

## Paper

# Fatherhood and France: Fathering Schatz in Hemingway's stories

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### Abstract

This study examines Ernest Hemingway's conception and construction of fatherhood by examining several stories in which the protagonists present the fathers' perspective. By focusing in particular on the contexts surrounding the boy characters "Schatz," who appear as protagonists' sons in several works and all grew up in France, Hemingway's attitude towards the one-to-one father-son relationship from the father's perspective can be clarified. Focusing on Hemingway's depictions of fatherhood, rather than "sonhood," through the character Schatz could show us a new aspect of Hemingway's attitude towards the father-son relationship.

Keywords : Ernest Hemingway / fatherhood / father-son relationship / France / American literature

### Introduction

Although many of the works of Ernest Hemingway depict father-son relationships, the protagonists are mostly sons, such as Nick Adams.<sup>1)</sup> It is not until 1933 that Hemingway set himself to fully develop the protagonist as a father in his story, "A Day's Wait" and "Fathers and Sons." Although the protagonist's son in the published version of "Fathers and Sons" is anonymous, the manuscript shows his father calls him "Schatz." In fact, both of the protagonists' sons are "Schatz," both raised in France, and both also probably the same age. Schatz next appeared in unfinished manuscripts from the mid-1940s to the early 1950s, part of which we can read in *Islands in the Stream*. This Schatz, once again the protagonist's son, was also raised in France.

Hence, Hemingway consistently connects France with the theme of father-son relationships. Examining Hemingway's concept of fatherhood through the Schatz character could throw new light on Hemingway's attitudes towards father-son relationships.

### With Schatz, as a sole companion

First, it should be noted that this section's title is drawn from Flora (1982). In *Hemingway's Nick Adams*, Flora (1982, 235) describes the beginning of "Fathers and Sons" as follows: "Nicholas Adams is driving through the southern countryside, with his son as his sole companion." The concept of the son as a father's sole companion is central to this study.

The sudden appearance of protagonists as fathers occurs in the 1933 short stories, "A Day's Wait," and "Fathers and Sons," published in *Winner Take Nothing*. Distinctively, these stories feature only two characters: a father and his son.

According to Flora (1982, 218), "A Day's Wait" narrows to the relationship between the father and his son. While they are not alone per se, the father's first-person narrative and his careful usage of pronouns occlude any other people from the reader as follows:

He came into the room to shut the windows while we were still in bed and I saw he looked ill (Hemingway, 1987, 332).

That the protagonist's wife is not identified has been pointed out by critics such as Smith (1989) and Flora (1982). Smith (1989) also

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takes note of the people staying at the house with this father and son. Returning to the house after the covey hunt, the protagonist narrator says:

At the house they said the boy had refused to let any one come into the room (Hemingway, 1987, 333, emphasis mine) .

This “they” indicates the protagonist and his son were at the house with other people. But who are “they”? Due to the deliberate narrative technique, there seems to be no way of determining who “they” are from this story.

In “Fathers and Sons,” set in the car the protagonist is driving, only the protagonist Nick and his son are present: all other people are located in Nick’s reminiscences. Although the son is anonymous in the published story, this story’s manuscript (no. 383) shows his father calls him “Schatz.” According to Smith (1989) , the composition periods of this story and “A Day’s Wait” overlap: “A Day’s Wait” (March-July 1933) , “Fathers and Sons” (November 1932-August 1933) . Both boys are raised in France and also probably of the same generation.

The central mystery of the father and son in “Fathers and Sons” is why they are driving alone in the middle of fall. As this story indicates, the town Nick is driving through is “not his country” (Hemingway, 1987, 369) . They also appear to have been traveling for several days.<sup>2)</sup> As well as the mystery of who “they” are in “A Day’s Wait,” there seems to be no way of knowing why the father and son are traveling alone.

Interestingly, according to Baker (1969) and Smith (1989) , Hemingway undertook long journeys alone with his first son in 1928 and 1932. On December 6, 1928, when he received a telegram telling him of his father’s suicide, he was on the Havana Special train, with his first son Bumby traveling to Key West. He had just moved there with his second wife Pauline and his second son Patrick. At that time Bumby was 5 years old. After receiving the telegram, Hemingway sent Bumby on, asking the Pullman porter to watch over him for the rest

of the trip south, and took the all-night train to Chicago.<sup>3)</sup>

Hemingway’s second journey with his first son was in 1932. According to Baker (1969) and Smith (1989) , Hemingway drove Bumby from Key West to Piggott, his second wife Pauline’s home, to join his wife, his second son Patrick, and third son Gregory, for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Hemingway and nine-year-old Bumby stopped for the night in late November 1932 in northern Mississippi. That experience is reflected in “Fathers and Sons.” Just after this second trip, Bumby came down with influenza. Due to a misunderstanding of the Centigrade temperature scale, he was sure he was going to die. That episode gave Hemingway the idea used in “A Day’s Wait.”

These biographical facts tell us that, first, the characters of Schatz are based on Hemingway’s first son, Bumby. Like “Schatz” in the 1933 work, Bumby was raised in France. Like Bumby, the Schatz in *Islands in the Stream* is the protagonist’s first son among three, and was also raised in France. It is clear that the characters of Schatz were based on Hemingway’s first son.

Second, on both journeys, Bumby was no longer Hemingway’s only son: during that time Hemingway lived with his second wife and their son(s) . So this time with his son from his first marriage represented occasional meetings—something which strongly influenced “A Day’s Wait,” and “Fathers and Sons.” This could never have been determined from the published works alone.<sup>4)</sup>

### **The Schatz stories’ focuses**

While Hemingway’s deliberate technique of omission is well-known, it should be noted that in the 1933 Schatz stories Hemingway creates omission through over-focusing, or the deliberate close-setting of narrative frames.

Considering the background behind these stories, the togetherness of the protagonists and their sons in “A Day’s Wait,” and “Fathers and Sons,” can be seen as occasional. But the narrative skillfully leads readers to overlook

that possibility. For instance, in the last part of "Fathers and Sons," there is this conversation between Nick and his son as follows:

"Why do we never go to pray at the tomb of my grandfather?"

"We live in a different part of the country. It's a long way from here." ...

"I hope we won't live somewhere so that I can never go to pray at your tomb when you are dead."

(Hemingway, 1987, 376, emphasis mine)

To whom does Nick's "we" refer? Perhaps he means that since he and his son live in a different part of the country from the tomb, they never go there. Nick's "we" here seems to encourage readers to assume that father and son live together.

Moreover, to whom does the son's "we" refer? Naturally, to himself and his family. But who are the son's family? Does it have this boy's mother as Nick's wife? Or this boy's mother as Nick's ex-wife? "Fathers and Sons" provides no hints about the nature of either "we."

In the opening scene of "A Day's Wait," the skillful usage of pronouns is conspicuous as follows:

He came into the room to shut the windows while we were still in bed and I saw he looked ill (Hemingway, 1987, 332, emphasis mine) .

Who are "we" here? The 9-year old son comes into his father's bedroom. The father is sleeping with someone. Should the reader assume that this someone is his mother? Also, can we be sure that the son usually lives in this house?

Flora (1982) sees narrative features like these in three of the late stories of *Winner Take Nothing*, "A Day's Wait," "Fathers and Sons," and "Wine of Wyoming," and attributes it to the Hemingway's intention to conceal parental separation as follows:

Hemingway's reticence about the sleeping wife in "A Day's Wait" becomes significant in

the context of the late stories of *Winner Take Nothing*—especially "Wine of Wyoming" and "Fathers and Sons." Hemingway chose not to emphasize any sense of parental separation in "A Day's Wait" (Flora, 1982, 218) .

By careful usage of pronouns in the 1933 stories, Hemingway focuses readers on father and son, occluding the people around them. Superficially, both stories depict the daily heart-warming relationship between father and son, but this is contradicted by the refusal to reveal their circumstances. From the 1933 stories, we find on one hand Hemingway's first strong enthusiasm for tackling fatherhood, and on the other an intense avoidance of husband-hood. Effacing husband-hood via narrative over-focusing might be his way to resolve the tension of separately being a husband and a father. However, ultimately he doesn't seem to be able to separate the two in the 1933 stories. Hence these stories leave some space for readers to overlook the possibility of the protagonists' broken marriage—in fiction, at least. Each reader must decide whether to associate the stories with the author's background.

### Through Schatz' France

The Schatz in "A Day's Wait," and "Fathers and Sons," are both based on Hemingway's first son, Bumby: raised in France, seemingly the same age, and depicted as sole companion to the protagonists. When the Schatz character reappears in *Islands in the Stream*, he seems to be older, but still shows common characteristics with the previous Schatz: he is the oldest son brought up in France. Now the connection between the Schatz character and France should be considered by comparing the 1933 works with *Islands in the Stream*. Examining Hemingway's depiction of a France-raised eldest son from the 1930s to the 1940s will help elucidate his attitude toward fatherhood as a writer at this point in his career.

Unlike the 1933 stories, in *Islands in the*

*Stream* Hemingway no longer effaces the stepfamily. The protagonist, Thomas Hudson, feels free to talk about his ex-wife with his three sons, including her only son Thom called "Schatz."<sup>5</sup> Considering the author's biographical background, in "A Day's Wait," stepbrothers as well as a stepmother could have been present in the house outside of the narrative focus. However, in *Islands in the Stream* Hemingway feels no need to use his deliberate focus to erase Schatz's two stepbrothers.

Moreover, the France in the 1933 stories and in *Islands in the Stream* is very different. In the 1933 stories it is only "France" that is mentioned, and France is clearly the boys' base, contrasting with America as the father's base. In "A Day's Wait," Schatz says, "At school in France the boys told me you can't live with forty-four degrees. I've got a hundred and two" (Hemingway, 1987, 334) . The school in France is Schatz's territory, and not his father's. In "Fathers and Sons," Schatz brings up France as follows: "In France that wouldn't make any difference. In France we'd go. I think I ought to pray at the tomb of my grandfather" (Hemingway, 1987, 376) . Schatz here is asserting his standards over his father's "foreign" standards. For Schatz, France is his place, not his father's.

On the other hand, in *Islands in the Stream*, Schatz aspires after the Paris experience he believes he shared with his father. Schatz here emphasizes Paris, not France. He needs to share his father's Paris as his own. So his Paris memories sometimes strike a jarring note. On this point, Waldhorn (2002, 206, emphasis mine) points out as follows:

Tom, Jr., the eldest, earns a slightly higher niche in his father's esteem. For one thing he shares Hudson's love of place, delighting his father with acute sensory memories of his childhood in Paris and extraordinary recollections about Joyce, Pound, and Ford. And yet there is something more than slightly awry about this happy past the boy remembers in adult terms (almost as

Hemingway was to tell the story again in *A Moveable Feast*) , something too compulsive about his rehearsal of how papa and I "used to go around together in Paris." When Tom, Jr., says "Tell them about when I was little... I'll never get to be as good in real life as the stories about me when I was little [57], the voice is the son's but the judgement is his father's.

In *Islands in the Stream* Schatz essentially cannot tell his Paris and his father's apart as his stepbrother Andrew points out as follows:

"Tell me about some more of those friends of mine, papa," young Tom said. "I know I knew them and I know we used to be around cafes together but I'd like to know some more definite things about them. The sort of things I know about Mr. Joyce, say."

"Can you remember Mr. Pascin?"

"No. Not really. What was he like?"

"You can't claim him as a friend if you don't even remember him," Andrew said (Hemingway, 1970, 72) .

Also Audrey Bruce, a girl who stays with Hudson, is dubious about Schatz's memory of Paris. She asks the first son "Do you really remember it that well? You were an awfully small boy" and tells him "I don't believe you can remember them all" (Hemingway, 1970, 188) .<sup>6</sup>

Hemingway's first son Bumby, who inspired the Schatz character, was also an awfully small boy with his father in Paris. In *Moveable Feast*, which depicts the young Hemingway's Paris life, there are several references to Bumby. But Bumby there is described as a "baby" who needs a formula bottle (Hemingway, 1996) . Even the most grown up Bumby in *Moveable Feast* is standing with his mother by the train tracks in Austria, "blond and chunky and with winter cheeks looking like a good Vorarlberg boy" (Hemingway, 1996, 206-207) . The first son in *A Moveable Feast* appears to be too young to share a detailed Paris memory with his father. From the old Paris memory Schatz

recollects many readers can naturally sense that “the voice is the son’s but the judgement is his father’s” as Waldhorn (2002, 206) points out.

### Conclusion

Reviewing Schatz in the three stories of Hemingway, we can see the author’s attitude towards the one-to-one relationship of father and son. In the 1933 stories, Schatz, as his father’s sole companion, may invoke their natural unity, even a warm relationship for some readers like Flora (1982) . However, the two Schatz highlight the different background between the fathers and sons, declaring their independence from their fathers through their own France. On the other hand, the Schatz created from the mid-1940s to the early 1950s in *Islands in the Stream* is eager to seek unity with his father through the memory of Paris, not France. Here, the son does not want independence from his father at all. On the contrary, he wants independence from his brothers by creating a “shared” memory with his father.

A common distinctive feature of the protagonists’ in the 1933 Hemingway’s stories and *Islands in the Stream* is that they sometimes show a lack of empathy with their sons. They do not show the same sensitivity regarding their sons as Nick Adams’ father.<sup>7)</sup> However, we can see a clear difference in the depiction of the father-son relationship in *Islands in the Stream*: here the eldest son Schatz tries to relate to his father, seeks to share Paris with his father. Schatz, now one of his father’s three sons, and no longer his father’s sole companion, finally gives his father Hudson an opportunity to share something with him. He seems to be the first and last son who tries to share something with his father in Hemingway’s stories. Nick Adams could never do this. Through the Paris memory the son tries to create from his father’s recollection, Hemingway might have tried to tackle the theme of fatherhood, not son-hood, and sought some hope in it for the first time in his career.

### Notes

This thesis is mainly based on my presentation at the 18th International Hemingway Society Conference in Paris in July 2018.

1) In Hemingway’s works protagonists as fathers first appear in “Cross Country Snow” in 1924, and which has the protagonist, Nick, just “before” becoming a father. Then in *A Farewell to Arms*, written from 1928 to 1929, the protagonist Frederic’s son did not cry at birth and died.

2) The story relates the following:

The cotton was picked and in the clearings there were patches of corn, some cut with streaks of red sorghum, and driving easily, his son asleep on the seat by his side, the day’s run made, knowing the town he would reach for the night,... (Hemingway, 1987, 369) .

3) According to Baker (1969), since he had just crossed the Atlantic with other strangers to see his father, Bumby was not worried.

4) Actually we have a third point: for Hemingway, traveling alone with his first son has some connotation of abrupt death: the 1928 journey was abruptly interrupted by his father’s suicide and the 1932 one was followed by his son’s confrontation with impending death, if not a real crisis. This will be discussed further at a later time.

5) It has the scene as follows:

“Papa, weren’t we ever poor?” Andrew asked.

“No I’d gotten over being poor by the time you guys were born. We were broke lots of times but never really poor the way we were with Thom and his mother.”

“Tell us some more about in Paris,” David said.

“What else did you and Tommy do?”

“What did we do, Schatz?” (Hemingway, 1970, 62)

6) The conversation between Audrey and Tommy (Schatz) is as follows:

“Do you really remember it that well? You were an awfully small boy.”

“I remember every bridge on the river from Suresnes to Charenton,” Tommy told her.

“You can’t.”

"I can't name them. But I've got them in my head."

"I don't believe you can remember them all. And part of the river's ugly and many of the bridges are."

"I know it. But I was there a long time after I knew you, and papa and I used to walk the whole river. The ugly parts and the beautiful parts and I've fished a lot of it with different friends of mine."  
(Hemingway, 1970, 188)

7) The 1933 stories might not invoke full warmth for every reader because each of the stories implies the lack of empathy of fathers with his sons. The father in "A Day's Wait" neglects his son's fear of death and entertains himself in hunting as Patrick J. Mahony (1968, 35) says "the father's successful self-entertainment in hunting." In "Fathers and Sons" Nick's perspective is basically on son's side in his boyhood recollection and he is easily forgetful of his role as a father in the present situation as follows:

"What was it like, Papa, when you were a little boy and used to hunt with the Indians?"

"I don't know," Nick was startled. He had not even noticed the boy was awake. He looked at him sitting beside him on the seat. He had felt quite alone but this boy had been with him. He wondered for how long (Hemingway, 1987, 375).

The protagonists who are so forgetful of their sons as to indulge themselves in own world have strong contrast with those of Nick Adams' father, who shows too much sensitivity toward his son. Actually such a tendency can also be seen in the father of the later Schatz story, *Islands in the Stream*. The protagonist Thomas Hudson's eye on his sons is sometimes too realistic to be a solitary father who welcomes his boys' occasional visits. Especially on Andrew, Hudson's youngest son, Hudson is too severe as Waldhorn (2002, 144) says as follows: "Though he is, as Hudson frequently observes, only a little boy and does nothing really bad, Hudson adds that "There was something about him that you could not trust."

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## References

# 父性とフランス —Ernest Hemingway 作品における少年 Schatz から—

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## 要旨

20世紀のアメリカ人作家 Ernest Hemingway にとって、父息子関係は活動期間を通じた大きなテーマであった。しかし、その大部分が息子視点からの描写である。そこで本稿では、Hemingway が描く父性について、主人公が父親として登場する幾つかの作品に着目する事で考察する。特に Hemingway の執筆作品に点在して登場する Schatz という少年の描写をたどり、この作家の扱う父息子関係をあえて父親の視点から照射し直し、Hemingway の描く父息子関係の新しい側面を導き出す。

複数の作品に登場する Schatz という少年は同一人物ではない。しかし全てがフランス育ちのアメリカ人少年で父親と共に物語に登場し、フランスとアメリカの価値観を比較するという共通点がある。この少年の描写を比較検討する事で、フランスというモチーフが Hemingway の考える父性に大きく、しかも複雑に関わっている事が明らかになった。

キーワード: Ernest Hemingway / 父性 / 父息子関係 / フランス / アメリカ文学