

# A Comparative Study of the Images of Tough Men in Hemingway and Lu Yao's Works

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**Keywords:** Hemingway; Lu Yao; image of tough men

**Abstract.** American writer Hemingway and Chinese mainland writer Lu Yao have all passed a great deal of works and have molded a series of tough men. These characters have many similarities and many differences. Therefore, this article focuses on the effectively contrast between the images of tough men created by them.

## Introduction

Many tough men characters were created by Hemingway—one of the most famous writers in the twentieth Century in his works *The Old Man and The Sea*, *Undeclared*, *The Sun Also Rises* and *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, and by Lu Yao—the Chinese mainland writer in his works *Ordinary World* and *In The Days of Suffering*. These tough men are not afraid of failure, fear of difficulties and challenges of fate. Their indomitable spirit drove them to maintain the human dignity and constantly struggle against the external adverse environment. In order to better study and analyze the image of tough men, this paper uses the method of comparison conduct the analysis.

## The Identical Tough Men

### The common heroes

Viewing Hemingway and Lu Yao's life experience, both of them were normal-born, and made certain achievements in their struggling. This has made them tend to create works in the background of the living environment they know very well, and present the tough men in their life into their works.

Many characters in Hemingway's writings are mortal beings. For example: Manuel is just a very ordinary old matador. Jordan, in *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, is just an ordinary language teacher who later joined the army to become a hero. In *The Old Man and The Sea*, Santiago is just an old fisherman. These characters did not lose morale in the face of war, harsh natural environment, the difficult process of life, but constantly struggled. Lu Yao, a commoner, has a stronger sense of common people and is full of sincere feelings towards ordinary workers. His characters, such as: Sun Shaoping, Gao Jialin and Ma Jianqiang are the children of peasants on the Loess Plateau. They were helpless and could only choose to work hard with individual efforts.

Table 1. Hemingway and Lu Yao's major works

Hemingway	Lu Yao
Major works	Major works
<i>The Old Man and The Sea</i> , <i>Undeclared</i> , <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> and <i>For Whom The Bell Tolls</i>	<i>Ordinary World</i> , <i>In The Days of Suffering</i>

### The tragic fate

Hemingway and Lu Yao used tragic elements in shaping these tough men characters. From life experience, Hemingway has gone through the first World War and the Second World War, the Spanish Civil War. The close experiences with wars and death had gave him a deeper understanding of the meaning and value of life. Therefore, in his works, many heroes are living in a lonely, stubborn, struggling and independent life, fighting with the outside environment and the forces of evil. For example, in *The Sun Also Rises*, the inner solitude of many characters is deeply contrasted with the scene of noise on the surface. In *Farewell to Arms*, the depiction of love and war gives a profound description of the breath of death, enabling the whole novel to develop its story in a deeply sad atmosphere. In *The Old Man and The Sea*, this kind of mood is more pronounced. The old fisherman, Santiago, fought bravely with the shark all by himself, a lonely individual, and finally caught the biggest fish in his life, but himself scarred. Therefore, Santiago is destined to be a tragic figure, it is a failure to bring the shark back, and also a failure not to catch one.

While in Lu Yao's writings, many tough men have more tragic colors. For example, there is a struggle-type tragedy, bitter-and-difficult-love tragedy, as well as ones caused by historical reasons. In a sad and desolate atmosphere, there is a spirit of intense inspiration. For example: Gao Jialin has been trying hard, hoping to get out of the Loess Plateau with his efforts. But his short life is full of twists and turns. Sun Shaoan, on the other hand, did not fight against his fate, instead, he just wanted to be a good peasant. But his life was full of suffering, blowing him again and again. However, he did not bow to the impermanence of fate but stood up after every fall, again and again, and ultimately realized his ideal of life. But his wife passed away forever.

Table 2. Comparison of Hemingway and Yao Lu's main tough men characters

Hemingway	Lu Yao
Main Tough Men	Main Tough Men
Manuel, Jordan, Santiago	Sun Shaoping, Gao Jialin, Ma Jianqiang

### Exploration of loneliness and perseverance

Hemingway's characters have abandoned the traditional religion and embraced the new values of individualism and maintained their dignity. They were the the pioneers of the new world, fully depicting their heroic images. On the other hand, characters in Lu yao's works were going through a social change in China. influenced by the new trend, these tough men carried out difficult exploration in the new world to change the fate and create their new life [1].

### Tough Men of Different Styles

Tenati, a famous French philosopher and critic, came out of the 3 elements of literary creation, i.e. the times, the environment, and the race. In different nationalities, countries and times, Hemingway and Lu Yao's tough men have different styles. Its overall characteristic is: Hemingway's tough guy has contempt for death, and showing personality, making them heroes of American individualism. The tough men characters in Lu Yao's works have characteristics of self sacrifice and humiliation enduring, making them Chinese heroes with typical collective thinking.

Table 3. Characteristics of Hemingway and Lu Yao's literary creation

Hemingway	Lu Yao
Literary Creation	Literary Creation
Contempt for death, showing personality and Egoism	Self sacrifice, humiliation enduring, collectivism

### **Tough men in different cultures**

Hemingway's tough men often fought alone, made their characters and paid attention to honor. They were full of strong heroism. For example, old matador Manuel, who was no longer a youth, kept his honor at the cost of his life. In his eyes, the death of himself in a bullfight was a small matter while the maintenance of his reputation and honor was a great event. Barnes, due to sexual damage caused in the war, was unable to pursue his love and in the spirit of incomplete pathological features. And alcohol anesthesia, natural scenery appreciation and quiet fishing were only his spiritual asylum. Santiago's catch of big fish was just to feed himself and get rich in life. From this point of view, they all have strong egoism.

Table 4. Character of tough men in Hemingway's works

Main Characters	Character
Manuel	Pay attention to honor
Barnes	Showing personality
Santiago	Fighting alone

Lu Yao's tough men characters have a strong sense of moral affinity and responsibility. For example: during the three years of natural disaster, Ma Jianqiang was suffering from hunger, but he refused to be given alms. At the same time, in his own difficult circumstances, he still gave the soybean and corn he obtained in the field to the starving mother and daughter passing by.

### **Different formation of tough men**

In Hemingway's works, many tough men have challenges to fate. Their bravery and resolute character were with natural characteristics. Manuel had the dedication to honor, and regarded honor as a creed in his life. And the old man, Santiago, fought with sharks for a long time on his own strength and courage, and made a new interpretation of the meaning of life.

The characters in Lu Yao's works have a strong heroic spirit, which were gradually honed in the acquired environment. They were trained in hardship and suffer. For example: many of the characters in the original heroes were behaved peasants, but the changes in social environment forced them to brave struggle with the times and fate. These heroes constantly struggled and finally overcame their weaknesses. Their own ideological spirit got sublimation in sharpening and suffering. They had always adhered to the direction of the individual value in life and their constant exploration [2].

Table 5. Comparison of the environment of Hemingway's and Lu Yao's tough men characters

Hemingway	Lu Yao
Tough Men	Tough Men
Bravery and determined character having characteristic of nature	Honed in the acquired environment

### **Conclusion**

The images of Hemingway and Lu Yao's tough men have many differences in distinguished times and social environment. However, the spirit of indomitable struggle and the quality of constantly fighting against fate are the common spirit of these characters. These tough men are examples of what we should learn to guide our future life.

## References

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