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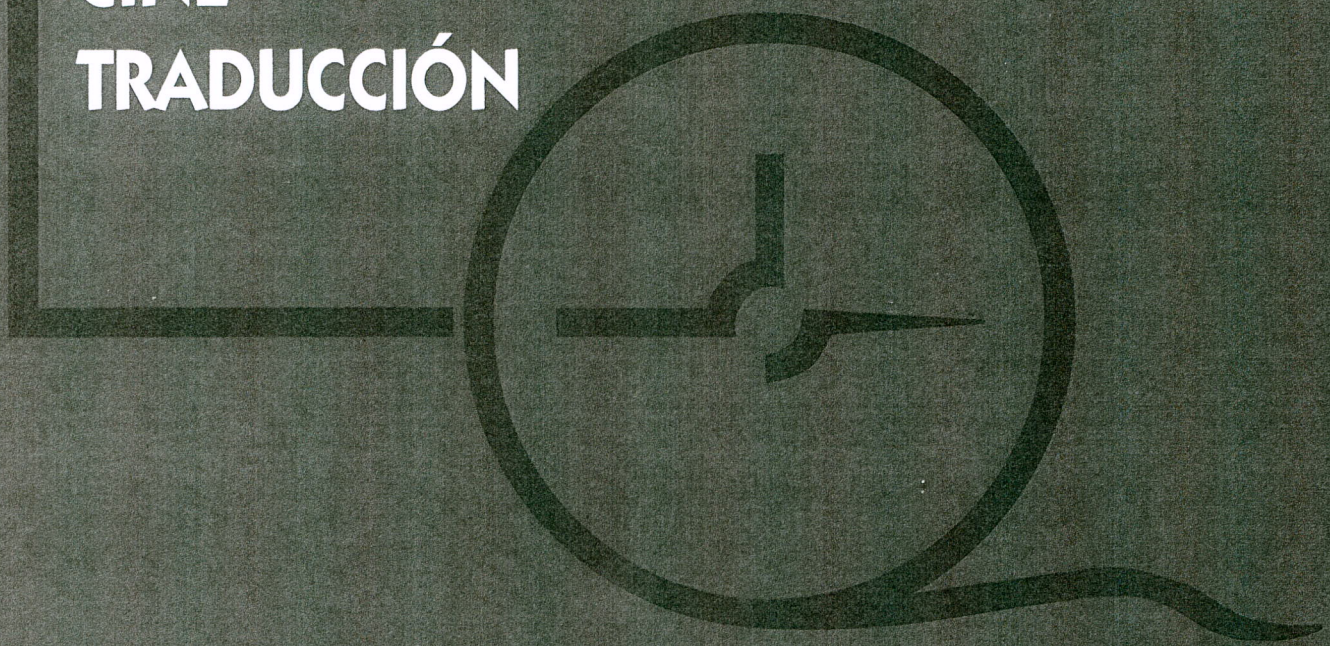

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LITERARY HEROES AND CINEMATOGRAPHIC HEROES: HEMINGWAY'S *TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT, CURTIZ'S THE BREAKING POINT* AND HAWKS'S *TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT*

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Hollywood has made three film versions of *To Have and Have Not.* Faulkner and Jules Furthman worked on the first version, released in 1944, which was directed by Howard Hawks, and featured Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall. Little was retained of the original; and critics agreed that the film was no more than a good action story. The second version, directed by Michael Curtiz, appeared in 1950 as *The Breaking Point.* This treatment was more faithful, but the result was again merely effective melodrama. The last version, under the original title, was shown in 1958, and was poorly received.[1]

In this paper we have chosen to analyze the novel written by Hemingway between 1932 and 1937 and the first two films Hollywood made of the novel, the 1944 version produced and directed by Howard Hawks,[2] and the 1950 version directed by Michael Curtiz,[3] as the most popular among the public. As Edwin Murray mentions in the paragraph we have used as introduction to this essay, one of the films (the 1944 version) was seen as a good action story, which retains little of the original plot of the novel. The 1950 version, on the other hand, was seen as a more faithful treatment of the novel, but resulting in melodrama. We will try to show how the two versions bear similarities with the original text, and how they both betray the final spirit of Hemingway's novel. This analysis does neither intend to be a piece of criticism on the difficulty of film adaptation, on how to adapt a novel in a faithful way, nor will we take a stand as regards one adaptation against the other, as a matter of supporting the conservative, more faithful adaptation rather than the one which introduces more innovative elements. Rather, we will reflect on how a certain literary work of art can give way to two films which belong to two different genres, and how each of them used the materials from the original source in a specific way, so as to achieve a final product which would be more coherent with their purpose. In order to carry out this comparative analysis of film/s and literature, we will start by studying the characteristics of the hero portrayed by Hemingway, and the hero seen first by Hawks and then by Curtiz, and we will also examine, albeit briefly, the different materials belonging to the novel that were kept by the scriptwriters, and also those which were discarded.

A HEMINGWAY HERO

Two characteristics that define the typical Hemingway hero are **a growing disenchantment with the reality of his world**, and the sense of being **lost in a changing world that he cannot understand**. In her study of American writers Claude Edmond Magny mentions that many of Hemingway's heroes exemplify this lack of understanding of the social, moral and even political conditions that surround them, and in this sense they could be said to belong to the "Lost Generation" which included those American writers, such as Hemingway himself, Fitzgerald and Steinbeck, just to mention some of the most important representatives of this era, who could not cope with the fact that the world they came back to had changed so suddenly and so much. Magny says that "modern man finds himself cast adrift in a confused world that he finds frightening and vaguely scandalous."[4]

In this sense, Harry Morgan, the hero of *To Have and Have Not*, would represent the prototype of a Hemingway adventurer, whose story begins *in medias res*, for we know about him and his trade after a whole episode with political connotations which will be commented on later. We know he owns a boat and hires it to rich people who want to go fishing off the Cuban coast. The novel is divided into three parts, entitled "Harry Morgan. Spring", "Harry Morgan. Autumn" and "Harry Morgan. Winter", metaphorically representing three stages in his life (hope, despair, and death) and the three parts cover different adventures of the protagonist, as they were originally three separate short stories, which follow a sort of chronological development. The main theme of the novel is that of an honest sailor who is forced, not by deliberate choice, but by society, by economic necessity, to become a smuggler, because he gets involved in several bad affairs and has to break the law and accept to carry any kind of cargo if he wants to make a living and support his family. As a summary of the plot we could say that the first part deals with the fishing trip, when Harry's services have been hired by a Mr. Johnson to go out fishing, and they are accompanied by Eddie the rummy; this Mr. Johnson provokes the beginning of Harry's downfall because he leaves without paying Harry the rent of his boat. The second affair is that of the Chinese men, when Harry hires his boat to a Mr. Sing, who "ships Chinamen", to take twelve Chinese men supposedly to the Tortugas coast, and finally ends up by killing Mr. Sing and taking his compatriots back to the Cuban coast. It is significant that the two film versions that are object of our study select just some of the adventures but not all, as we will analyze later on.

The second part of the novel, not covered by any of the film versions, deals with liquor-smuggling: Harry and his mate Wesley get shot by the coastguard and then they are reported by "one of the three most important men in the United States" who happened to see them while he was fishing in another boat. As a result of this trip Harry has one arm amputated and loses his boat.

The third part of the novel covers Harry's last trip, used as the ending of the 1950 film version with some significant changes. Harry agrees to take some bankrobbers away from Havana, and to do this he attempts to steal his own boat from the coastguard, but they find it, and he hires his friend Frankie's boat to do this trip; the robbers murder Harry's mate, Albert, and they sail out to sea. Harry begins a gunfight and finally gets badly wounded and dies.

– Our hero is highly **individualistic**, and normally prefers to run risks on his own. In cases when there is some danger involved, he tries to go out alone in his boat, but in the third part of the novel, and due to his physical handicap, Harry is not so self-sufficient as he was before, and needs somebody to help him. Even so, he doubts about taking anybody with him because he can see that this new trip is dangerous: "Probably I shouldn't take Albert. He's soft but he's straight and he's a good man in a boat. He doesn't spook too easy but I don't know whether I ought to take him. But I can't take no rummy nor no **nigger**. It would be better alone, anything is better alone but I don't think I can handle it alone."[5]

Although he does not believe in anything, he **gets involved in adventures which have nothing to do with himself.** Like Henry in *A Farewell to Arms*, Robert Jordan in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, or Harry in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro", the Hemingway heroes belong to the type of Americans who participate in conflicts they have no direct relationship with (such as World War I, or the Spanish Civil War). In this sense these heroes would be representative of the author's concern regarding social matters, sometimes when he was himself looking for adventures, as knowledge that would inspire themes for his novels, and others because he became preoccupied with social and political questions. In this way we may consider *To Have and Have Not* among these politically-concerned novels, although, as we will see in the analysis of the novel and the films, the references to politics are short, but full of significance. Fernanda Pivano, one of Hemingway's biographers, mentions the political question as one of the basic elements in the atmosphere of the story: "En agosto de 1933 seguía escribiendo un cuento (el de Harry Morgan) ambientándolo en la revolución que había presenciado en Cuba (y que el 12 de agosto destituiría al dictador Gerardo Machado para reemplazarlo por el presidente Carlos Manuel de Céspedes): por primera vez después del artículo para "Esquire" Hemingway trataba temas cubanos."[6]

The opening episode of the novel includes a reference to Cuban society and to Cuban political problems, through a meeting Harry has with three young men who want to leave Cuba and go to the U.S. because they have some problems which presumably have to do with the political situation of the country: "You know how it is early in the morning in **Havana** with the bums still asleep against the walls of the buildings, before even the ice wagons come by with ice for the bars? Well, we came across the square from the dock to the Pearl of San Francisco Cafe to get coffee and there was only one beggar awake in the square

and he was getting a drink out of the fountain. But when we got inside the café and sat down, there were the three of them waiting for us."[7] The opening passage is used to advance the question of Harry's decency. He says "I can't do it...I'd like to do it as a favour. But I told you last night I couldn't". We still do not know what it is that Harry cannot do. The reason why he cannot do it is that it would mean a risk for his boat: "I make my living with the boat. If I lose her I lose my living". What he cannot do is to take these three rich Cubans to the U.S. To the remark made by one of the Cubans about the situation there "Afterwards, when things are changed, it would mean a good deal to you ", he answers "I know. I'm all for you. But I can't do it"; "I don't care who is President here. But I don't carry anything to the States that can talk."[8] After the interview with Harry, the three men get killed.

There is a two-sided implication in this first episode of the novel: Harry talks about the poverty that filled the streets of Cuba, as opposed to the rich appearance of the three men. We have an echo of this contrast established between the very rich and the very poor in the long digression which separates Harry's long agony in the boat and the actual confirmation of his death, made by the doctor after the boat has been brought to the harbour, in the last pages of the novel. In refusing to take these wealthy Cubans, Harry is losing a lot of money, but he refuses to take them not because he is a coward, or because he does not support their political position, but because he does not sell himself or his boat. We see the hero stating his first characteristics: **honesty and self-pride**. From this high start, we will see his evolution as a descent to hell, to the pit, to his death. We find an echo of this contrast established between the very rich and the very poor in the long digression which follows Harry's long agony in the boat, at the end of the story, when he is extremely poor and has been forced to risk his own life in order to get some money to support his family, and the extremely rich people who have everything in life to be happy, but cannot find happiness in their money.

– Although he is a **cynic** and a **nihilist**, he feels continually obliged to prove himself, to show his courage and valour in heroic deeds, or even in normal everyday life, as is the case in *To Have and Have Not*. Harry Morgan is forced to become a smuggler and almost a pirate after having tried for years to earn his living legitimately by renting out his boat to rich people who want to go fishing off the Cuban coast. After all, his obligation is to maintain his family, who depend on him for their support. Harry summarizes his hopeless situation at the beginning of the third section of the novel:

> Look at me. I used to make thirty-five dollars a day right through the season taking people out fishing. Now I get shot and lose an arm, and my boat, running a lousy load of liquor that's worth hardly as much as my boat. But let me tell you, my kids ain't going to have their bellies hurt and I ain't going to dig sewers for the goverment for less money than will feed them. I

> can't dig now anyway. I don't know who made the laws but I know there ain't no law that you got to go hungry.[9]

– The reference to the family serves us to introduce the question of the "object of desire": **women**. According to Magny, many of Hemingway's protagonists "find in wine, women, bullfighting and big-game hunting sufficient sources of satisfaction, almost indefinitely renewable, for a man in good health".[10] We see women as one of the main objects of desire in Hemingway's novels, objects which are always at the protagonist's disposal, from the very beginning of the story. They do not have to be conquered. This is the case in the novel of our study, where Harry and Marie have a happy marriage. This element can be contrasted with what happens in the films, when the woman has to be gained by the hero. And we may advance one of the key thematic and tonal differences between the novel and both film versions: it is Marie who gives the ending of the novel a tragic tone, with her interior monologue , full of despair and of a kind of death-wish provoked by Harry's death. In contrast with this ambience of tragedy, Hawks's film introduces what could have been the beginning of the relationship between Harry and Marie, whilst Curtiz maintains the important role of Marie at the end of the film but saves the hero.

The hypothesis I defend in this paper can be put forward at this moment, before starting the analysis of the film versions. There are three different heroes in this essay. On the one hand we have the "positive" more cinematographic hero, who succeeds at the end, and "saves the girl", the hero performed by Humphrey Bogart in the 1944 version. On the other hand, we have the purely melodramatic hero, who suffers pain and misfortunes, but is saved in the last minute, performed by John Garfield in the 1950 version. And last, but not least, we have Harry Morgan, that we can call the tragic hero, or anti-hero, depending on the reading we adopt with regard to some of the features he exhibits at the end of the story.

HAWKS'S HARRY MORGAN: *TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT*

The first thing we can say about Hawks's version of Harry Morgan deals with the choice of the actor who plays this leading role. Although it may sound obvious, the fact that it is Humphrey Bogart who features the protagonist marks the character of his hero in a certain way. Rick, the hero from 1943 Curtiz's *Casablanca*, the defender of the *Resistance* had to be committed to the good cause again, and the committal was reinforced by the script. He was undoubtedly the star of Hawks's film, as is marked by the fact that he is involved in almost every shot. The first scenes of the film serve to draw his character as a good-natured, skillful and honest captain, as is proved by his relationship with Eddie and his client, Mr. Johnson. in their fishing trip. The first two episodes of

the novel - the political episode and the fishing trip in the *Queen Conchs*- are maintained in Hawks's version, although their order is reversed. In Hawks's film we see first the fishing trip, which serves to reinforce the description of the protagonist as a kind friend and honest patron. The character of Mr. Johnson is also kept in the script, for it will be used for a double purpose: as a link that will bring about the encounter between Harry and Marie, as she robs Mr. Johnson's wallet and is seen by Harry, and also as a victim of the political plot in which Harry will get more and more involved,

The action of the film takes place in Martinique, in 1940, when the government of Vichy, allies of Hitler, has just come to power on the mainland, and consequently on the island. From the beginning of the film we see the police in disguise trying to keep the situation under control. Frenchie, Harry's friend and owner of the bar and hotel where Harry has his base, forms part of the Resistance, and asks Harry to hire his boat and take some of his mates to rescue one of the leaders of the Resistance, but Harry refuses. These people come to the bar, to try and convince Harry to help them, and are intercepted by the police on their way out. There is a gunfight, and Johnson, Harry's client, gets shot and dies, without having been able to sign the travellers cheques with which he was going to pay Harry's services. So Harry is left without any money, and then will accept to carry the leader of the Resistance and his wife, M. and Mme. de Bursac, to Martinique. From that moment onwards, Harry will significantly become more and more involved in this political fight, although it has nothing to do with him. In this way he responds to one of the characteristics which we have stated as defining the typical Hemingway hero. There is a very relevant statement which supports this definition, uttered by Harry as an answer to Frenchie's question about why he is helping them. Harry says "I don't know. Maybe it is because I like you and I despise them [the members of the police]". He likes to be challenged, no matter what risks it may involve. In this sense, Hawks's Harry begins to distance himself from the protagonist of the novel, because Harry, in the original text, does not accept a challenge for the sake of challenge itself, but only as a means to get some money, what we see in the third part of the novel, when he tries to recapture his boat and steals it from the police harbour.

There is still another peculiarity in their nature which links both heroes. From the moment Harry/Bogart decides to help the Resistance, he will show a potential for shocking acts of violence,[11] violence that he shares with the protagonist of the novel. The use of violence in the film, as this critic points out, is justified because it confirms the protagonist's defense of justice and love, whilst the violence displayed by Harry Morgan in the novel is not always used to prove his value as a person. His fits of bad temper, as in the episode when he kills Mr. Sing, the Chinese trader, because he distrusted him, have caused disagreement among the critics on their views of the character of Harry Morgan, to the point

of considering him, as Edmund Wilson does, "a combination of a wooden-headed Punch and Popeye the Sailor, a buccaneer, a vicious thug, whose terror we may feel but whom we can never pity."[12]

Notwithstanding these pejorative opinions about Harry, I still maintain my view of him as a tragic hero. Even though I mentioned the possibility of considering him an anti-hero, in the sense of his having betrayed all his basic rules of behaviour in his descent to hell, I prefer the label of tragic hero, especially if we oppose him to Bogart's version of Harry. The latter's portrait of Harry as the truly positive hero, who never makes any mistakes, was one of the main reasons why Hawks's version of the novel was considered to betray the spirit of the original text, that is to say, it was considered a non-version, but just a good action story. However, in my opinion, it is coherent as a film which only wanted to portray the good side of the adventures of Harry Morgan, and thus adapted only the parts of the text in which he had not started his downfall. The same happens to the version of the relationship between Harry and Marie that we see in this film. It has nothing to do with the married couple with three girls that we see portrayed in the novel. Hawks tried to explain that his version dealt with the relationship between Harry and Marie twenty years before the events we know of in the novel. His vision was enhanced by the fact of the love affair that Bogart and Bacall began during the shooting of the film.

As a summary to this version, we can say that although Hawks's vision on Harry Morgan, as his version of Harry and Marie, differs extremely from what we read in the original text, we cannot discard it as a version, somewhat innovative, but at the same time coherent. It is based on Hawks's positive view of both the hero and the relationship between hero and heroine, as well as a sequel on the theme developed in *Casablanca*, and is thoroughly a most enjoyable film.

CURTIZ'S HARRY MORGAN: *THE BREAKING POINT*

The plotline of the film is based upon several episodes which belong to the three parts of the novel: the episodes of the fishing trip and the Chinese men from Part I: Spring; the capture of the boat which is a consequence of the events that take place in Part II of the novel; and the main episode from Part III: Winter, where Harry agrees to take the robbers away from the island after they have robbed the racing course. The scriptwriter also maintained some basic characters that appeared in the novel, like Wesley, Harry's mate, but somehow changed them because he reduced the three characters who accompany Harry throughout the novel into just one, and introduced some new characters, like Leona, performed by Patricia Neal, who will be used as a witness, and basic link between the three main events. The scriptwriter chose to end the film with the consequence of the second episode in the novel, when Harry gets shot in the arm, and has it cut off.

The hero in *The Breaking Point* is characterized so as to resemble the protagonist of the novel as much as possible. We have already noted that the film reproduces most of the main events of the original text, but without the strength, the force which makes of Harry a tragic hero. We see this Harry Morgan in the film hesitating about whether or not to do what he thinks is wrong, but we always see there is another way out for him, that of going back to the Navy or of becoming a partner in the business owned by his father in law, even though he does not contemplate any of these possibilities. The protagonist of the novel has no escape. He is doomed to fall deeper and deeper into the pit if he wants to bring some money home.

This episode with the three Cubans is not included in *The Breaking Point.* The fact that this specific political episode in Havana is not included in the film version of 1950, the very fact that the whole action takes place not in Cuba, but in Mexico, should make us think that both the scriptwriter and the director preferred to skip all references to the Cuban political situation.

The following episode in the novel responds to Hemingway's idea that a writer should write only, and write well, about the things that happened to him, and which were known by him in depth. The fishing trip with Mr. Johnson reflects Hemingway's knowledge of this art of fishing, and of the expenses it could bring, and of the necessaries it required. The whole anecdote is used in *The Breaking Point* in a simplified way, dealing less with the reason for the trip (that is, fishing), and more with the introduction of a new element: Mr Johnson, who in the film will be called Halagan brings a friend with him, Leona, a beautiful young woman who did not appear in the novel, and who will be used in the film, as we have already mentioned, as a witness and also as a counterpoint to Harry's wife, Lucy. Leona will perform the role of the object of desire and temptation for Harry, but at the same time Leona serves to characterize him as a faithful husband. The montage of sequences of the film, which reproduces to a certain extent the different parts of the novel, mixes scenes that deal with Harry's trips with his stay at home, and the relationship with his wife. This relationship is more developed in the film than in the novel, as responds to the melodramatic nature that pervades this version, and in which the key element will be the ending, when Lucy saves her husband's life when she convinces him to let the doctors amputate his arm.

CONCLUSION

Many more things could be said about Harry Morgan and his story, as seen by Hemingway, Hawks and Curtiz, things that will probably take some of our time in the near future. However, as a conclusion to this first approach to this story, which Hawks chose to describe as "that goddamned piece of junk", we can say that we have tried to analyze the figure of Harry Morgan as a hero who

could form part of the long gallery of Hemingway heroes, and found that, as every reader has one interpretation of a text -if this text is rich enough as to give place to a multiple interpretation- each filmmaker has one vision of the hero, though based on the same story. From Hemingway's tragic figure, to Hawks's positive one, with the intermediary character created by Curtiz, the protagonist of the 1950 melodrama, we have attempted to describe the terms in which the film industry marked the background of the first version, with the choice of Bogart, Marcel Delio, and even that of the singer "Cricket", direct descendant from *Casablanca*'s Sam, and we may conclude that the second version of the novel, even though it tried to be the faithful film interpretation of the original text, was also marked by the film genre to the extent of changing the tragic ending of Harry Morgan's story and giving the spectators a weaker, but quietening ending of a melodrama.

NOTES

[1] Edwin Murray. *The Cinematic Imagination: Writers and the Motion Pictures*, (New York: Ungar, 1972), p. 226

[2] PRODUCTION CREDITS AND CAST: **TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT**
Released by Warner Brothers-First National, October 1944

Executive Producer	Jack Warner
Produced and Directed by	Howard Hawks
Screenplay by	Jules Furthman and William Faulkner
From the novel by	Ernest Hemingway
Photographed by	Sid Hickox, A.S.C.
Art Director	Charles Novi
Film Editor	Christian Nyby
CAST	
Morgan	Humphrey Bogart
Eddie (The Rummy)	Walter Brennan
Marie	Lauren Bacall
Helene de Bursac	Dolores Moran
Cricket	Hoagy Carmichael
Paul de Bursac	Walter Molnar
Gerard	Marcel Dalio

[3] PRODUCTION CREDITS AND CAST: **THE BREAKING POINT**
Released by Warner Brothers-First National, October, 1950

Produced by	Jerry Wald
Directed by	Michael Curtiz
Screenplay by	Ronald MacDougall
Based on a story by	Ernest Hemingway
Photography by	Ted McCord, A.S.C.
Art Director	Edward Carrere
Film Editor	Alan Crosland, Jr.
CAST	
Harry Morgan	John Garfield
Leona Charles	Patricia Neal
Lucy Morgan	Phyllis Thaxter
Duncan	Wallace Ford
Wesley Park	Juano Hernandez

[4] Claude-Edmond Magny,, *The Age of the American Novel* (*L'age du roman americain*) Paris: Seuil, 1948, p. 148.

[5] Ernest Hemingway, *To Have and Have Not* (New York: Scribners, 1937), p. 81. The quotations are taken from Grafton's Edition, 1972

[6] Pivano, Fernanda. *Hemingway*. Trad. de Carmen Artal. Barcelona: Tusquets, 1986, p. 168.

[7] Ernest Hemingway, *To Have and Have Not* , p. 9. .

[8] Ernest Hemingway, *To Have and Have Not* , pp. 9-10.

[9] Ernest Hemingway, *To Have and Have Not* , p. 74.

[10] Magny, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

[11] This violent nature of the protagonist is remarked by William Rothman, in his article "To Have and Have Not Adapted a Novel" in Gerald Peary and Roger Shatzkin (eds.) *The Modern American Novel and the Movies* (New York: Ungar, 1978), pp. 70-79.

[12] Quoted by Rothman in the article cited above, p. 74.

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