

## Abstract

20<sup>th</sup> century was one of the most tumultuous periods in the human history. The fast-paced changes, innovations and progress, and the deadly, violent conflicts such as World War I shattered many illusions and marked future generations. The divide between the old and the new world became irreconcilable, because the old beliefs had been killed on the battlegrounds of Belgium and Italy. A member of such generation that had a first-hand experience was one of the most important and successful American writer Ernest Hemingway. A literary behemoth of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Hemingway's work reflects his time; it is full of loss and sorrow young people of the war generation had to suffer. Many of his novels and short stories discuss the state of the world and how a person can find their place in it, how to cope with what had been and with what is to come. Furthermore, he analyses the relationships between friends, men and women, between individual and society, looking for answers to elementary human questions. How does one establish their own place in the world? What love looks like and how such relationship works? What is one's purpose in life? How to cope with loss and suffering?

In his texts Hemingway portrays the protagonists in various life situations and plots, but many share a common experience, such as the protagonists of the texts analysed in this thesis. The thesis explores the theme of loss and estrangement in three key Hemingway's works: two short stories "The Snows of the Kilimanjaro" and "The Short and Happy Life of Francis Macomber" and his novel *The Sun Also Rises*. Upon the first glance the texts might appear to be dissimilar from each other, yet there are shared commonalities, such as the estrangement from one's own self, estrangement from society, the issue of losing and finding purpose in life, the issue of meaningful life, and loss of marriage. Harry from "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" is wrestling with his approaching death and coming to understanding how his giving up on and of his talent has rendered his life meaningless and purposeless. He is dying and leaving nothing behind, not even himself, because he became estranged from himself a long time ago. On the other hand, Francis Macomber from "The Short and Happy Life of Francis Macomber" is also estranged from himself, but what is tragic is that he does not know it up until a pivotal moment. Jake Barnes from *The Sun Also Rises* is riddled with several losses, having lost so much to the war, yet he is determined to find his place in the world anew. To better understand how the choices of those protagonists are important to understand their situations and to obtain deeper understanding of their losses, this thesis draws on Soren Kierkegaard's text *Either/Or* to explain the reverberations of those decisions or inaction. The

idea of being estranged from one's own self directly correlates with Kierkegaard's philosophy, which concerns attaining and becoming oneself as the main purpose in life.