Debba rise above shared verbal dialogue. She situates herself at the intersection of how Hemingway concurrently relates to his pursuit of carnal knowledge and his longing for oneness with an originary continent in the human evolutionary process. To Hemingway, and by extension to his non-African readers, Debba might well represent all matters African, with their attendant dimensions, which often surpass mere lingual understanding. She would also stand for, at least transiently, an answer to Hemingway’s oft-repeated Spanish phrase addressed to her “No hay remedio” (there is no remedy), which Mary considers to be just “too easy” a way out of the vagaries and confusions of life (*UK* 84).

Tertiary Characters—A number of tertiary round characters also facilitate the reader’s grasp of the centrality of the theme of exploration and literary alterations of Africa and Africans to Hemingway at the level of his fictionalized experiences in *UK*. They include Ngui, the narrator’s gunbearer and tracker; the truck driver Mthuka; and the tracker Keiti. Hemingway gives them fictive status as his coreligionists in their shared belief in an elaborate view of an animate universe that he develops in *UK*.⁴

These sympathetic characters balance out Hemingway’s encounter with the Massai tribesman Simeon who provokes him, and with whom he has a theatrical Western style showdown at Mr. Singh’s *duka* (a general store) in Loitokitok, Kenya. The narrator portrays Simeon as a weak but bullying, cuckolded and dishonored man, whose promiscuous wife has a sexual preference for Wakamba men. Nevertheless, Hemingway describes him as being still full of swagger and bravado.

Then there is Reginald, the Informer, who works for the police. Even though he informs Hemingway on secret Mau activities, he is a source of concern to Hemingway. Reginald appears to everyone as a detested vestige of British colonialism in Kenya at the time. The case of Reginald is full of complications. Aside from Hemingway, whom he addresses as “brother,” everyone feels either hostile toward him or avoids him altogether. Even Mary,

generally a woman of sympathy and understanding, cannot stand him. The “widow,” Reginald’s companion, reportedly wishes that authorities send him “to some distant place if it were impossible to have him hanged” (*UK* 109). Reginald serves his community as the mythological scapegoat, taking on their sins, which highlights his ambiguous and contradictory role concurrently as an informer, friend, insider, and outsider to Hemingway. He is a case of the betrayer betrayed, which makes for his total alienation from his tribesmen. He ends up being a contradiction, a man tragically at once loose and caught.

Hemingway is ambivalent enough toward Reginald to have a nightmare about him, one of “the real ones that could drench you in sweat, for a long time” (*UK* 118). He hangs Reginald in this nightmare, a telling eruption of the unconscious desires into dream images. Ironically, it is most likely that he hangs the informer in his nightmare for the very service that he renders: informing. The depth of Hemingway’s hatred of the informer in the nightmare expresses itself in having his body taken out in the hunting car “to be eaten by hyenas.” Unconsciously the informer might represent the narrator’s own Jungian “shadow,” his own repressed unconscious side.

Hemingway’s practice as a creative writer integrates the positive and negative components of his personality. His creativity is also his mode of attaining salvation. This rare salutary integration grants him legitimacy as a possessor and revealer of hard-earned and often ruthless truth, a sun that leaves no shadows. As a writer, he is in reality himself an *informant*, and a superb one at that. He makes secret forays into the dark regions of the as-yet-unknown domains of the mind. What he writes is eventually available to anyone who can read and has the capacity to understand, and possibly act upon it. In a sense, Reginald and Hemingway both *inform*, albeit that the former does it surreptitiously, most often exclusively for personal monetary gain to the detriment of others. In any case, to the extent that homicidal rage is restricted to Hemingway’s nightmares, it remains under control in waking hours and helps maintain his psychical balance and creativity.

Setting—the action in *UK* takes place either on or around a small plain between a river and a stretch of swampland in the lee of Kilimanjaro in Kenya. Christopher Ondaatje locates the setting southwest of Nairobi “near the Kimana River and swamp” (*Hemingway in Africa: The Last Safari* 171). It is entirely possible that Hemingway chose to leave this pastoral setting

unnamed. The unidentified setting enables to find an opening for the play between the geography of the unidentified African location and his own imaginatively created dreamscape of it. Therefore, it imparts a blend of realistic and phantasmagoric geography. Consequently, the narrative text at once holds close to African geography and the unbound world of imagination beyond it, which the reader will have to recuperate. Hemingway tells us in his poignant numinous language:

There are always mystical countries that are part of one's childhood. Those we remember and visit sometimes when we are asleep or dreaming. They are as lovely at night as they were when we were children. If you ever go back to see them they are not there. But they are as fine in the night as they ever were if you have the luck to dream of them. In Africa when we lived on the small plain in the shade of the big thorn trees at the edge of the swamp at the foot of the great mountain we had such countries. We were no longer, technically, children although in many ways I am quite sure we were. (*UK* 23)

In the passage, we have an encapsulation of the multifaceted role setting plays in Hemingway's fiction, casting a spell on the reader. Being set in reality under Mount Kilimanjaro, Hemingway's prose poetry lifts his own lived experience of it to a lasting literary place in fictionalized autobiography that is *UK*. It is a vast province, real and imagined, which turns the narrative of Hemingway's second safari into the plurisignificant fictional narrative of a voyage of exploration. The setting then turns into an invitation to the reader to participate actively in the pursuits of lion and leopard hunting that constitutes the general plot.

CONCLUSION

We have seen Hemingway as an amalgam of writer-trickster who by utilizing elements of fiction in a creative way transmutes the autobiographical account of a safari into the magic of fictionalized autobiography. He often provides his characters and their circumstances with a nimbus of an imaginal fifth dimension, which prompts its own ontology. Martin Heidegger assures us that "the poetry that thinks is in truth the topology of Being" (*Poetry, Language, Thought* 12). If not the truth of "the topology of Being,"

the fusion of prose and an intuitive literary fifth dimension in *UK* embrace the truth of the topology of *being*, which longs for transcendence of meaning.

Consequently, as I have suggested, *UK* possesses unique “prosaics,” prompting the reader to explore its ontology and metaphysics. The book demonstrates the quality of Hemingway’s passionate meaning-making world on the African continent, seen with the marveling eyes of a child discovering the world for the first time. Hemingway observes that “Africa being as old as it is, makes all people except the professional invaders and spoilers into children” (*UK* 23). In his last book on Africa, with the fresh all-embracing gaze of a child, he imparts to us the living texture of an imaginal fifth dimension of fictionalized autobiography.

NOTES

1. For my previous work on this subject, please see my “Alchemy, Memory, and Archetypes: Reading Hemingway’s *Under Kilimanjaro* as an African Fairy Tale.” In *Ernest Hemingway and the Geography of Memory*, eds. Mark Cirino and Mark Ott (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2010), 107–16.
2. Henceforth I shall refer to *Under Kilimanjaro* as *UK*.
3. Hemingway had in his library in Havana, Cuba, Paul Radin’s *The Story of the American Indian*. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1944. Print. Please see item 5429 in Brasch, James D. and Sigman, Joseph. *Hemingway’s Library: A Composite Record* [Electronic Edition]. John F. Kennedy Library, 2000. Web. 24 September 2015.
4. Please see my “Hemingway’s African Book of Revelation: Dawning of a New Religion in *Under Kilimanjaro*.”

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