

Univerzita Pardubice
Fakulta filozofická
Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Občanská válka z pohledu Ambrose Bierce a Stephena Cranea

Diplomová práce

Autor: Milada Boušová
Vedoucí: PhDr.Šárka Bubíková, Ph.D.

2006

University of Pardubice
Faculty of Arts and Philosophy
Department of English and American Studies

**Views on the Civil War: Ambrose Bierce and Stephen
Crane**

Thesis

Author: Milada Boušová
Supervisor: PhDr.Šárka Bubíková, Ph.D.

2006

ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with the writing about the Civil War in the USA. It gives brief depiction of the history of the Civil War as well as of the literary style of the post-war period. The thesis concentrates on the comparison of the novel *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane and war short stories by Ambrose Bierce who both opposed the romantic depiction of the War and tried to depict the War realistically. This text is a comparison of chosen aspects of both writings and also comments on those aspects which are exclusive for each author. The aim of the thesis is to show that although both authors reflected on the War realistically their perception of the War is in many ways different.

ABSTRAKT

Diplomová práce se zabývá literárními díly o občanské válce v USA a rovněž stručně shrnuje historii občanské války a také literárních směrů v poválečném období. Tato práce se zaměřuje na srovnání románu *Rudý odznak odvahy* od Stephena Cranea a válečných povídek Ambrose Bierce, kteří oba odmítali romantické znázorňování války a snažili se zobrazit válku realisticky. Tato práce porovnává vybrané aspekty obou děl a také komentuje aspekty, která se objevují jen u jednoho z autorů. Cílem této diplomové práce je ukázat, že i přestože oba autoři zobrazovali občanskou válku realisticky jejich pohled na občanskou válku je do jisté míry odlišný.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Civil War was one of the major events in the U.S.A. in nineteenth century and was therefore portrayed in the post-war literature. Even though the romantic depiction of the War prevailed there were some authors who opposed this tendency and attempted to present the War realistically; among these were Stephen Crane and Ambrose Bierce.

Although both authors were realists their writings are different in various ways. This thesis concentrates on showing these differences by the comparison of Stephen Crane's novel *The Red Badge of Courage* and Ambrose Bierce's short stories about the Civil War. Stephen Crane wrote apart of his novel also short stories with the war theme but this thesis concentrates solely on the novel as the dimension of the work would not allow inclusion of Crane's short stories.

Ambrose Bierce's short stories are based on his experience during the Civil War as he enlisted at the beginning of the War and fought for almost four years while Crane was born after the Civil War and his novel could be therefore based only on second hand experience by reading other authors.

This thesis begins with a short summary of the history of the Civil War as well as the summary of the contemporary writing on the Civil War. The text analysis is divided into six chapters; the first four chapters concentrate on comparison of aspects which occur in the writings of both authors while the other two chapters are devoted to depiction of the differences in the work of each author.

The first chapter is concerned about the portrayal of fear and courage in writings of both authors. Fear and courage are the principal concerns of the main character of Stephen Crane's novel and many characters in Bierce's short stories also experience these emotions. The first chapter therefore concentrates on comparison of the perception of fear and courage by the characters of both authors and also the way in which both authors describe these feelings.

The second chapter focuses on the depiction of dead and wounded soldiers. It compares the scale of usage of this theme in the works of both authors and also explains the purpose of use of this theme by each author.

The third chapter pays attention to the use of humor in Crane's and Bierce's writings. The chapter not only distinguishes the different types of humor used by the authors but also explains the intentions which led the authors to the use of humor in their works.

The fourth chapter concentrates on comparison of different approaches to the use of

nature. While the use of nature in the work of Ambrose Bierce is generally agreed on there are different approaches to the perception of the use of nature by Stephen Crane.

The fifth chapter concentrates only on Ambrose Bierce's short stories and explores themes which were not used by Crane. These themes are experience of war as a base for writing about the war, reasons for choosing the form of a short story rather than the form of a novel, phenomenon of a family fighting on both sides and the definition of the term realism.

The last chapter is devoted to Stephen Crane and contains analysis of the growth of Henry Fleming, the main character of Crane's novel. The form of novel enabled Crane to show the development of the character which was not possible for Ambrose Bierce as he wrote only short stories.

The thesis shows that even though both authors are considered to be realists who opposed the romantic depiction of the war and both attempted to portrait the war as it was there are still differences in the method in which they decided to portrait the War.

2. HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR

The Civil War took place in the U.S.A between years 1861 and 1865 as a result of growing tension between the South and the North. In 1860 Republican Party won the elections and Abraham Lincoln was elected President which was greatly opposed by Southern slaveholders as Abraham Lincoln was active in anti-slavery movement. Three months after Lincoln's election seven Southern states South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas seceded from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America and elected Jefferson Davis their president. Abraham Lincoln tried to modulate raising conflict between the North and the South with his speech when he said:

I have no intention to interfere with the institution of slavery in the states where it exists. I believe I had no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so. ... The government will nor assail you. You can have no conflict without yourselves being the aggressors.

(spartacus.schoolnet)

However, on April 12, 1861 the Confederate army attacked Fort Sumter in Charleston harbour and forced its inhabitants to surrender. As a result of this attack Lincoln ordered blockade of Mexico ports, as South greatly depended on imported goods, in hope that it would force South to sign a peace deal. To implement the blockade there were massive enrolments in all the Union states. At that time everyone believed that the war will last only a few weeks.

At the end of August 1861 Radical Republicans tried to turn the war into war against the slavery which was not supported by Lincoln as he feared that it could turn the slave owners of the border states against the Union and therefore strengthen the Confederate army.

Randal Wayne Allred in his dissertation work states that:

This tendency [imposing new meaning on the war in traditional battle narratives] drove political action, too: when the ostensible purpose of the War-to-preserve-the-Union devolved into a meaningless abstraction with mounting casualty lists and Southern resistance, Lincoln deliberately re-wrote the War as a quest for human freedom.

(Allred, 1993, 257)

This inaccuracy could be challenged in several cases. Not only that Lincoln did not support Radical Republicans in August 1861 but he also later that year refused to support Horace Greeley, one of the leaders of the anti-slavery movement, when he tried to persuade Lincoln to "convert the war into a war on slavery"

(spartacus.schoolnet)

This could be clearly seen in Lincoln's statement regarding Greeley's persuasion:

My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that.

(spartacus.schoolnet)

This statement was later supported by Lincoln's actions when he issued Emancipation Proclamation on 22nd September, 1862 where he stated that from the 1st January, 1863 all slaves, from states which were in rebellion, would be freed. However, this Proclamation did not apply to border slave states as Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky and Missouri as these states were loyal to the Union. In 1863 Lincoln also allowed formation of black regiments, where African Americans were allowed to fight the war since until then they were only allowed to work for the army on civilian positions.

Lincoln could not support his desire for preserving the Union, over the wish to free slaves, more clearly than when he in 1864 decided for Andrew Johnson to be his candidate for vice president, as Johnson openly supported slavery.

Johnson's nomination cannot be in greater contrast with Lincoln's speech in 1858 in Quincy, Illinois, where he stated:

We have in this nation the element of domestic slavery. The Republican Party think it wrong – we think it is a moral, a social, and a political wrong. We think it is wrong not confining itself merely to the persons of the States where it exists, but it is a wrong which in its tendency, to say the least, affects the existence of the whole nation. Because we think it wrong, we propose a course of policy that shall deal with it as a wrong. We deal with it as with any other wrong, insofar as we can prevent it growing any larger, and so deal with it that in the run of time there may be some promise of an end to it.

(spartacus.schoolnet)

This shows Lincoln's great concern for the preservation of the Union which he valued far more than his belief in abolition of slavery.

Lincoln was assassinated on 15th April, 1865, six days after the end of the Civil War in which the Union was preserved. After his death Andrew Johnson became the President of the United States.

This historical event had great impact on the whole nation as following the War which divided the United States in their opinion and joined them again by the force of armed conflict had to follow the era of rebuilding of relationships among the states as well as among the

people who experienced the war. This also had an impact on literature as many authors felt the need to write about the war.

3. WRITING THE CIVIL WAR

Since the War had such a disastrous consequence on the country as well as on the people's spirit there was a tendency to describe the War in a romantic way in an attempt to justify it. Among the authors who described the war romantically were Walt Whitman with his *Drum-Taps* (1865) and also Herman Melville with his *Battle Pieces* (1866). One of the best Southern poets was Henry Timrod whose the most famous poem *Ode on the Confederate Death* (1867) was "written to be sung at a memorial service in Charleston's Magnolia Cemetery for the dead of a lost war." (Simpson, docsouth.edu) and also Timrod's successor Sidney Lanier with his *Tiger-Lilies* (1867). However, not all authors of that period felt the same way. Among those who refused to glorify the War were Ambrose Bierce and Stephen Crane. Both authors attempted to describe the War realistically, although Crane is considered to be naturalist rather than a realist.

Ambrose Bierce is best known for his short stories, although he also wrote poems. Most of Bierce's short stories about the Civil War were published in *San Francisco Examiner* and in 1891 collected in *Tales of Soldiers and Civilians*.

Bierce in his short stories usually deals with individual people rather than with a prototype of a certain group of people. He shows that the War is not fought by a mass of soldiers but by individuals. Even though he later in his life regarded the War years as the best time of his life he considers the War to be absurd as could be seen in his poem *Arma Virumque*:

"Ours is a Christian army"; so he said
A regiment of bangomen who led.
"And ours a Christian navy," added he
Who sailed a thunder-junk upon the sea.
Better they know than men unwarlike do
What is an army, and a navy too.
Pray God they may be sent them by-and-by
The knowledge what a Christian is, and why.
For somewhat lamely the conception runs
Of a brass-buttoned Jesus firing guns.

(Bierce quoted in Hopkins, 1984, 262)

He adopts a similar attitude also in his short stories. The main character in each of Bierce's stories faces great danger which often results in the protagonist's death. Herbie Butterfield counted that

... of the sixteen war stories, eleven end with the death of the principal or only actor, two with him having to expect death, and the remaining three with him causing or witnessing the death of his dearest relative.

(Butterfield, 1986, 143 – 144)

As a result, Bierce often addresses the theme of fear in his short stories, uses description of the surroundings as well as humor, often sarcastic, to emphasize the absurdity of the War.

Stephen Crane is best known for his novel *The Red Badge of Courage* (1960) even though he also wrote short stories as well as poems. Similarly to Bierce Crane in his writing tries to show the absurdity of the War and he also uses the means of description of the nature as one of the main themes of his novel. Another major theme is also the theme of fear and cowardice. Unlike in Bierce's stories the main character, after facing deadly danger, survives. Crane in his novel uses irony rather than sarcasm. Another difference in comparison of these two authors is that Bierce, unlike Crane, experienced the War.

As both writers addressed the theme of war in both writings occurs the theme of fear and courage. While Bierce usually addresses fear on personal level it is possible to see this theme on a more general level in Crane's writing.

4. THE THEME OF FEAR AND COURAGE

The description of fear occurs in Bierce's writing in various ways. In *One of the Missing* the main character, a private Jerome Searing, is captured under the debris of a fallen building with his own rifle pointed at him. The parts of the fallen building prevent him from moving and he is overwhelmed by fear that his rifle would fire and kill him. However, he does not realize that since the trigger of the rifle was so sensitive, it would fire at the moment when the building was falling on him. In the end Jerome Searing manages to push the rifle aside but dies in the attempt not by the shot but by being killed by his own fear.

Bierce's description of the main character is following:

Jerome Searing, the man of courage, the formidable enemy, the strong, resolute warrior, was pale as a ghost. His jaw was fallen; his eyes protruded; he trembled in every fiber; a cold sweat bathed his entire body; he screamed with fear. He was not insane - he was terrified.

(Bierce, 1984, 272)

In this description Bierce shows that a soldier does not think about any high ideals when faced with deadly danger, as was seen in writings of romantic writers of that period, but experiences fear and his main aim is to survive. It is also obvious that Bierce does not attribute the feeling of fear only to soldiers new to war but also to those who are brave and experienced soldiers.

Another short story by Bierce where fear is the central theme is *A Tough Tussle* which describes a Federal officer, Second-Lieutenant Brainerd Byring, who is a brave soldier but is squeamish when encountered with death bodies. Similarly as Jerome Searing in *One of the Missing*, Byring is also described as "brave and efficient officer... but the sight of the dead, with their clay faces, blank eyes and stiff bodies ... had always intolerably affected him." (Bierce, 1984, 299).

One night when on picket Byring noticed that near the place where he was stationed was a body on the ground. At first he thought of leaving the place but as he did not like others to think that he is a coward, he decided to stay. After a while he noticed that he unconsciously grasp his sword and:

observed that he was leaning forward in a strained attitude - crouching like a gladiator ready to spring at the throat of an antagonist. His teeth were clenched and he was breathing hard.

(Bierce, 1984, 302)

After a while he tried to pluck up his courage and he even managed to laugh to himself but

instead of relaxation it had the opposite effect on him.

He sprang to his feet and looked about him, not recognizing his own laugh. He could no longer conceal to himself the horrible fact of his cowardice; he was thoroughly frightened!...His face was wet, his whole body bathed in a chill of perspiration. He could not even cry out.

(Bierce, 1984, 303)

The story concluded when a group of officers came to the place where Byring was on guard and found him dead with his sword thrust through his heart. They also found the corpse of the Confederate private and at first thought that they fought and both were killed during the fight but after closer examination it became apparent that even though the Confederate soldier received many wounds by Byring's sword he was dead long before the fight. Allred in his work *Writing the Civil War* analyzed the ending of the story and pointed out an interesting fact that the only way Byring was able to kill himself in the battle with the dead body was to point his own sword to himself and commit suicide. Allred concludes his analyses by the assumption that "Byring, having suddenly discovered that the corpse was dead long before he arrived, could not withstand the self-inflicted indictment of cowardice." (Allred, 1993, 166). It could be agreed that the reason for Byring's suicide was his fear which he was not able to overpower but it is obvious from the story that Byring knew that it was a corpse. In addition to this Bierce, earlier in the story, describes Byring's hatred for dead bodies so it could be also concluded that Byring's reason for suicide was his inability to cope with his fear of corpses.

In this story Bierce again stresses out the bravery and intelligence of the main character who is overcome by fear and in the struggle against it dies. By these two stories could be seen that Bierce does not ascribe fear only to those who are weak but considers it as a feature which can seize even a brave and accomplished soldier. In both stories are the main characters in a deadly danger which is being faced outside the battle.

Stephen Crane in his novel *The Red Badge of Courage* on the contrary connects fear with the battle itself or the prospect of a battle. This could be seen when new soldiers are told that they will fight their first battle. The main character, young farmer Henry Fleming, is seized by fear that he will not be able to sustain the perils of the battle and will be seen as a coward. He tries to reason with himself and persuade himself of the reasons that he will not flee. Henry Fleming interrogates his friend Jim Conklin as well as other new soldiers about their fear and the possibility of flight from the battle. As nobody else appears to be as frightened as Henry, he decides to conceal his worries and fear before others. Later on, before the first battle, Wilson entrusts Henry with an envelope and asked him to send it to Wilson's family in case

he is killed during the battle. This event showed that Henry was not the only private to suffer from fear.

This description of soldier's behaviour before the first battle corresponds with the work of Michael Wingfield Shaefer where he describes, according to his findings based on interviewing veteran soldiers, four stages of fear:

Initially, before and during the soldier's first engagement, his fear is of fear itself; not yet knowing how he will behave under fire, the apprehension that he may disgrace himself by running is uppermost in his mind.

(Shaefer, 1997, 9)

The comparison of Crane's description of Henry's behavior with the general description of soldier's behavior clearly shows certain similarities and it is therefore possible to assume that the reason for Crane to include this passage was his intention to describe the war realistically. It is possible to see that the main theme of the novel is fear and courage; the author describes Henry who "tried to mathematically prove to himself that he would not run from the battle" (Crane, 1960, 18) in the anticipation of the first battle.

The second stage described by Shaefer shows soldiers who are no longer terrified by the thought of the battle but are able to fight.

Shaefer describes the second stage as following:

The soldier holds his place, bolstered by example of his officers' courage, by the threat of punishment at their hands should he flee...and above all by his desire not to let down or disgrace himself before his peers and friends. ... The majority are unwilling to take extraordinary risks and do not aspire to a hero's role, but they are equally unwilling that they should be considered the least worthy among those present.

(Shaefer, 1997, 10)

This is certainly true for the first attack in Henry's first battle. Crane describes the shouting and swearing officers as well as the sneering remarks of the veteran soldiers towards those who fled the field. Crane also describes Henry's feelings where he feels as a member of an army prepared to fight with his regiment. However, the fear overpowers him again when he is confronted with the second attack and he loses his sense of attachment and flees.

He yelled then with fright and swung about. For a moment, in the great clamor, he was like a proverbial chicken. He lost the direction of safety. Destruction threatened him from all points. Directly he began to speed toward the rear in great leaps. ... On his face was all the horror of those things which he imagined. ... He ran like a blind man. ... Since he had turned his back upon the fight his fears had been wondrously magnified.

(Crane, 1960, 48)

From the point when Henry runs and breaks the traditions of the army to behave as a unit, the feeling of fear gradually gives place to the feeling of guilt and isolation.

After Henry flees from the battle he tries to persuade himself that it was a wise thing to do and others are fools to stay in the battle. Donald Pease comments on this event in his essay where he states:

Henry explores the range of “his” feelings on the subject of his fear, until in the course of these reflections he decides that fear not only sets him apart from the other men but it also situates him above them.

(Pease, 1987, 84)

Similarly, Henry throws a pine cone at a squirrel and it escapes to a tree top. The extract which supports Pease’s view is following:

The youth felt triumphant at the exhibition. There was the law, he said. Nature had given him a sign. The squirrel, immediately upon recognizing the danger, had taken to his legs without ado. He [the squirrel] did not stand solidly baring his furry belly to the missile, and die with an upward glance at the sympathetic heavens. On the contrary, he had fled as fast as his legs could carry him.

(Crane, 1960, 53)

After this event Henry persuades himself that he is wiser than others which is expressed in the sentence “He knew it could be proved that they had been fools.” (Crane, 1960, 52)

When hidden in the forest Henry observes Union soldiers running towards a battle; for a moment Henry experiences the feeling of courage when he imagines that he would run with them and will be heroically killed in the midst of the battle. When he stops dreaming he realizes that his wish for the Union army to lose the battle in which case it would be confirmed that Henry was not a coward but a wise man who could foresee the defeat.

However, this new faith soon ceases and is replaced by new fear that if he comes back to his regiment without a wound and after the Union army would win, others will consider him a coward and will sneer at him. This problem is solved when he tries to stop a passing soldier, who tries to escape from the battle, and who hits Henry on the head with his rifle butt.

Eric Solomon in his essay *A Definition of the War Novel* believes that “the wound, then, may be seen as the result of an honorable, not a cowardly, action” as “he does not receive his wound in flight but in the performance of an act of courage.” (Solomon, 1967, 91) Solomon’s opinion is quite surprising considering that Henry received the wound after he fled his regiment. Solomon supports his view with argument that Henry received his wound when

he was walking towards the battle not running away from it. However, it could be argued that it was rather Henry's fantasy of being hero than his courage that brought him closer to the battle.

However, Solomon's opinion is further supported by Donald B. Gibson: "because he [Henry] does not involve himself in the hysteria of the crowd [of running soldiers], he is rewarded with a little red badge of courage" (Gibson, 1968, 78) When the reader returns to Crane's description of the situation it becomes obvious that the scene was very confused and Henry was trying to make sense of the situation: "... he could only get his tongue to call into the air: Why-why-what-what's th' matter?... His incoherent questions were lost. They were heedless of his appeals. They did not seem to see him." (Crane, 1960, 73-74) Even though Henry did not get involved in the "hysteria of the crowd" it is hardly any reason to assume that Henry's behavior was such that it should have been rewarded.

After the battle is over Henry manages to return to his regiment and makes others believe that his wound was received during the battle and that it was a wound from a bullet. Before the following battle Henry, together with Wilson, overhears general to utter derisive remarks on the regiment. The rage of being disregarded as well as the need to prove his courage Henry suppresses his fear and fights bravely during his second battle.

Shaefer's description of third and fourth stage of fear is dealt with in the final battle of the novel. The third stage is described:

As the euphoria at discovering he is not a coward wears off, the man under fire attains a clearer understanding of what is going on outside himself and thus becomes more aware of the physical dangers ... [which] set up a new round of fear that, given its more rational basis in observable facts, can never be entirely mastered.

(Shaefer, 1997, 10)

The fourth stage which is described as the first step towards veteranship:

Recognizing the danger he is in, the soldier masters his irrational, primal instincts for flight and comes to the counterintuitive realization that his chances of death or injury are greatest when he turns his back to the enemy. His safety is most assured ... when he continues to fight in the hopes of removing the threat to his safety.

(Shaefer, 1997, 10)

The reader can note that Crane ascribed the veteran-like behavior to a relatively newly formed regiment during their fight in their fourth battle. He describes the regiment's attack on the Confederate lines during which they had to cross an open space. According to their general this regiment was to be sacrificed in order to hold the line so the Confederate army could not

surround them. During this battle the new regiment not only managed to hold the line but also to overpower the antagonists:

The youth [Henry Fleming], upon hearing the shouts, began to study the distance between him and the enemy. He made vague calculations. He saw that to be firm soldiers they must go forward. It would be death to stay in the present place, and with all the circumstances to go backward would exalt too many others. Their hope was to push the galling foes away from the fence.

(Crane, 1960, 125)

It is unlikely that a soldier during his fourth battle would be able to decide on the strategy of the regiment. Furthermore, Crane describes the soldiers during this battle as running upon the enemy and eventually coming close enough to capture four Confederate soldiers:

At the yelled words of command the soldiers sprang forward in eager leaps. There was new and unexpected force in the movement of the regiment. A knowledge of its faded and jaded condition made the charge appear like a paroxysm, a display of the strength that comes before a final feebleness. The men scampered in insane fever of haste, racing as if to achieve a sudden success before an exhilarating fluid should leave them. It was a blind and despairing rush by the collection of men in dusty and tattered blue, over a green sward and under a sapphire sky, toward a fence, dimly outlined in smoke, from behind which spluttered the fierce rifles of enemies.

(Crane, 1960, 125)

Shaefer, on the contrary, after comparing the writings of Bierce and William De Forest, who both fought in the Civil War, opposed the idea of massed charges or fighting in close proximity using bayonets when he wrote:

Conflict is seldom composed of massed volleys and charges concluding with sword or bayonet fighting; each side usually advances or retreats slowly and piecemeal, firing from whatever cover is available and rarely getting close enough to the other for hand-to-hand combat.

(Shaefer, 1997, xiv)

An example of a battle scene could be seen in Bierce's short story *Killed at Resaca* where he depicts an attack during which all the soldiers look for a cover except the main character who, as the reader finds out at the conclusion of the story, does not take a cover to prove his bravery to his girlfriend. The fact of a soldier not taking a cover is considered as unusual feature and the soldier is admired for his bravery by his co-belligerents.

Crane also describes fear as an emotion which can be felt by the whole unit rather than by individuals, as for example in the last battle:

In the clouded haze men became panic-stricken with the thought that the regiment has

lost its path, and was proceeding in a perilous direction. Once the men who headed the wild procession turned and came pushing back against their comrades, screaming that they were being fired upon from points which they had considered to be towards their own lines. At this cry a hysterical fear and dismay beset the troops.

(Crane, 1960, 113)

A similar scene occurs at the beginning of the story:

Wild yells came from behind the walls of smoke. A sketch in grey and red dissolved into a moblike body of men who galloped like wild horses.

The veteran regiments on the right and on the left of the 304th immediately began to jeer. With the passionate song of the bullets and the banshee shrieks of shells were mingled loud catcalls and bits of facetious advice concerning places of safety. But the new regiment was breathless with horror.

(Crane, 1960, 38)

Even though Crane describes fear as an emotion which often possesses whole groups of people at the same time he also describes the main character, Henry Fleming, who after fleeing from the first battle has to deal with his feelings on his own. This is also true for another character, the loud soldier Wilson, who after being boastful in the base camp reconsiders his views after facing the first battle and experiencing deadly fear and becomes less self-assured.

The feeling of fear is in both authors connected with courage. Interestingly, both authors also mention the theme of fear of other people considering the character not courageous.

Fear and courage, or rather courage born from fear of being seen as not courageous, is the core topic in Bierce's short story *Killed at Resaca*, already mentioned before, where Bierce describes Lieutenant Herman Brayle as a very courageous man who never hides behind any kind of a cover during a battle and always stays straight to face the enemy. In the last battle Brayle decides to cross the field close to the enemy's line and is shot in the attempt. The narrator of the story mentions a love letter which was found in Brayle's pocket book. It contained these lines:

Mr. Winters, whom I shall always hate for it, has been telling that at some battle in Virginia, where he got his hurt, you were seen crouching behind a tree. I think he wants to injure you in my regard, which he knows the story would do if I believed it. I could bear to hear of my soldier lover's death, but not of his cowardice.

(Bierce, 1984, 376-377)

As could be seen in this short story the Lieutenant's courage was initiated by the fear that his lover would think him a coward rather than by him disregarding the necessity for a cover during the battle.

Even though fear and courage are considered to be opposite qualities, comparison of both authors shows that they could, in extreme situations, be closely connected and even intermingle with each other. It is possible to see that fear, as well as courage, played an important role in their writings and was of the major concern of both authors. However, the major difference between them is that while Crane concludes his novel with the main character becoming brave through his fear of being called coward and the rage at his superior for doing so Bierce, as Russell Duncan and David Klooster states in their work *Phantoms of a Blood-Stained Period*, believes that “Fear of being left behind and the embarrassment of being called a coward put men into war, and fear for their lives kept them fighting” (Duncan and Klooster, 2002, 28).

Even though this difference might seem marginal the main dispute between these views is that Crane attempted to describe the War as an event during which soldiers, after overcoming the initiatory doubts and fears, became better people who fought not only for fear of being sneered at but also for their ideals as could be seen in Henry’s and Wilson’s great concern to acquire the Confederate flag after their victory in the concluding battle of the novel. On the contrary, Bierce leaves the reasons for fighting on a personal level – soldiers are fighting because it is safer to fight than to turn back on the enemy and flee; they fight to save their lives without any concern for higher ideals.

Another issue widely addressed in the works of both authors was the approach to the wounded and dead soldiers and civilians. Bierce regards this issue in various situations and his descriptions of wounded and dead soldiers often play an important part in his stories. Crane, on the other hand, does not regard wounded and dead soldiers, with a few exceptions, as so important.

5. DEAD AND WOUNDED SOLDIERS

One of the most striking short stories by Bierce is *Chickamauga*. The plot is quite simple: a young boy, son of a Southern farmer, gets lost in a forest after being scared by a hare. He attempts to find his way home but falls asleep in the forest. He wakes up the following day and on the journey home encounters a large group of wounded soldiers. He does not comprehend the seriousness of the situation and instead of being scared, he tries to play horse with one of the soldiers. This situation is in great contrast to his previous day experience when he encountered the hare. In the end the boy manages to find his way home only to see his home burnt to the ground and finds a corpse of his mother. At the conclusion of the story the reader also learns that the child is a deaf mute.

Even though this story is without any doubt very powerful, it also contains an interesting description of the wounded soldiers whom the boy met in the forest.

Suddenly he saw before him a strange moving object which he took to be some large animal—a dog, a pig—he could not name it; perhaps it was a bear. ... But something in form or movement of this object ... told him it was not a bear, and curiosity was stayed by fear. ... at least it had not the long, menacing ears of the rabbit. ... To the right and to the left were many more ... They were men. ... The very ground seemed in motion toward the creek.

(Bierce, 1984, 315)

This description evokes a sense of horror in the reader and seems to be used as an instrument to induce the horrifying atmosphere which occurred after the battle rather than a reality. However, this assumption is opposed by Shaefer who quotes William Averell, a colonel who fought at the battle of Malvern Hill on 1 July 1862. The colonel's memories are following:

Looking down the hill at first light, Averell saw that dead and wounded men were on the ground in every attitude of distress. A third of them were dead, but enough were alive and moving to give to the field a singular crawling effect.

(Shaefer, 1997, 17)

As it is possible to see, it was not Bierce's wild imagination or a tendency to emphasize the horror of the war but a realistic description which the author was likely to experience during his service for the Union army. Even though Bierce's later retrospective on the War was not altogether negative, he attempted to describe the War as it really was; with its cruelty and absurdity. Bierce in his writings focused his attention to the battle at Chickamauga, which was a model for his short story, in his *Prattles* published in *San Francisco Examiner* between the years 1888 and 1898 and further discussed various details of the battle.

Another Bierce's story which realistically depicts the battlefield is a short story *The Affair at Coulter's Notch*. Bierce writes:

With the ruined guns lay the ruined men - alongside the wreckage, under it and on top of it; and back down the road - a ghastly procession! - crept on hands and knees such of the wounded as were able to move. The colonel - he had compassionately sent his cavalcade to the right about - had to ride over those who were entirely dead in order not to crush those who were partly alive.

(Bierce, 1984, 281)

Bierce again reiterated similar scene as in *Chickamauga* where he described the crawling wounded soldiers. In addition to this he also mentioned the fact that even during the battle the soldiers had to cope with the problem of avoiding their own injured soldiers as they were not able to help them during the battle itself. This fact was often omitted in romantic writings of that period as well as in Crane's writing.

Bierce further addressed the issue of dying for honor commonly described by romantic authors. In the short story *One Officer, One Man* Bierce wrote "Nothing had suggested the glory of a soldier's death nor mitigated the loathsomeness of the incident." (Bierce, 1984, 327) when he described a fallen soldier. Bierce also referred to this issue in the short story *One Kind of Officer*, where he in the second chapter named *Under what circumstances men do not wish to be shot*, openly mocked the romantic idea of falling on the field of honor where he wrote: "Dead upon the field of honor, yes; but the field of honor was so very wet! It makes a difference." (Bierce, 1984, 290).

In order to describe the war realistically Bierce depicted not only dead and wounded soldiers, but also civilians in detail to show that not only soldiers who voluntarily signed up to the war were affected. Such a description can be found in the story *Chickamauga* when the young boy finds his dead mother.

There, conspicuous in the light of conflagration, lay the dead body of a woman-the white face turned upward, the hands thrown out and clutched full of grass, the clothing deranged, the long dark hair in tangles and full of clotted blood. The greater part of the forehead was torn away, and from the jagged hole the brain protruded, overflowing the temple, a frothy mass of gray, crowned with clusters of crimson bubbles-the work of a shell.

(Bierce, 1984, 318)

This opinion is supported by Duncan and Klooster:

Historian Alice Fahs argues that the 1880s and 1890s were a time when Americans worked intently to create heroic images of the officers and soldiers who fought in the

war. By emphasizing the bravery, courage, and heroism of the soldiers and the glory of the cause, the collective memory of the people began to exclude the horrors of battle, the barbarity of the fighting, the psychological trauma of civil war. It was just the kind of “aggressive heroizing” that would offend Bierce and incite him to write a much different kind of war memorial.

(Duncan and Klooster, 2002, 15-16)

Crane described the wounded soldiers as an observer-his descriptions do not evoke as much horror as Bierce’s. In the chapter VIII Crane describes the march of wounded soldiers:

One of the wounded men had a shoeful of blood. He hopped like a schoolboy in a game. He was laughing hysterically.Another had a grey seal of death already upon his face. His lips were curled in hard lines and his teeth were clinched. His hands were bloody from where he had pressed them upon his wound. He seemed to be awaiting the moment when he should pitch headlong. He stalked like the specter of a soldier, his eyes burning with the power of a stare into the unknown.

(Crane, 1960, 56-57)

It is possible to that this description, even though it is not a pleasant one, does not evoke as much horror as the reader could have seen in Bierce’s description. It seems that the narrator comments on the situation with an awe, rather than horror.

However, there are few occasions when the wound played an important part. Such an occasion was when Henry encountered the group of wounded soldiers and met the tattered soldier. Crane does not ascribe any name to this character who played an important role in the story. Eric Solomon believes that it was because “the tattered man represents society and to the conscience-stricken Henry the wounded soldier is a reminder of guilt.” (Solomon, 1967, 88). This argument is supported by the fact that when the tattered soldier asked Henry about his wound, Henry deserted him driven by his guilt of not having any wound.

When escaping the shame of not having any wound by leaving the tattered soldier behind, Henry was encountered by even greater shock when he recognized, among the wounded soldiers, his friend Jim Conklin and later had to witness his death. For the first time in the novel Henry shows concern for another person. Even though his concern for Jim Conklin was genuine, soon after his death Henry abandoned the tattered soldier for the second time and left him to his pain and loneliness in the middle of the field. After this event Henry left the group of wounded soldiers and returned towards the battle. Henry broke the military and ethical rules for the second time which again resulted in his feeling of guilt and loneliness. Later in the book when Henry overlooks his deeds, he feels ashamed that he left another wounded soldier unattended in the middle of the field.

Short afterwards Henry encountered the soldiers escaping from the battle and received

his wound. The fact that Henry received his wound, called the red badge of courage, after he committed his “real sin” (Solomon, 1967, 89) supports the opinion stated earlier that he did not deserve any token of courage and that the title of the book indicates an ironic conception of the novel.

Eric Solomon takes this view even a step further when he analyses the situation of meeting the group of wounded soldiers and Henry’s longing for a wound:

Although Henry joins the crowd, he remains an outsider, for he has no wound. ... The lack of any mark distinguishes Henry. “He was continually casting sidelong glances to see if the men were contemplating the letters of guilt he felt burned into his brow...He wished that he, too, had a wound, a red badge of courage”. Ironically enough, he now desires to be marked by the red death he had feared. Honor, or the appearance of honor, is his new goal.

(Solomon, 1967, 87)

Solomon here even suggests Henry’s desire for the wound. When Henry returned to his regiment he exaggerated his deeds on the battlefield and persuaded his friends that he had received the wound in a battle. He passed his wound for a rifle shot.

With the exception of the march of wounded soldiers towards the rear after the first battle Crane does not mention any wounded soldiers who must have occurred after each battle.

From the comparison of the two authors it is possible to see that Bierce tried to evoke the horrors of the war by vivid descriptions of dead and wounded soldiers whom he could encounter during his service in the army. Crane, on the contrary, does not use this device as widely as Bierce, Crane uses this device mainly for a description of the situation or to depict Henry’s reasons and deeds.

As it was possible to notice authors also used humor to show the absurdity of the war. Bierce’s humor is more obvious and often seems morbid but witty. Crane uses the device of parody and irony rather than obvious sarcasm.

6. HUMOR

As it was already mentioned in the previous chapter *The Red Badge of Courage* is usually perceived as a parody novel which mocks the romantic novels about the Civil War during the second half of 19th century.

According to Eric Solomon's essay *A Definition of a War Novel*

Crane parodies war fiction in three ways: through direct depiction of the reversal of Henry's romantic stereotypes; through the indirect characterization of Henry as a fallible, egocentric antihero; and, as always in Crane's best fiction, through the sense of reality.

(Solomon, 1967, 75)

It is possible to see the first pattern in the event when Henry told his mother that he enlisted for the army and his mother instead of talking about high ideals talks about socks and shirts.

Henry's thoughts are:

Still, she had disappointed him by saying nothing whatever about returning with his shield or on it. He had privately primed himself for a beautiful scene. He had prepared certain sentences which he thought could be used with a touching effect.

(Crane, 1960, 15)

Henry's feelings of a chivalric hero are further emphasized in the scene when Henry goes to see his former classmates just before going to the war and meets a girl who "grew demure and sad at the sight of his blue and brass". (Crane, 1960, 16) When leaving, Henry "had turned his head and detected her at a window watching his departure" (Crane, 1960, 16). This scene reminds the reader not only about chivalric novels but also about traditional materials of war fiction.

Marston La France also considers the irony in the scene where Henry bids farewell to his mother but apart from mentioning the discrepancy of Henry's expectations and mother's reaction. La France also points out the mother's speech where she said: "Don't go a-thinkin' you can lick the hull rebel army at the start, because yeh can't. Yer jest one little feller amongst a hull lot of others ..." (Crane, 1960, 15). La France sees the irony of this situation in the fact that it took Henry the entire novel to discover this simple truth which he was told by his mother at the beginning.

Another element which points to *The Red Badge of Courage* being a parody is the characteristics of the hero. Crane described him as a coward and a deserter who instead of selflessly helping his friends tries to use their weaknesses against them as could be seen in the

event when Wilson entrusts Henry with an envelope for his family before the first battle as he fears that he might die. Henry instead of giving him the envelope back when they met again, after the battle, tries to keep it for later in case Wilson questions him about his deeds during the battle and discovers his lie about his wound.

Even the event in which Henry received his wound is parody as instead of receiving it in a battle he receives it from a soldier who tries to flee from a battle. Crane emphasized the parody by calling the wound “little red badge of courage”. Ironically, Henry received his wound, which was not a very serious one, after imagining himself as

a blue desperate figure leading lurid charges with one knee forward and a broken blade high-a blue, determined figure standing before a crimson and steel assault, getting calmly killed on a high place before the eyes of all. He thought of the magnificent pathos of his dead body.

(Crane, 1960, 69)

By comparing this image and Henry’s actual reaction when he received his wound it is clearly visible that Henry’s reaction was far from being heroic.

He got upon his hands and knees, and from thence, like a baby trying to walk, to his feet. Pressing his hands to his temples he went lurching over the grass. ... Once he put his hand to the top of his head and timidly touched the wound. The scratching pain of the contact made him draw a long breath through his clinched teeth. His fingers were dabbled with blood. He regarded them with a fix stare.

(Crane, 1960, 75)

Solomon argues that only the first part of the book is a parody while the second part, which begins when Henry returns to his regiment, is realistic. Solomon sees the second part of the novel as a repetition of the first half with the difference that Henry through his journey after his flight gradually loses the “romantic literary fancies” (Solomon, 1967, 76) and in the second part of the book becomes “as egocentric and emotional in his bravery as [he was] in his cowardice” (Solomon, 1967, 76) This refers back to Solomon’s opinion that Crane evokes the parody through the “sense of reality” (Solomon, 1967, 75)

The humor which could be seen in writings of Ambrose Bierce is easily detectible. Even though some authors refer to Bierce’s humor as to “bizarre black humor” (Allred, 1993, 176) Bierce seems to use humor to underline the atmosphere of the depicted situation. In some instances Bierce uses light irony as in the short story *A Tough Tussle* where he describes the main character: “Second-Lieutenant Brainerd Byring was a brave and efficient officer, young and comparatively inexperienced as he was in the business of killing his fellow-men.” (Bierce, 1984, 299) while in other cases, as in the story *Killed at Resaca*, Bierce uses black

humor when he describes a situation in which a brave officer tries to pass an open space not very far from the enemy's line while the other soldiers are watching him from a cover.

We watched him with suspended breath, our hearts in our mouths. On one occasion of this kind, indeed, one of our number, an impetuous stammerer, was so possessed by his emotion that he shouted at me: "I'll b-b-bet you t-two d-d-dollars they d-drop him b-b-before he g-gets to that d-d-ditch!" I did not accept the brutal wager; I thought they would.

(Bierce, 1984, 374)

The purpose of the use of humor in this story is to alleviate the situation. This could have been very useful type of humor used by soldiers in war as it could help them to depersonalize the horrors which surrounded them.

In the story *The Coup De Grace* Bierce uses humor to depersonalize from the situation when he refers to burying of dead soldiers after the battle as "to tidy up a bit" as well as laconic remarks concerning the care of wounded soldiers after the battle:

It is an army regulation that the wounded must wait; the best way to care for them is to win the battle. It must be confessed that victory is a distinct advantage to a man requiring attention, but many do not live to avail themselves of it.

(Bierce, 1984, 319)

This extract also shows the situation on the battlefield after the battle which was often omitted by many writers. In the same short story Bierce also refers to the fact that the soldiers who survived had to not only bury their dead comrades but also sent a report regarding the number of dead and missing soldiers:

There was little attempt at identification, though in most cases, the burial parties being detailed to glean the same ground which they had assisted to reap, the names of victorious dead were known and listed. The enemy's fallen had to be content with counting. But of that they got enough: many of them were counted several times, and the total, as given afterward in the official report of the victorious commander, denoted rather a hope than a result.

(Bierce, 1984, 319)

This open sarcasm also refers to the fact that the war, as well as the soldiers fighting in it, had to be presented in a favorable light. This phenomenon was true especially after the war where many soldiers claimed to be in the regiment which determined a battle.

Similar style of humor appears in often quoted part from *What I Saw of Shiloh*. This writing differs from others by being the actual account from a battle not a short story. Bierce's humor nevertheless is as poignant as in his short stories. In the quoted part Bierce depicted the

scene after the battle:

Men? There were men enough; all dead, apparently, except one, who lay near where I had halted my platoon to await the slower movement of the line—a Federal sergeant, variously hurt, who had been a fine giant in his time. He lay face upward, taking in his breath in convulsive, rattling snorts, and blowing it out in sputters of froth which crawled creamily down his cheeks, piling itself alongside his neck and ears. A bullet had clipped a groove in his skull, above the temple; from this the brain protruded in bosses, dropping off in flakes and strings. I had not previously known one could get on, even in this unsatisfactory fashion, with so little brain. One of my men, whom I knew for a womanish fellow, asked if he should put his bayonet through him. Inexpressibly shocked by the cold-blooded proposal, I told him I thought not; it was unusual, and too many were looking.

(Bierce quoted in Duncan and Klooster, 2002, 103-104)

Bierce used a vivid description of a severely wounded soldier to evoke the atmosphere of horror. After achieving this he undermined the scene by his harshly ironic humor. Apart from these, it is also possible to notice in the last sentence “too many were looking” the implication that if there was nobody looking he would allow his man to finish off the wounded sergeant which was impossible to do in front of other man. This fact also implies that even among the soldiers of the same army was important to save appearance.

This argument is supported by Randal Wayne Allred who comments on the last sentence as on „satirical venom at conventional behavior” (Allred, 1993, 176). Allred also argues that it seems as if the irony of the last sentence was included to show that “he was not really affected by the scene” (Allred, 1993, 176) and further on includes rhetorical question where he asks “Did he write this to imply that he was not really shocked but cold-blooded himself?” (Allred, 1993, 176) The conclusion of Allred’s argument is that “his mocking, satirical bravado and irony are defenses against the pain of acknowledging the loss of illusion.” (Allred, 1993, 177). Allred’s conclusion could be supported by Bierce when he said: “When I ask myself what has happened to Ambrose Bierce the youth, who fought at Chickamauga, I am bound to answer that he is dead.” (Bierce quoted in Duncan and Klooster, 2002, 21)

Considering Bierce’s short stories it can not be omitted that he was not only ready to criticize the army as whole but was also quick to criticize the incompetence of some officers. Such an absurdity is shown in the story *One Kind of Officer* where one of the main characters, captain Ransome, is told off by his superior at the beginning of the story for having different view on the given situation. The story opens with the sentence: “Captain Ransome, it is not permitted to you to know anything. It is sufficient that you obey my order ...” (Bierce, 1984,

289). The general then orders Ransome to open fire as soon as he sees any troops. Ransome took the order literally and was holding the line despite many casualties among his men. At the end of the story reader learnt that Ransome's men were shooting into another regiment of the same army. Ransome, when interrogated in regard of his knowledge of such fact replied: "I knew that, general. It appeared to be none of my business." (Bierce, 1984, 297) In this story Bierce shows not only the incompetence of the general who refused to listen to his subaltern but also the absurdity of the officer who blindly listened to the order of his superior just to prove that the superiors order was incorrect.

Mary E. Grenander in her essay dissects use of irony combined with terror in Bierce's stories. Grenander distinguishes two types of tales: in the first group are stories "in which the actual situation is harmful, with the protagonist conceiving it to be harmless and reacting accordingly" (Grenander, 1982, 213) and the second group are stories "in which the actual situation is harmless, with the protagonist conceiving it to be harmful and reacting accordingly" (Grenander, 1982, 213)

This view is certainly true for some of the stories as for *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* where the main character, Peyton Farquhar who is a Confederate spy, was caught by the Union soldiers and was about to be hanged from the bridge. At that point the narrator describes Farquhar's journey up to the point where he meets his wife, then the reader learns that it was only Farquhar's distorted imagination and that he is hanging from the bridge. In this group Grenander also includes the story *Chickamauga* which was already mentioned earlier. As an example of the second group Grenander mentions *One of the Missing* which was also discussed earlier.

Even though it is possible to agree with Grenander that this pattern is true for some stories, it cannot be applied to all stories where irony or absurdity of the war is described.

7. NATURE

Nature played a key part especially in Crane's writing. There are several different approaches to the perception of nature in *The Red Badge of Courage* which shows the ambiguity of the perception of nature. The ambiguity will be shown in essays of three different authors who have various opinions on the depiction of nature. Although all of them agree that the description of nature has a symbolic meaning each of the authors has different opinion on the meaning of the symbolism.

Donald B. Gibson's view changes throughout his essay which shows the possible ambiguity of the perception of nature. Marston La France believes that nature creates only a setting with symbolic significance rather than functions as a symbol itself. The last author, Jean Cazemajou, agrees with Donald B. Gibson that nature has symbolic meaning but ascribes it religious meaning. Even though each of the authors uses the novel to support their views on nature their attitudes still remain ambivalent.

Donald B. Gibson considers nature to be one of the major themes of the novel. Gibson at first describes nature as a positive force: "So powerfully does he feel nature's compassion for him that he imagines she envelops him, protecting him from any antagonistic forces without." (Gibson, 1968, 71)

He lay down in the grass. The blades pressed tenderly against his cheek. The moon had been lighted and was hung in a treetop. The liquid stillness of the night enveloping him made him feel vast pity for himself. There was a caress in the soft winds; and the whole mood of the darkness, he thought, was one of sympathy for himself in his distress.

(Gibson, 1968, 25)

However, later in his essay Gibson ascribes the nature a negative force when he analysis the scene in the forest where Henry runs after his flight from the battle and after finding peaceful place which is described as a chapel, Henry finds a rotting body of a soldier. Gibson argues that the nature showed Henry its hostility by presenting a dead body after showing him its peacefulness. According to Gibson "Henry should be met with such a sight, since he must be disabused of his faith in a sympathetic nature." (Gibson, 1968, 74) Furthermore, Gibson later argues that Crane shifts to seeing the nature as openly hostile when he says:

His unguided feet, too, caught aggravatingly in brambles; and with it all he received a subtle suggestion to touch the corpse. ... At least he burst the bonds which had

fastened him to the spot and fled, unheeding the underbrush.

(Crane, 1960, 54)

Gibson concludes:

Because he is able to flee he should have been reborn. ... Henry was reborn as a result of his forest-chapel experience; that he learns that nature is not the least sympathetic toward man's hopes and aspirations.

(Gibson, 1968, 75)

Further in his essays Gibson states: "Just as nature lacks the consciousness to support men in the achievement of their ends, so she lacks the consciousness implied in thwarting goals." (Gibson, 1968, 76)

It is possible to see from the above mentioned quotes that Gibson's view on the nature is changing throughout the essay. Gibson at first describes nature as protective, than she teaches Henry that she is not always sympathetic, later becomes openly antagonistic and at the end is seen, as Gibson points out, as indifferent. In the conclusion Gibson believes that "the youth projects onto nature his own feelings about his place in nature." It could be therefore understood that Henry at first feels that he belongs to nature, when he perceives it positively, than he feels that nature guides him, later threatens him and in the end he feels indifferent towards the nature.

Gibson's final conclusion is that "the conflict which is *apparently* between the youth and a hostile nature is in fact the conflict existing within the youth." (Gibson, 1968, 76) This opinion is, however, contradictory to his earlier views. At the beginning of the essay Gibson used the quote from *The Red Badge of Courage* mentioned above to support his view that nature is a positive force which is, however, in contradiction with Gibson's later opinion of "conflict existing within the youth" as in the quote from Crane chosen by Gibson is a discrepancy between Henry's feelings and the mood of the nature. Henry felt "vast pity for himself" and was "in distress" while the grass was "pressed tenderly against his cheek", "the night was enveloping him" and "there was caress in the soft winds". It is clear, that because Henry's feelings were contrary to the mood of the nature, it could not suggest that the description of the nature describes Henry's feelings. This view is further supported by the quote from Gibson's essay mentioned above: "So powerfully does he feel nature's compassion for him that he imagines she envelops him, protecting him from any antagonistic forces without." (Gibson, 1968, 71) As could be seen the author himself speaks about the "forces without" when he speaks about the use of nature in *The Red Badge of Courage*. Even though it was shown that the idea of nature depicting Henry's mind is in discrepancy with

Henry's feelings, Donald B. Gibson is not the only one who approaches the depiction of the nature in such a way. Another author who assumes that Crane was depicting Henry's mental growth by depicting the nature was Marston La France. La France writes that Crane exploits two illusions in the novel: "the notion that moral qualities" which according to La France "exist in nature" and also "the belief that he [Henry] is unique" (La France, 1971, 106)

La France considers Henry's journey through the forest, after he ran from the battle, "a pilgrimage within the mind". La France suggests that the meaning of the journey through the forest is to "find the truth". To do so Henry has to overcome a number of emotions. These are: "fear, guilt, shame, hatred of those who remained and fought, vanity, self-pity, rage, his sufferings as he sympathetically experiences Conklin's death, the self-loathing evoked by the tattered man" (La France, 1971, 111). La France compares these emotions to the actions Henry has to go through on his journey and he finds the way out of the forest only after he turns again towards the battle and therefore "back to his original commitment" (La France, 1971, 114).

Even though both authors ascribe the nature a symbolic meaning within the novel, it is obvious that while Gibson tries to persuade the reader that nature is the picture of Henry's mind, La France describes the nature as a setting for Henry's actions which has symbolic significance.

The view of the forest being a symbolic place is also supported by Jean Cazemajou:

[the forest] instead of being a specific setting, located precisely in space and time, this forest appears rather a symbolic place reminiscent of the one in Genesis where Adam takes refuge after his fall and tries to hide behind trees in his flight from the face of God.

(Cazemajou, 1969, 58)

This view ascribes the scene a religious meaning which is not suggested by other authors. Cazemajou supports his view by the second conclusion of the novel *The Red Badge of Courage* "He turned now with a lover's thirst to images of tranquil skies, fresh meadows, cool brooks-an existence of soft and eternal peace" (Crane, 1960, 134) which according to Cazemajou supports his view of "Henry's Edenic vision" (Cazemajou, 1969, 58)

Cazemajou also presents the widely discussed sentence "The red sun was pasted in the sky like a wafer" (Crane, 1960, 64) to support his views of religious symbolism appearing in the novel. This sentence occurs later in the novel, in chapter IX, after Henry experiences the death of Jim Conklin. Cazemajou writes:

The redness of the wafer is indeed a sign of sacrifice, ... it refers, intuitively rather than deductively, to the common archetypal image which is part and parcel of Aztec culture: the occasional need to sacrifice the life of a young man to the sun in order to preserve its life and brilliance.

(Cazemajou, 1969, 62)

This view is however contradicted by R.W.Stallman who in his notes to the text of *The Red Badge of Courage* states:

The [fierce canceled] red sun was pasted in the sky like a fierce wafer. The repeated word fierce ... underscores the fact that Crane intended the sun to personify the wrathful gods of Henry's insult and worship.

(Crane, 1960, 211)

However, Stallman's notes do not suggest any connection to which gods he was referring to. It could be therefore argued that there is not any suggestion towards the Aztec culture and, as seen from the context of the novel where Crane often refers to war as to "the blood-swollen god" (Crane, 1960, 73). It would be more likely to assume that Crane referred to the war rather than to a symbol of Aztec culture as the novel does not suggest any other connection with Aztec culture.

Marston La France believes that "symbols exist, and exist only, in context" (La France, 1971, 99) This idea further supports the contrary opinion to the Cazemajou's view on the red sun being a symbol of Aztec culture as Crane does not mention any hint to Aztecs or their culture in the context. La France also believes that the sentence does not imply any religious meaning and that the wafer is certainly not the "wafer of the Mass" (La France, 1971, 99) as "Crane never mentioned any religious ritual, or god external to man except in terms of ironic attack or contempt" (La France, 1971, 99) La France further supports his opinion by Edward Stones' observation that "at least five chapters in the novel end with a reference to the sun" (La France, 1971, 99). La France therefore believes that the sun is "used throughout as a general image of external nature" (La France, 1971, 99) and should not be ascribed symbolic meaning as the other uses do not follow the same pattern.

La France connects the words "wafer" and "pasted" with "the seal of a legal document and thus suggests completion, finality" (La France, 1971, 100). Even though there is not any suggestion of the legal context in the novel it seems as the most reasonable explanation to the use of the sentence "The red sun was pasted in the sky like a wafer" (Crane, 1960, 64), especially if it is considered that this sentence was written just after Jim Conklin's death which also suggested "finality" of his life. As it is possible to observe, from above mentioned views, the use of nature is widely discussed subject with various opinions of the intended

purpose.

Bierce's view and description of nature was influenced by his work as a topographical engineer during the Civil War as his task was to observe the landscape and then draw maps of what he observed. Bierce later commented on the experience: "To this day I cannot look over a landscape without noting the advantages of the ground for attack or defense." (quoted in Duncan and Klooster, 11). This was true not only for his life but also for his stories. Duncan and Klooster observe that "Bierce's Civil War stories pay careful attention to the lay of the land, especially to the placement of troops and guns on the battlefield" (Duncan and Klooster, 2002, 11) This could be seen in Bierce's short story *The Affair at Coulter's Notch* where Bierce describes the setting for the upcoming battle:

The place was a depression, a "notch," in the sharp crest of a hill. It was a pass, and through it ran a turnpike, which reaching the highest point in its course by a sinuous ascent through a thin forest made a similar, though less steep, descent toward the enemy. For a mile to the left and a mile to the right, the ridge, though occupied by Federal infantry lying close behind the sharp crest and appearing as if held in place by atmospheric pressure, was inaccessible to artillery. There was no place but the bottom of the notch, and that was barely wide enough for the roadbed. From the Confederate side this point was commanded by two batteries posted on a slightly lower elevation beyond a creek, and a half mile away. All the guns but one were masked by the trees of an orchard; that one - it seemed a bit of impudence - was on an open lawn directly in front of a rather grandiose building, the planter's dwelling.

(Bierce, 1984, 276)

Bierce uses such a detailed description of the place for the upcoming battle so the reader can easily imagine the setting and is later drawn into the action which follows. Bierce does not use any symbolism when he describes the nature; he uses the descriptions merely for setting the scene. However, as Eric Solomon points out in his essay *The Bitterness of Battle: Ambrose Bierce's War Fiction*, Bierce uses the description of nature in two different ways: "At times the landscape is indifferent" (Solomon, 1982, 190) while in other cases "the natural setting is deliberately contrasted to the ugliness of the events it shelters" (Solomon, 1982, 190) It was possible to observe the first case in the above mentioned quote from the short story *The Affair at Coulter's Notch* where Bierce only observes the place without ascribing it any emotions which it may evoke. The other case could be seen in the story *On a Mountain* which is a depiction of Bierce's early military experience and clearly show Bierce's mastery to evoke positive emotions in the reader which he later contradicts by the realistic depiction of war.

It was a strange country. Nine in ten of us had never seen a mountain, nor hill as high as a church spire, until we had crossed Ohio River. In power upon the emotions

nothing, I think, is comparable to the first sight of mountains. ... Space seemed to have taken on a new dimension; areas to have not only length and breadth, but thickness. ... How we revealed in its savage beauties! With what pure delight we inhaled its fragrances of spruce and pine! How we stared with something like awe at its clumps of laurel! ... And, by the way, during those halcyon days (the halcyon was there, too, chattering above every creek, as he is all over the world) we fought another battle.

(Bierce in Duncan and Klooster, 2002, 74)

It could be seen that Bierce's description of the nature evokes the impression of a natural beauty and peacefulness of the nature after which Bierce mentions, seemingly by the way, the war. Later in the story Bierce goes even further when he contrasts the beauty of the nature to the horrifying reality of war.

How romantic it all was; the sunset valleys full of visible sleep; the glades suffused and interpenetrated with moonlight; the long valley of the Greenbrier stretching away to we knew not what silent cities; the river itself unseen under its "astral body" of mist! Then there was the "spice of danger."

Once we heard shots in front; then there was a long wait. As we trudged on we passed something - some things - lying by the wayside. During another wait we examined them, curiously lifting the blankets from their yellow-clay faces. How repulsive they looked with their blood-smears, their blank, staring eyes, their teeth uncovered by contraction of the lips! The frost had begun already to whiten their deranged clothing.

(Bierce in Duncan and Klooster, 2002, 76-77)

Bierce again evokes the atmosphere of peacefulness by the description of the nature only to contrast it with an awful sight of corpses lying by the side of the road. It seems that Bierce purposely lulls the reader by the romantic description of nature to make the contrast of nature and the dead bodies stronger.

When comparing the use of nature in Crane's and Bierce's writings it is possible to observe that Bierce uses the description of nature to evoke a certain atmosphere to underline his stories or merely as a description of a setting of a story. Gibson, La France and Cazemajou argue that Crane's description of nature was used as symbolism to underline the plot of the novel or to add another meaning to the described situation.

Even though it was just shown that there are subjects in which it is possible to compare Stephen Crane and Ambrose Bierce there are also some interesting points in which are these authors incomparable as those points only occur in the work of one of the authors.

8. AMBROSE BIERCE

Ambrose Bierce wrote only short stories as he believed that the short story is more suitable form of depiction of war as was paraphrased in Allred's *Writing the Civil War*:

war has no coherent text - at least, none of any universal significance. There is no moral causation in war. ... This is why Bierce never wrote a novel: the novel form itself assumes that there exists some meaning, some significance, in the sequence of random happenings that we call life. There is no inherent continuity of life from one moment to the next that can be plausibly connected together into one complex narrative. Life consists of episodes, unrelated events that are fragmentary and random.
(Allred, 1993, 189-190)

Ambrose Bierce fought during the Civil War for almost four years even though he was severely injured in the head. However, as a result of his head injury he had to resign from the post of topographical engineer, which he achieved for his bravery and abilities. Bierce's first-hand experience helped him to depict the war in a realistic way. His belief that experience is essential to write realistically about the War is obvious from his opinion when he refers to correspondents who discuss "forts, guns and warships without having observed them, and battles without having seen one" (Bierce quoted in Shaefer, 1997, 80). Bierce says:

When a man writes on military matters without some degree of special training, study, and the technical knowledge so obtained, he makes a fool of himself in the first sentence, in the last and in all the intermediate sentences. No subject, not even art or literature, is beset with so many pitfalls for the confident ignoramus - the layman happy in unconsciousness of his own fallibility.
(quoted in Shaefer, 1997, 80)

This opinion is also shared by Eric Solomon when he understands the meaning of the short story *Chickamauga* as the boy's loss of romantic perception of the war and gaining the understanding of real war after he experiences it. Solomon wrote: "War is not what it seems to be in books and pictures. Only experience, personal experience, can wipe out the false impression and teach the essentials of war." (Solomon, 1982, 194)

Owing to Bierce's experience he was able to address issues which occurred during the war; one of such issues was the disunion of families, especially in border states, which Bierce addressed in four of his short stories. One of them is *Three and One Are One* in which Bierce depicts disunion of a family when one of the sons, Barr Lassiter, decides to join the Union army while the others support the Confederacy:

This unhappy division begot an unsupportable domestic bitterness, and when the

offending son and brother left home with the avowed purpose of joining the Federal army not a hand was laid in his, not a word of farewell was spoken, not a good wish followed him...

(Bierce, 1984, 378)

When Lassiter arrived in his village two years later he found only the ruins of his house and no trace of his family.

This idea is taken even a step further in *A Horseman in the Sky* and in *The Affair at Coulter's Notch* as in both of these stories Bierce describes not only the disintegration of a family but also scenes in which one member of the family knowingly kills a member or members of his own family. The storyline in *A Horseman in the Sky* starts when Carter Druse decides to join the Union army while his father chooses to support the Confederacy; his mother is too ill to be able to join the discussion. However, the father's reaction is completely different to the one in the previous story: "The father lifted his leonine head, looked at the son a moment in silence, and replied: Well, go, sir, and whatever may occur do what you conceive to be your duty. Virginia, to which you are a traitor, must get on without you." (Bierce, 1984, 359) It could be seen that compared to the previous story the father, even though he disapproves with his son's deeds, understands his feelings and hopes that he will fulfill his duty. These words are crucial in the story as Carter Druse is, when on a picket, faced with the dilemma whether to shoot his father and "do his duty" or spare his father's life but put in danger his own regiment. Druse chose to "do his duty". Bierce depicts the scene after Druse fired at his father and was questioned by his officer about the reason for firing:

"Did you fire?" the sergeant whispered.

"Yes"

"At what?"

"A horse. It was standing on yonder rock - pretty far out. You see it is no longer there. It went over the cliff."

The man's face was white, but he showed no other sign of emotion. Having answered, he turned away his eyes and said no more. The sergeant did not understand.

"See here Druse," he said, after a moment's silence, "it's no use making a mystery. I order you to report. Was there anybody on the horse?"

"Yes."

"Well?"

"My father."

(Bierce, 1984, 362-363)

Even though this account of the situation might show Druse as a cold man who blindly follows the cause of his army, even if it means to destroy his family, the preceding moments show that he went through a moral dilemma. At first, when he recognized in the

enemy's soldier his father, he "grew pale; he shook in every limb, turned faint ... was near swooning from intensity of emotion." (Bierce, 1984, 360) But then he decided that "The duty of the soldier was plain: the man must be shot dead ... Duty had conquered; the spirit had said to the body: Peace, be still. He fired." (Bierce, 1984, 360-361) From this extract is obvious that even though he had moral dilemma whether to choose the duty over his family, his sense of honor and duty outweighed his emotions.

Another short story in which Bierce refers to the same theme, where a soldier values his sense of duty over his family, is *The Affair at Coulter's Notch*. This story depicts a family in which the husband, Southern farmer, supports the Union while his wife is faithful to the Confederacy. When the Union army arrives in the area where Coulter's house is, he is ordered by a spiteful general to open fire on the Confederacy headquarter which is stationed in his own house. Coulter chooses not to reveal to his commander that the house the general has ordered him to attack, is his own house, instead he only interrogates:

"On the next ridge, did you say, sir? Are the guns near the house?"

"Ah, you have been over this road before. Directly at the house"

"And it is - necessary - to engage them? The order is imperative?"

His voice was husky and broken. He was visibly paler. ... and rode straight forward into the Notch.

(Bierce, 1984, 278)

Coulter's house is conquered by the use of the only gun which was operated under the direction of Captain Coulter and is used as the Union headquarters. The story closes when the officers find Captain Coulter in the cellar of his house with his dead wife and a dead child in his arms - both killed by a bombshell.

This short story, beside some others, even at the time of publication raised disagreement of some literary critics who believed Bierce's stories to be improbable. A reviewer from the New York *Sun* wrote a review on *Tales of Soldiers and Civilians* in which *The Affair at Coulter's Notch* was published:

Nor does there seem to us to be the appearance of truth or reason in some of the tales. ... if the officer in charge of the battery at Coulter's Notch had publicly explained the circumstances, we feel quite sure that he could have avoided the unpleasant duty of shooting cannon balls at his wife and child.

(quoted in Duncan and Klooster, 2002, 161)

Bierce opinion on such a review is easy to comprehend from his reaction which he published in his column called *Prattle* in *San Francisco Examiner* on June 26, 1892. (Duncan and Klooster, 2002, 161):

O what a thing it is to be an ass! ... Regarding the officer at Coulter's Notch, I will confess, too, the probable efficacy of a "public explanation," whatever that might be in an army, through military subordination is not favorable to it. Unfortunately, though, for the relevancy of the suggestion I had chosen to write of an officer whose pride and sense of duty forbade him to explain.

(Bierce quoted in Duncan and Klooster, 2002, 161)

Bierce also argued against the opinion that his stories lack "appearance of truth" when he stated that "the incidents that come in for my special reprobation by the critics as "improbable" and even "impossible" are transcripts from memory - things that actually occurred before my eyes." (Duncan and Klooster, 2002, 254)

Daniel Aaron believes that "Bierce smuggled personal experience into his fiction [as] the tales are usually laid in localities he had fought over." (Aaron, 1982, 173) and also that "Bierce's tales of war are not in the least realistic; they are, as he doubtless intended them to be, incredible events occurring in credible surroundings" (Aaron, 1982, 172-173) As could be seen from Bierce's quotation from Duncan and Klooster, Bierce's stories were realistic.

Ambrose Bierce is usually considered to be a realist. It would be therefore useful to define the term "realism" at this point as there are considerably different views about the meaning of this term. The definition of realism presented in the Norton Anthology called *Adventures in American Literature* is following:

Realism can be defined as the depiction of life as most people live and know it. The realistic writer is concerned with recording the details of ordinary life, with showing the reader not generally but precisely how ordinary life is lived. *Ordinary* is a key word in any discussion of realism. Many realistic writers, in their search for subject matter, tend to avoid the unusual or out-of-the-way and deliberately concentrate on the typical and the average.

(Hodgins, Francis, Silverman, Kenneth, 1980, 378-379)

This definition does not seem to be entirely true for Bierce as his short stories were far from being ordinary; they were often described as "improbable" and "impossible" (Duncan and Klooster, 2002, 254). However, Bierce claims that he had described the war as it was, even if the truth seemed unlikely. This opinion is also supported by Bierce's reaction quoted earlier.

Michael Shaefer's view on realism is much closer to Bierce's concept when he asks a rhetorical question: "What realism actually consists of?" Shaefer believes that

As most authors and critics are quick to point out, simple accuracy of observation ... does not constitute realism as a literary style or aesthetic. Realism lies not in just getting the surface appearance right, but in imparting it some kind of meaning or feeling.

(Shaefer, 1997, 17)

Shaefer further supports his view by quoting William Dean Howells: “When realism becomes false to itself, when it heaps up facts merely, and maps life instead of picturing it, realism will perish” (quoted in Shaefer, 1997, 17). Similar view is also shared by Robert Spiller who believes that “realism consists of the author’s representing life as it appears to him, which may not be the same as life as it really is.” (quoted in Shaefer, 1997, 18)

Bierce tried to depict the war as it was, or it should be said, as he believed it to be, which is possible to observe from his various remarks towards those who tried to accuse him that his stories are a work of fiction. The fact that Bierce accepts that he is able to refer only to a part of the battle in his narratives is shown by the title of his story *What I Saw of Shiloh* where it is obvious that Bierce did not attempt to give a review of the battle but just an account of what he actually saw.

Bierce, faithful to his realistic views, refused to ascribe any ideology to the War and in his comments often mentioned that soldiers who fought in the War did not fight for any high ideals or ideology as it was often described by the romantic authors of the post war era. Duncan and Klooster wrote about Bierce’s work after the War:

He sharpened his wit and discovered a real ability for satire and sarcasm - an ability stemming from a deep understanding that in the Civil War man had died for causes they did not understand, died to have their manhood recognized according to history’s definition at the time: courage, honor, duty.

(Duncan and Klooster, 2002, 17)

This example supports Bierce’s opinion, depicted in his short stories *The Affair of the Coulter’s Notch* and *A Horseman in the Sky*, that men did not enlist to the army to fight for high ideals but to fulfill their duty. Michael Shaefer supports Bierce’s view when he describes soldiers in a combat: “If the enemy does appear, the soldier gives little thought to the cause for which he is ostensibly fighting. He uses his weapons not to free slaves or defend states’ rights or advance any other high purpose but simply to keep from being killed. (Shaefer, 1997, Introduction XIV)

Bierce pointed out the discrepancy between the war presented to the public with the cause and war rhetoric and the reality of war in the battlefield in his short story *An Affair of Outpost*. The story depicts a Governor who visits a battlefield to see the real war. However, he expects to see the war which is presented to the public in a romantic way. On his way from the front, which he briefly visited, the Governor falls over and sprains his ankle which leaves him immobile. While he is waiting on the spot for the stretcher bearers he witnesses the

combat of the retreating army and his romantic imagination of the war is shattered:

In all this was none of the pomp of war - no hint of glory. Even in his distress and peril the helpless civilian could not forbear to contrast it with the gorgeous parades and reviews held in honor of himself - with the brilliant uniforms, the music, the banners, and the marching. It was an ugly and sickening business: to all that was artistic in his nature, revolting, brutal, in bad taste.

“Ugh!” he grunted, shuddering - “this is beastly! Where is the charm of it all? Where are the elevated sentiments, the devotion, the heroism, the - “

(Bierce, 1984, 346)

The Governor is then saved by the retrieving army led by Captain Armisted who is killed in the attempt to save the Governor. Bierce concludes the story:

“Where is Captain Armisted?” the Governor asked, not altogether carelessly.

The surgeon looked up from his work, pointing silently to the nearest body in the row of dead, the features discreetly covered with a handkerchief. It was so near that the great man could have laid his hand upon it, but he did not. He may have feared it would bleed.

(Bierce, 1984, 349)

In the conclusion of the story is well shown that even though the Governor is grateful to Captain Armisted for saving his life he would not leave his world of parades and accept the unpleasant reality of battlefield. The story shows the courageous action of the Captain who saved the Governor but also the discrepancy between the courageous and dutiful soldiers and the Governor representing the “deceit of the marketplace” (Solomon, 1963, 186).

Ambrose Bierce in his short stories tried to depict the war as it was or as he perceived it to be, using his observation from the battlefield to show the absurdity of war and the needless casualties which occurred during the war. He opposed the romantic depiction of war which tried to show soldiers heroically dying for the cause which was presented by the Government.

9. STEPHEN CRANE

Stephen Crane's novel *The Red Badge of Courage* is considered to be one of the best works written about the Civil War. Crane uses the form of a novel which allows him to show the development of the characters during the war. Crane's main character, Henry Fleming, is a farm boy who enlists to the army to prove his courage and escape the drudgery of every day life on a farm. The novel describes Henry's growth throughout the novel in which the young boy grows into a man.

At the beginning of the novel Henry felt like a romantic hero. This feeling was well depicted in scenes when he was leaving his home and "primed himself for a beautiful scene" (Crane, 1960, 15) while giving farewell to his mother and also when he went to his school to say goodbye to his friends and he saw a girl watching him to leave.

However, the first trial starts when he is first encountered with the prospect of a battle. Henry grows anxious not of the battle itself but because he is worried that he will not be able to sustain the perils of the battle and will desert and also because he realizes that he does not know anything about himself concerning his behavior in the battle: "It had suddenly appeared to him that perhaps in a battle he might run. He was forced to admit that as far as war was concerned he knew nothing of himself." (Crane, 1960, 18) At this point starts Henry's journey in which he should learn about himself.

The scene in which Henry is worried about his response to the battle was depicted earlier in this paper in the chapter *The Theme of Fear and Courage*. His worries proved to be true. After sustaining the first attack during his first battle he is not able to endure the second attack and he flees. This antiheroic behavior is further underlined by Henry's self-delusion when he considers his flight to be wise as he does not want to admit to himself that his behavior was cowardly.

He had fled, he told himself, because annihilation approached. He had done a good part in saving himself, who was a little piece of the army. He had considered the time, he said, to be one in which it was a duty of every little piece to rescue itself if possible. Later the officers could fit the little pieces together again, and make a battle front. If none of the little pieces were wise enough to save themselves from the flurry of death at such a time, why, where would be the army? It was all plain that he had proceeded according to very correct and commendable rules. His action had been sagacious things. They had been full of strategy. They were the work of master's legs.

(Crane, 1960, 51)

Henry is, At this point, lead by a self-delusion and does not learn anything about himself as he

still see himself as a superior to the others and refuses to accept the reality that while many others stayed and fought in the battle he cowardly fled. This opinion is also shared by Marston La France who compares Henry Fleming to other Crane's characters:

... and Henry Fleming are all cut from the same bolt: all are young, naïve, untried, subject to fear, troubled by a sense of being unique, given to silly illusions, the environment or society in which they find themselves seems hostile to the ideals they posit for their own lives, ... [they] struggle to bridge the gap between their romantically impossible dreams and harsh realities.

(La France, 1971, 102)

Henry is soon after his flight confronted with the reality of war. At first when he meets a dead soldier in the forest and later, even more harshly, when he after meeting a group of wounded soldiers finds out that one of the wounded soldiers is his friend Jim Conklin. It is the first time in the novel when Henry loses concern for himself and cares for another person. He tries to care about Jim but later on is only able to witness Conklin's death. Henry's reaction to Conklin's death is following: "The youth turned, with a sudden, livid rage, toward the battlefield. He shook his fist. He seemed about to deliver philippic." (Crane, 1960, 64) However, he was not able to do so as he was too moved by the death of his friend. Henry, instead of changing his behavior after witnessing Conklin's death, commits another unheroic deed when he leaves the tattered soldier, a man who shows concern for him even though he is himself badly wounded, wondering in pain in fields. Henry's reason for deserting the tattered soldier was fear that the tattered soldier would find out about his lack of a wound:

His late companion persistency made him feel that he could not keep his crime concealed in his bosom. It was sure to be brought plain by one of those arrows which cloud the air and are constantly pricking, discovering, proclaiming those things which are willed to be forever hidden. He admitted that he could not defend himself against this agency. It was not within his vigilance.

(Crane, 1960, 67)

Henry again deserts; this time not his regiment but another soldier in need. It therefore seems that Henry did not learn anything from his experience as he still has the same heroic fantasies. On the contrary, Eric Solomon believes that "the betrayal of the tattered soldier is essential to Henry's growth to maturity. ... Henry realizes what he has done. His later heroism marks a successful attempt to wipe out his cowardice." (Solomon, 1967, 89) Solomon refers to the conclusion of the book where Henry regards leaving the tattered soldier in the field as a mistake and believes that "It would become a good part of him. He would have upon him often the consciousness of a great mistake. And he would be taught to deal gently and with

care. He would be a man.” (Crane, 1960, 133) However, it should be pointed out that Henry does not think about the tattered soldier until the conclusion of the novel and when Solomon writes that “His heroism marks a successful attempt to wipe out his cowardice.” (Solomon, 1967, 89) It should refer to Henry’s later behavior during the battle rather than to the desertion of the tattered soldier as Henry does not realized “what he has done” (Solomon, 1967, 89) until after the last battle.

After deserting the tattered soldier Henry is again on the run; this time towards the battle. Henry also goes back in his thoughts when he again imagines himself to be a hero who is “getting calmly killed on a high place before the eyes of all” (Crane, 1960, 69) On the way towards the battle Henry receives his wound and with the help of a stranger, a soldier with cheery voice, returns to his regiment.

Eric Solomon believes that the novel consists of two parts:

The first half focuses in a parodic manner on Henry Fleming, the antihero, isolated in his romantic literary fancies of war should be. The second half portrays in a realistic mode the experiences of the larger body of men who muddle through. Henry is as egocentric and emotional in his bravery as in his cowardice, but Crane shows the young soldier’s last action in context of the regiment’s dogged behavior. Thus the rhythm of the novel’s two parts reflects the author’s basic approach to fiction: the movement from parody to realism. And Henry’s later heroism is not inconsistent with the first part’s parodic mode; reality is not only the reverse of romance but in some ways a verification of the truths that lie behind the idealized conventions.

(Solomon, 1967, 77)

It is possible to agree with Eric Solomon that Fleming’s view changes through the novel “from parody to realism” or it could be also said from romantic perception of the war to more realistic one. However, it is not quite possible to agree with him when he writes about Henry Fleming’s “realization in the military scheme - marked by his return to the regiment following the climatic wound he receives in chapter twelve.” (Solomon, 1967, 77) The main reason why Henry’s return to the regiment should not be taken as a turning point is that Henry does not change his ways directly after returning to the regiment. It does not happen until later in the novel when he overhears officers speaking unfavorably about his regiment. This opinion could be supported by the event when Henry invents a story about being shot in the battle after his return to his regiment’s camp:

Yes, yes, I’ve - I’ve had an awful time. I’ve been all over. Way over on the right. Ter’ble fightin’ over there. I had an awful time. I got separated from th’ reg’ment. Over on th’ right, I got shot. In th’ head. I never see sech fightin’. Awful time. I don’t see how I could get separated from th’ reg’ment. I got shot, too.

(Crane, 1960, 79-80)

It could be seen that Henry presents a story which he was trying to invent during his flight. Furthermore, he also tries to use his friend's weakness when he tries to keep an envelope which Wilson entrusted him, when afraid of being killed, before the first battle in which Henry fled. Henry at first wants to give the envelope back to Wilson as soon as he remembers it but he then decides to keep it and use it against his friends in case Wilson asks him unpleasant questions:

He now rejoiced in the possession of a small weapon with which he could prostrate his comrade at the first signs of a cross-examination. He was master. It would now be he who could laugh and shoot the shafts of derision.

(Crane, 1960, 89)

Donald B. Gibson comments on Henry's behavior: "only a person who was not very worthwhile could take such an attitude." (Gibson, 1968, 66)

Although Henry's attitude before the following battle changes compared to the beginning of the novel, it does not show Henry in a favorable light. Crane writes about Henry's thoughts:

He did not give a great deal of thought to these battles that lay directly before him. It was not essential that he should plan his ways in regard to them. He had been taught that that many obligations of life were easily avoided. The lesson of yesterday had been that retribution was a laggard and blind.

(Crane, 1960, 91)

This shows that Henry's attitude was not at least heroic and therefore did not comply with his behavior after the following battle. Moreover, Henry still has his romantic fantasies about being brave:

He felt quite competent to return home and make the hearts of the people glow with stories of war. He could see himself in a room of warm tints telling tales to listeners. ... He saw his gaping audience picturing him as the central figure in blazing scenes. And he imagined the consternation and the ejaculations of his mother and the young lady at the seminary as they drank his recitals. Their vague feminine formula for beloved ones doing brave deeds on the field of battle without risk of life would be destroyed.

(Crane, 1960, 92)

Henry returns to his romantic fancies he had when leaving home. He again mentions his mother and the girl he saw in the window when leaving to the War. It is therefore obvious that because Henry still have his "romantic literary fancies" (Solomon, 1967, 76), his attitude has

not changed. Considering Solomon's opinion about the two parts of the book, it is clearly shown that Henry, at the beginning of the second day, still does not have any experience and his views are very similar to those he had at the beginning of the novel.

Henry's behavior begins to change before the first battle of the second day when he replaces his cowardice with rage against the enemy:

Yesterday, when he had imagined the universe to be against him, he had hated it, ... to-day he hated the army of the foe with the same great hatred. He was not going to be badgered of his life, like a kitten chased by boys, he said.

(Crane, 1960, 97-98)

Henry is, At this point, able to loose his romantic ideas and replace them with reality of war. His rage grows larger when he, together with his friend Wilson, overhears an officer of their own army to refer to their regiment as to "mule drivers" (Crane, 1960, 103). The general decides to sacrifice them in order to hold the positions. Henry suddenly realizes his insignificance:

These happenings had occupied an incredibly short time, yet the youth felt that in them he had been made aged. New eyes were given to him. And the most startling thing was to learn suddenly that he was very insignificant. The officer spoke of the regiment as if he referred to a broom.

(Crane, 1960, 104)

This realization helps Henry to stop thinking about himself and become a part of the regiment as he realizes that his regiment is more significant and the only way to overpower the enemy is by staying together. Later he even becomes one of the courageous leaders of the regiment and, together with his friend Wilson, a color bearer. The last battle of the novel finishes when Henry's regiment manages to hold the line and to force the enemy's army to retreat and even to capture four soldiers and get hold of the enemy's flag.

The novel concludes with Henry's self-reflection after winning the last battle. Henry reflects on his growth and his achievements during the two days of fighting. He is at first pleased with himself when he reflects on other people's opinion about him:

But the youth, regarding his procession of memory, felt gleeful and unregretting, for in it his public deeds were paraded in great and shining prominence. Those performances which had been witnessed by his fellows marched now in wide purple and gold, having various deflections. They went gaily with music. It was pleasure to watch these things. He spent delightful minutes viewing the gilded images of memory.

(Crane, 1960, 131)

Later he remembers his flight from the battle and even though he feels ashamed of it,

he considers it to be just a mistake of a novice to the war “who did not comprehend”. He believes that: “it had been very proper and just” (Crane, 1960, 132) to flee from the battle. At this point it is possible to see that Henry still was not able to admit his mistake and he tried to convert his cowardly act into a part of his learning process.

When he remembers the tattered soldier whom he left in fields “vision of cruelty brooded over him” (Crane, 1960, 132) and Henry suddenly realized his mistake: “For a time this pursuing recollection of the tattered man took all elation from the youth’s veins. He saw his vivid error, and he was afraid that it would stand before him all his life.” (Crane, 1960, 133) At first he considers this event to be a great mistake but later he persuades himself that “the consciousness of a great mistake” will make him a better person. Henry believes that as a result of this mistake “he would be taught to deal gently and with care. He would be a man”. (Crane, 1960, 133)

It is possible to see that Henry realized his mistake and when trying to comprehend his action he considered the act of leaving the tattered soldier in the fields as a formative element for the future. The view on Henry’s growth through experiencing the war and being able to reflect on his deeds as well as to admit his greatest mistake is supported by Henry’s final prospective when he discovers the reality of war and is able to abandon his romantic views:

And at last his eyes seem to open to some new ways. He found that he could look back upon the brass and bombast of his earlier gospels and see them truly. He was gleeful when he discovered that he now despised them. ... He would no more stand upon places high and false, and denounce the distant planets. He beheld that he was tiny but not inconsequent to the sun. ... the youth smiled, for he saw that the world was a world for him. ... He turned now with a lover’s thirst to images of tranquil skies, fresh meadows, cool brooks - an existence of soft and eternal peace.

(Crane, 1960, 134)

It is clearly shown that Henry realized that he does not have to die heroically or show others his great deeds to prove that he has his place in the world. He realized that the meaning of life is not to be a hero but to find his place in the world. This realization is shown in the sentence “The youth smiled, for he saw that the world was a world for him”

Donald B. Gibson argues that Henry “is deluding himself in the same manner as he often deluded himself before” as Gibson believes that “Only a fool would have ‘turned now with a lover’s thirst to images of tranquil skies, fresh meadows, cool brooks - an existence of soft and eternal peace.’ ” because according to Gibson “No one ever leads or ever has led ‘an existence of soft and eternal peace.’ ” (Gibson, 1968, 64) Gibson quite clearly omits the fact that Henry realized his previous mistakes and understood that the reality of war is different

from “the brass and bombast of his earlier gospels” and managed to find his place in the world through the war experience. Therefore, the sentence “He turned now with a lover’s thirst to images of tranquil skies, fresh meadows, cool brooks - an existence of soft and eternal peace” shows Henry’s realization that his place in the world is on his farm.

10. CONCLUSION

In spite of the fact that both authors were concerned with the realistic depiction of the Civil War there were many differences in their work. The thesis compares Stephen Crane's novel *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) and Ambrose Bierce's short stories and is divided into six chapters of which four concentrate on a certain aspect common for both authors and the last two chapters are concerned with topics specific for each author.

The first theme of fear and courage played an important role in the writings of both authors but each of them ascribed different reasons for fear and for courage to their characters. Stephen Crane concludes his novel with the main character becoming brave after he experiences great fear first for his life and then for the fear that others will see him as a coward and also as a result of rage that he, together with his regiment, was considered to be coward. Bierce, on the contrary, believes that fear for being seen as a coward forces men to go to the war but the reason for which they fight is the fear for their lives.

Similarly, Crane believes that courage is a virtue which is obtained after overcoming initial fear and is therefore ascribed to the characters of the novel who have already gained some experience on the battlefield. Bierce's characters, on the other hand, experience often deadly fear after previously proving their courage.

The second theme which compares the works of both authors is the depiction of dead and wounded soldiers. This theme is widely used especially by Ambrose Bierce whose vivid depictions of dead and wounded soldiers not only help the reader to easily imagine the atmosphere of the setting but also evoke horror to show to the reader the ugliness of the War. This theme is used in a different context in Stephen Crane's writing. Crane only mentions dead and wounded soldiers to depict a situation or to show Henry's reasons for his deeds.

The third theme is humor. The use of this device is very different in the writing of each author as Crane uses parody on the contemporary romantic writings; he describes the main character, Henry Fleming, as an antihero who instead of bravely fighting in the War deserts his regiment and tries to conceal it by fictional story. Even the wound which Henry receives is acquired in a parodic situation. The parodic intention of the novel is underlined by the title which is identical with the reference to the wound: *The Red Badge of Courage*.

Bierce's humor is, on the contrary, easily detectable, sometimes sarcastic and in other instances in a form of light irony. Bierce frequently uses humor to underline the atmosphere, to emphasize the irony of the depicted situation or to stress the absurdity of war.

The last theme used by both authors is the theme of nature. Bierce uses description of

nature to evoke atmosphere, to give emphasis to a certain affair or merely to describe the setting. The use of nature in Crane's novel is a subject of discussion for various authors and the only view on which all the authors are able to agree is that Crane uses nature symbolically. However, there is no evidence to prove the meaning of the symbols used by Crane.

The fifth chapter devoted to Ambrose Bierce supplements the aspects of Bierce's writing which were not mentioned in Crane's work. One of the differences is Bierce's belief that only short stories are a suitable form of war writing as he considers the War to be "sequence of random happenings" (Allred, 1993, 190) and therefore unsuitable for the novel form.

The source of Bierce's short stories was his experience during the Civil War as Bierce strongly believed that only those people who were involved in the fighting of the Civil War should write about the War. He perceived experience to be necessary for realistic depiction of the War. This opinion is shown on Bierce's reaction when he was accused by one of his reviewers that his stories are lacking reason and cannot be true.

Bierce's reasons for writing his short stories were to show the reality of the War as he perceived it during his service in the Union army and also to point out the absurdity and tragedy of the War. This fact is shown by the theme of a family divided by the War and its members fighting on opposite sides. Apart from the tragedy that a member of the same family was forced to kill his relative in order to protect the army in which he was fighting Bierce also shows that the personal sense of honor and duty were the major reason for enlisting and staying in the War. The interest in the Cause as described by contemporary romantic writers was marginal for most of the soldiers..

The last chapter explores the development of the main character, Henry Fleming, in Crane's novel. At the beginning of the novel is Henry Fleming described as a naïve country boy who has romantic fantasies from the books he read about glory gained on the battlefield. Henry's view changes throughout the novel as his romantic fantasies are challenged by the reality of the battlefield. Henry's views change in the conclusion of the novel as he not only loses his romantic fantasies but also finds his place in the world.

The comparison of the authors shows that although there are differences in portraying the Civil War they both succeed to portray the war realistically. Even though Stephen Crane's novel *The Red Badge of Courage* is perceived more favorably, Ambrose Bierce's short stories also have considerable place in the Civil War writing.

11. SUMMARY

V této diplomové práci se věnuji srovnání románu Stephena Cranea *Rudý odznak odvahy* (The Red Badge of Courage) s válečnými povídkami Ambrose Bierce. Oba autoři se snažili o realistické zobrazení války což bylo v rozporu s tehdejšími pojetím zobrazení války. V 80. letech devatenáctého století byla obvykle občanská válka zobrazována romanticky a tito dva autoři se spolu s několika dalšími postavili proti romantickému pojetí války a zobrazili ji ve svých dílech realisticky.

Tato práce je rozdělena do osmi kapitol. První a druhá kapitola zobrazují historii občanské války a její zobrazení soudobými autory. Třetí až šestá kapitola srovnává vybrané aspekty děl obou autorů. Sedmá kapitola je věnována Ambrosi Bierceovi a vybraným aspektům jeho díla, které se neobjevují v díle Stephena Cranea. Poslední kapitola se věnuje tvorbě Stephena Cranea a je zaměřena na vývoj postavy hlavního hrdiny Craneova románu, Henryho Fleminga.

V první kapitole jsou shrnuty důvody vedoucí k občanské válce a také Lincolnovi politické názory, které zastával před svým zvolením do funkce prezidenta USA a rovněž během občanské války jako prezident USA. Čtenář se v této kapitole může dozvědět o počátku občanské války a politických záměrech unionistického severu. Také je v této kapitole ukázáno, že i když byl Abraham Lincoln před svým zvolením do funkce prezidenta USA odpůrcem otroctví, jednota USA pro něj byla větší hodnotou, kterou hodlal udržet bez ohledu na zrušení či přetrvání otroctví. V závěru první kapitoly se čtenář může dozvědět o konci občanské války a rovněž o atentátu na Abrahama Lincolna.

Druhá kapitola se zabývá literárními tendencemi po skončení občanské války a zejména způsoby jakými byla občanská válka zobrazována v literatuře. Jsou zde uvedeni nejen přední autoři poválečného období, kteří upřednostňovali romantické pojetí zobrazení války, ale jsou zde především představeni autoři, kterými se zabývá tato diplomová práce, tedy Stephen Crane a Ambrose Bierce, kteří se snažili o realistické zobrazení války. Rovněž je možné se v této kapitole krátce seznámit s jejich díly, které jsou předmětem této diplomové práce.

V následující kapitole je srovnáváno téma strachu a odvahy v dílech obou autorů. Jsou zde porovnávány povídky Ambrose Bierce *Jeden z chybějících* (One of the Missing) a *Tvrdlý zápas* (A Tough Tussle) na kterých je znázorněn Biercův popis hrdinných vojáků, které propadnutí strachu stálo život. I když jsou obě tyto povídky z válečného prostředí, ani jeden z těchto vojáků nepřišel o život ve strachu z bitvy nebo v bitvě samotné.

Stephen Crane naopak připisuje pocit strachu nezkušeným vojákům a tento strach je spojený s bitvou nebo s očekáváním bitvy. Craneův popis strachu je zde porovnán s výsledky průzkumů prováděných po občanské válce, jejichž cílem bylo zkoumat strach nezkušených vojáků a rovněž vojenských veteránů. Jsou zde popsány čtyři stupně strachu a ty jsou porovnány s chováním Craneových postav, zejména s hlavním hrdinou románu *Rudý odznak odvahy* (The Red Badge of Courage) Henrym Flemingem. Je zde rovněž nastíněn přerod vojenského nováčka bojujícího se strachem před první bitvou ve vojenského veterána, který je schopen svůj strach do jisté míry potlačit a bojovat.

Oba autoři ve svých dílech rovněž popisují spojení strachu a odvahy, respektive strachu vojáka z toho, že bude považován za zbabělého. Bierce na tento jev poukazuje v povídce *Zabit u Resacy* (Killed at Resaca) kde se po smrti hrdinného vojáka ukáže, že jeho hrdinství mělo původ v obavě, že bude svou dívkou považován za zbabělého. Tento jev se objevuje i v románu Stephena Cranea, kde hlavní hrdina po svém útěku zamíří zpět k bitvě a touží po zranění v obavě, že bude považován za zbabělého. V závěru této kapitoly je vyzdvižen hlavní rozdíl mezi pojetím strachu a odvahy v díle Ambrose Bierce a Stephena Cranea.

Ve čtvrté kapitole je srovnáváno téma popisu mrtvých a raněných vojáků. Tento aspekt se objevuje především v díle Ambrose Bierce. V této kapitole jsou vybrány povídky *Chickamauga*, *Událost u Coultrovy soutěsky* (The Affair at Coulter's Notch) *Jeden důstojník, jeden muž* (One Officer, One Man) a *Jeden typ důstojníka* (One Kind of Officer) na kterých je patrný Biercův barvitý popis raněných a mrtvých vojáků, kterým se Bierce snažil poukázat na hrůzy války.

V Craneově díle se objevuje jen několik momentů, kde se čtenář může setkat s popisem raněných nebo mrtvých vojáků. Těmito scénami jsou především smrt přítele Henryho Fleminga, Jima Conklina, opuštění potrhaného vojáka (the tattered soldier) který je raněn a v neposlední řadě Henryho zranění, které je nazýváno „malý rudý odznak odvahy“ (little red badge of courage). Craneův popis raněných a mrtvých vojáků není tak barvitý jako Biercův popis. Crane používá prostředku popisu mrtvých a raněných vojáků převážně k dokreslení situace nebo k osvětlení Henryho činů a důvodů k nim.

Pátá kapitola se zabývá užitím humoru v románu Stephena Cranea a povídkách Ambrose Bierce. Román *Rudý odznak odvahy* je obvykle považován za parodii romantických románů o občanské válce. V této kapitole jsou rozebírány některé části románu, které na toto pojetí poukazují. Hlavní hrdina, Henry Fleming, je považován spíše za antihrdina a také k jeho zranění je v románu referováno ironicky.

K vykreslení užití humoru v díle Ambrose Bierce je opět použito několika povídek na kterých je patrný Biercův styl humoru. V povídce *Zabit u Resacy* užívá Bierce černého humoru ke zlehčení situace, zatímco v povídce *Rána z milosti* (The Coup De Grace) je humor otevřeně sarkastický a slouží k odosobnění se od hrůzy války. Bierce, stejně jako Crane, zesměšňuje přikrašlování války v soudobých médiích. V povídce *Jeden typ důstojníka* Bierce rovněž poukazuje na absurditu vojenské mašinérie, která je zde v rozporu se zdravým rozumem.

V šesté kapitole je srovnáno užití popisu přírody. Bierce užívá popisu přírody převážně k tomu, aby si čtenář lépe představil místo ve kterém je zasazen příběh, jak je ukázáno v povídce *Událost u Coulterovy soutěsky* (The Affair at Coulter's Notch). V některých případech využívá kontrastu popisu malebné přírody a ošklivosti války. Tento případ je v této práci ukázán na povídce *V horách* (On a Mountain).

Craneovu popisu přírody je připisován symbolický význam. V této kapitole jsou uvedeny názory tří různých autorů a přestože se všichni autoři shodují, že příroda v díle Stephena Cranea má symbolický význam, každý z těchto autorů zastává jiný názor na význam tohoto symbolismu.

Sedmá kapitola je věnována Ambrosi Biercovi a jsou zde uvedena témata, která se neobjevují v díle Stephena Cranea, ale v díle Ambrose Bierce zaujímají důležité postavení. Prvním z těchto témat je osvětlení Biercova důvodu díky kterému upřednostňoval formu povídek před románem.

Stěžejním tématem Biercovi tvorby byla jeho válečná zkušenost, kterou získal během téměř čtyřleté služby v armádě Unie. Bierce ve svých povídkách zachycuje okamžiky, které, jak sám tvrdí, sám prožil a tudíž věří, že nikdo kdo nemá válečnou zkušenost by neměl psát o válce.

Na základě svých válečných zkušeností Bierce zmiňuje jev objevující se v hraničních státech během občanské války. Tímto jevem je rozdělení rodiny, která v důsledku názorové nejednotnosti bojuje na obou stranách. Bierce ve svých povídkách uvádí i případy, kdy se voják musel rozhodnout mezi loajalitou ke své rodině a loajalitu ke svému regimentu. V Biercových povídkách vítězí oddanost armádě a smysl pro povinnost před láskou k vlastní rodině.

Vzhledem k tomu, že je Bierce považován za realistu a sám se rovněž snažil o realistické pojetí války, je poslední část rozboru Biercova díla věnována pojmu realismus a rozdílným pojetím tohoto pojmu.

Poslední kapitola je věnována románu Stephena Cranea a především rozboru vývoje

hlavní postavy, Henryho Fleminga. Zpočátku je Henry popisován jako naivní mladý muž, který se rozhodne dobrovolně přihlásit do války na základě jeho romantických představ, které získal četbou válečné literatury. Henry se zpočátku obává bitvy a především svojí reakce na ní, neboť zjistí, že o sobě nic neví. Po útěku z první bitvy se Henry prodírá lesem a rozebírá své pocity. Nakonec se vrátí zpátky ke svému regimentu se zraněním a také s prvními zkušenostmi, které na svém útěku získal. Nadcházející den se Henryho regiment opět připravuje k útoku ve kterém Henry tentokrát statečně bojuje spolu se svým regimentem. Henry dokázal nahradit svůj strach z bitvy vztekem na nepřítele a rovněž na Henryho nadřízené, kteří se nechvalně vyjádřili o kvalitě jeho regimentu. Během této bitvy je možné pozorovat Henryho vývoj, který je završen Henryho úvahou nad vlastním jednáním a rovněž Henryho prozřením po kterém pochopil, kde je jeho místo v životě a rovněž si dokázal přiznat některé chyby, které během svého vývoje učinil.

První část románu, kde se Henry stále zabývá svými romantickými představami ve kterých je hrdinou, je parodií, zatímco druhá část románu ve které Henry ztrácí své romantické představy a bojuje společně se svým regimentem je laděna realisticky.

V závěru práce jsou znovu porovnána témata diskutovaná zejména ve třetí až šesté kapitole a každá z těchto kapitol je shrnuta a je zde vyjádřen názor na jednotlivé aspekty děl obou autorů ke kterému jsem dospěla za použití sekundární literatury. I přesto, že se Stephen Crane občanské války osobně nezúčastnil je jeho román považován za jedno z nejlepších realistických románů o občanské válce. Povídky Ambrose Bierce nikdy nazískaly takovou popularitu jako Craneův román, ale přesto zaujímají důležité místo v literatuře občanské války.

12. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aaron, Daniel, "Ambrose Bierce and the American Civil War" in "Critical Essays on Ambrose Bierce" compiled by Cathy Davidson, G.K.Hall, Boston, 1982, 169-181
- Allred, Randal Wayne, "Writing the Civil War: Cultural Myth and War Narrative in De Forest, Bierce, and Crane", University of California, Los Angeles, 1993
- Butterfield, Herbie, "Our Bedfellow Death: The Short Stories Of Ambrose Bierce" in "the 19th century American Short Story" edited by Lee, Robert A., Vision Press Ltd., London, 1986, 134-149
- Berkove, Lawrence I., "A Prescription for Adversity", The Ohio State University Press, 2002
- Cazemajou, Jean, "The Red Badge of Courage: The Religion of Peace and the War Archetype", University of Minesota Press, Minneapolis, 1969
- Crane, Stephen, "The Red Badge of Courage", The New American Library, New York, 1960
- Duncan, R., Klooster, D.J., "Phantoms of a Blood-Stained Period: The Complete Civil War Writings of Ambrose Bierce", University of Massachusetts Press, 2002
- Davidson, Cathy N., "Critical Essays on Ambrose Bierce", G.K.Hall, Boston, 1982
- Gibson, Donald B., "The Fiction of Stephen Crane", Southern Illinois University Press, 1968
- Grenander, M.E., "Bierce's Turn of the Screw: Tales of Ironical Terror" in "Critical Essays on Ambrose Bierce" compiled by Cathy Davidson, G.K.Hall, Boston, 1982, 209-216
- Hodgins, Francis, Silverman, Kenneth, "Adventures in American Literature", Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 1980, 297-385
- Hopkins, E.J., "The Complete Short Stories of Ambrose Bierce", University of Nebraska Press, 1984, 261-399
- La France, Marston, "A Reading of Stephen Crane", Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1971
- Nagel, James, "Stephen Crane and Literary Impressionism", The Pennsylvania University Press, 1980, 95-128
- The Norton Anthology of American Literature, Volume 1, 4th edition, Norton & Company, New York, 1994, 777-779

- Pease, Donald, "Fear, Rage and the Mistrals of Representation in The Red Badge of Courage" in "Modern Critical Interpretations: The Red Badge of Courage" edited by Bloom, Harold, Chelsea House Publishers, Philadelphia, 1987, 75-98
- Pizer, Donald, "Critical Essays on Stephen Crane's The Red Badge of Courage", G.K.Hall, Boston, 1990, 217-228
- Simpson, Lewis P., "Civil War in Literature", 10 February 2006
<http://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/civilwar.html>
- Shaefer, Michael W., "Just What War is: the Civil War writings of De Forest and Bierce", University of Tennessee Press, 1997
- Solomon, Eric, "Stephen Crane from Parody to Realism", Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1967
- , "The Bitterness of Battle: Ambrose Bierce's War Fiction" in "Critical Essays on Ambrose Bierce" compiled by Cathy Davidson, G.K.Hall, Boston, 1982, 182-194
- www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USAcivilwar.htm, "Background to the War", 20 January 2006,