

**Money and Body for Male's Pleasure: A
Psychoanalytical Reading of Ernest Hemingway's
*A Farewell to Arms***

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Abstract

This article explores World War I Hero, Expatriates: Money and Body are two major objects for males' pleasure. The very title is slightly discussed applying psychoanalytical approach. Mainly, it studies focusing on Freudian and Jungian concepts of Sex and Sexuality. Statement of problems is to find out what made the people go outside the country as expatriates mainly to the protagonist Lieutenant Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley, in the novel A Farewell to Arms, written by Ernest Hemingway. Furthermore, this article tries to analyze World War I Hero and Expatriates: Money and Body for Male's pleasure with reference to some critics in the body part of this article. In A Farewell to Arms, the hero, Frederic Henry, is badly injured by the bomb shell in the Italian front during the World War I. He is admitted to the Milan hospital and has been involved with the nurse Catherine Barkley. She is a volunteer nurse and the central character. However, the hero, Henry is attracted towards her for his pleasure not only from the perspective of money but for body and pleasure. These two characters represent the American and British expatriates who are crowding the bars, restaurants, night clubs, bull fight sports or in different entertaining places getting fed up with the horrors of World War I. They live comfortably in the foreign country. They want to get rid of the war and weapons so that they can enjoy as outsiders in the foreign countries as expatriates.

Keywords: Crowding, expatriates, injured, psychoanalyses, weapons, world war I.

Introduction

Ernest Hemingway enlisted him to fight in the World War I to end all wars. He volunteered for an ambulance service in Italy, was badly wounded and cured twice. Out of his experiences came *A Farewell to Arms*, 1929. Everybody was tired of World War I, and they were seeking permanent peace. Most of the troops were in the front. Many of them hardly realized that the war was to end wars, which had killed over many millions of people. Men, who survived, wanted to enjoy their lives visiting foreign countries spending money with some girls. In this novel, *A Farewell to Arms*, in terms of objectifying the women, mainly the character of Catherine as exposing of female prostitutes for the soldiers' comfort increasing gender hierarchy inconstant psychology of the protagonist and highlighting queer behavior. In contrast, Frederic Henry, becomes the key representation of the storyline of the narrative. His involvement with Catherine is not to have love affair but rather to get much satisfaction from her as he is spending a lot of money for her because she is the only body to please him.

Frederic Henry frequently visits many places such as Milan, Florence, Rome, Naples, Vila San Giovanni, Messina, Taormina to get adventures with beautiful girls but he does not visit Abruzzi the Priest's home which is not affected by war. Henry, who volunteers for service with the Italian army in World War I, has a great impact upon the civil world. The portrayal of young females as prostitutes in Gorizia, for the Italian officers', and the soldiers,' recreation from the monotonous war stands for the proof of the unwilling situation of the war. Having disgusted and not glorifying war, Henry and Catherine Barkley escape to Switzerland; they live in harmony until the tragic end of her pregnancy. War is not glamorized in this novel. Instead, it is presented in a very real and horrifying fashion from the perspective of the ambulance driver. Psychologically, fear of the war becomes the anxiety and core issue to the protagonists and it becomes the reason to move as expatriates.

A Farewell to Arms portrays American and British expatriates who travel from Paris to the Festival of San Fermin, in Pamplona, to watch the running of the bulls and the bullfights. In this novel the characters do not desire love for the modern world but it is about a group of characters who go off to a fiesta, who inevitable change that always takes place in human affairs. Being the males, they are seeking the women who satisfy them for the sexual pleasure and the women are meant for them that they are the body and objects of giving pleasure. These expatriates have a lot of money to visit outside their country which is resulted from World War I. They take girls with them and enjoy visiting different places and in the case of *A Farewell to Arms*, Henry and Catherine visit Spain to enjoy sports and bull fighting but their main desire is to have maximum physical pleasure to each other.

The characters, in *A Farewell to Arms*, are greatly affected by this war. Hemingway captures the angst of the age and transcends the involvement of Henry

and Catherine, although they are representative of the period. Catherine is starved for prostitution is emblematic of the rotten crowd living on inherited money and Henry is sexually maimed. She is the inspiration to males, muses them for sexual temptation, releases them from sexual tension, and nurturer's them sexually. It is Henry, the ambulance driver of World War I, who pays bills again and again in the restaurant and bar. His wound of the war symbolizes the disability of the age, the disillusion and the frustration felt by an entire generation. However, *A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway is the best artistic achievement, having perfect example of American machismo and expatriates.

Statements of Problems

What made the people to move outside their country as expatriates? This is the question that seeks to answer from this article.

In the novel, *A Farewell to Arms*, World War I is guided by death drive or Thanatos. People of that time were forced to involve in destructive behavior. A huge number of people were in frightening situation. Wound, fear of death, destruction, love and hatred, conflict, war and ammunition, barbed wires, guns, shells, and some advanced weapons were the destructive objects that cause to seek peace and visiting foreign countries to enjoy as expatriates.

Sex and Sexuality Review

Sexual act is not that much narrower as much as it has been generally thought. If we exclude sexuality from the process of childbirth and kissing, then we are making a mistake. If one thinks that sexual only means about reproduction, then there is risk of excluding the whole host of activities like masturbation, kissing which is not directed towards reproduction, yet they are undoubtedly sexual. In this regard Freud says:

If you take the sexual act itself as the central part, you'll perhaps declare sexual to mean and everything which is concerned with obtaining pleasurable gratification from the body of the opposite sex; in the narrowest sense, everything which is directed to the union of the genital organs and the performance of sexual act...in doing so you may come very close to the sexual, there would be no meaning to the child birth in terms of sex. (155)

In popular view, sexual is something which combines references to the difference between the sexes, to pleasurable excitement and gratification, to the functions oriented towards reproduction. But in Freudian scientific analyses, this is no longer sufficient.

Similarly, Lois Tyson expresses her view on the meaning of sexuality: "Another area of psychological experience that has tended to elicit abstract explanations-and as we saw above, this points, to its frightening power in our lives-especially in the past, sexually was a matter of a biological pressure that is discharged in the act of sexual

intercourses. Freud called that drive Eros and placed it in opposition to thanatos, death drive" (*Critical Theory Today* 24). Sexuality is part and parcel of our identity and thus relates to our capacity to feel pleasure in ways that are not generally considered sexual. Therefore, our sexuality is one of the clearest and most consistent barometers of our psychological state in general. So, life is not only to be influenced by death instinct or Thanatos, as mentioned in *A Farewell to Arms*. It is also Eros that helps the expatriates to visit different places for their pleasure.

Moreover, Anthony Storr asserts:

All human beings, at least in Jung's view, experience life archetypically, at least at times. Perhaps the easiest way of appreciating this is to take some typical human experience like sex. Sex can be the mere slaking of an 'all-too-human' appetite. (Jung is fond of phrases like all-too-human', and to a minor extent may merit the Freudian accusation of regarding *sex per se* as distasteful). On the other hand, sex can be experienced as transcendental love, a 'divine' afflatus, the most important thing in life. (41)

So, sex and sexuality is a common stuff of day-to-day human experience which is very much essential in human life. The sexual instinct is inherited. Therefore, the hero or heroine is attracted to their opposite sex and cross the border to live and enjoy as the expatriates in foreign country forgetting the World War I fear.

Analyses of World War I Hero and Expatriates: Money and Body for Male's Pleasure

The hero is a courageous man who champions the cause of humanity at the expense of his personal life. The hero rises above interest and petty motives to serve people of all times and cultures. In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell defines the modern hero: "The modern hero, the modern individual hero who dares to heed the call and seek the mansion of that presence with whom it is our whole destiny to be atoned, cannot, indeed must not, wait for community to cast off its slough of pride, fear, rationalized avarice, and sanctified misunderstanding" (391). According to Fishwick, "In classic times, the heroes were God –men; in the medieval Ages, God's men; in the Renaissance, universal men; in the eighteenth century gentlemen; in the nineteenth, self-made men. Our century has seen the common man and the outsider become heroic"(61). In *A Farewell to Arms*, a hero, Frederic Henry joins the World War I in Italy after being disillusioned by the fall of the American dream. The character of Frederic in the Italian front made more identifiable with a rank of a second lieutenant to the ambulance job, but he does not do the job for any patriotic reason, rather the war excites him intensely that he feels released from inertial and unmanly life once he led in America. The war exposes a kind of heroic impression upon him. As a result, he makes a personal code of conduct that is exemplified in his macho style of living, such as, showing off masculinity, drinking alcohol and

womanizing. As he comes to the front and stays in the hospital area in one of the houses, he meets with the lieutenant Rinaldi. He is in another bed and both of them have a conversation about the new places visiting English girls for the sake of money and body for pleasure. In this regards, Hemingway writes in *A Farewell to Arms*:

We shook hands and he put his arm around my neck and kissed me.

‘Oughf, ‘I said.

‘You’re dirty,’ he said.’ You ought to wash. Where did you go and what do you do? Tell me everything at once.’

‘I went everywhere. Milan, Florence, Rome, Naples, Villa San Giovanni, Messina, Taormina-‘

‘You talk like a time table. Did you have any beautiful adventures?’

‘Yes,’

‘Where?’

‘Milano, Firenze, Rome, Napoli-‘

‘That’s enough. Tell me really what was the best.’

‘In Milano’.

‘That was because it was first. Where did you meet her? In the Cova? Where did you go? How did you feel? Tell me everything at once. Did you stay all night?’

‘Yes.’

‘That’s nothing. Here now we have beautiful girls. New girls never been to the front before.’

‘Wonderful.’

‘You don’t believe me. We will go now this afternoon and see. And in the town we have beautiful English girls. I am now in love with Miss Barkley. I will take you to call. I will probably marry Miss Barkley.’(11)

In the lieutenant Rinaldi’s and Frederic Henry’s conversation, some dirty activities and visiting some cities mean to express their views in the horrified situation of World War I. They try to get rid of the war and enjoy with the girls not only for the sexual desire fulfillment but also for making trivial position to the females.

Females are not well respected here in the novel mean to say that they are being made inferior. They are objectified as flesh and exposing as the prostitute for the soldiers’ comfort and pleasure. In Lois Tyson’s view: "Feminist theory points out, however, that both “good girls” and “bad girls” are objectified by patriarchy. That is they are not viewed as independent human beings with their own goals, needs and desires. Rather, they are evaluated only in terms of their usefulness to patriarchal men" (*Using Critical Theory* 142). Whether they are patriarchal or feminist, they are the sexual temptation, muses, promoting to masochistic quality, and solvers of domestic problems as well as fulfilling males’ desires for body and pleasure. Catherine Barkley is an anti- mythic character as represented; and extols Hemingway for regarding women as fellow creatures, in honor of making a female without mystery who are

presented as human being.

World War I created many difficulties in the world as the immediate troubles of the war included quarrels among victors, housing problems, disillusionment about the League, unemployment and strikes. So, the experience of the soldiers in the trenches could never be shared by the people at home, and there was at first breach between the returning fighting men and the civilian population. Some London and American expatriates wanted to visit other countries with some girls and get relaxed by forgetting the war trauma. They visited places spending a lot of money for the sake of body and pleasure. For this, John Montgomery cites: "The greatest war the world had ever known had ended eight months before, at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918. When they heard that Foch and the German leaders had signed an armistice, the people of London, Paris, New York, and the other capitals of the world, became delirious with joy" (13). Again Hemingway discusses the same situation which occurred in the World War I. The characters who are involved in the war find very difficult situation and hate it from their core of the heart. One side of the war country must have stopped fighting. The more they involve in the war, the more aggravate situation is created.

Every peasant of the country hates war because it invites more anger, panic, pandemic disease, frustration, anxiety, and chaotic situation which exist in psychological realm. Hemingway further mentions:

‘War is not won by victory. What if we take San Gabriele? What if we take the Carso and Monfalcone and Trieste? Where are we then? Did you see all the far mountains to-day? Do you think we could take all them too? Only if the Austrians stop fighting. One side must stop fighting. Why don't we stop fighting? If they come into Italy they will get tired and go away. They have their own country. But no, instead there is a war.’ Everybody hates this war.

‘You're an orator.’

‘We think. We read. We are not peasants. We are mechanics. But even the peasants know better than to believe in a war. Everybody hates this war.’ (48)

Many people do not like war. It only makes the situation worse. Whatever wars were took place in different period of time, all it was harmful to the involving nation. War shatters the nation. Babies to all age's people are shattered. This happened even in Vietnam villages. On one hand America thinks that involving in the Vietnamese and defeating her can be of pride to America but on the other hand such a beautiful pastoral country can be in dangerous situation. Beautiful and peaceful pastoral country is changed into chaotic and ugly country. In this regard, Philip Roth mentions in his book *American Pastoral*:

“What about the war-” “My responsibility is to you and not to the war.” “Oh, I know your responsibility is not to the war-that's why I have to go New York. B-b-b-because people there do feel responsible. They feel responsible when

American b-blow up Vietnamese villages. They feel responsible when America is b-blowing little b-babies to b-b-b-b-bits. B-but you don't, and neither does Mother. You don't care enough to let it upset a single day of yours. You don't care enough to make *you* spend another night somewhere. You don't really care, Daddy, one way or the other." (107)

Similarly, whatever wars have taken place in different epochs, war was there to show the power to weak countries. Both sides winning and losing countries suffer a lot. No matter how much they have lost from each side, sooner or later war has to be ended.

In each and every war, war has disadvantages and victory and defeating is a kind of illusion. So talking about the war, George Orwell in his book *1984* cites:

In the past ages, a war, almost by definition, was something that sooner or later came to an end, usually unmistakable victory or defeat. In the past, also war was one of the main instruments by which human societies were kept in touch with physical reality. All rulers in all ages have tried to impose a false view of the world upon their followers, but they could not afford to encourage any illusion that tended to impair military efficiency. So long as defeat meant the loss of independence, or some other result generally held to be undesirable, the precautions against defeat had to be serious. (205-6)

In the same manner, war is not welcome by Conrad because after the long span of fighting, war must be stopped. People think that an individuality is important than involving in war. They want independence and lead their life happily. Most of the people want to stop the World War I and get rid of it so that they live comfortably, happily and blissfully. For this, John Peck and Martin Coyle present in their book *A Brief History of English Literature*:

Essentially, it is the story that has a singleness of purpose dictated by the circumstances of its production. Conrad's works seem to anticipate the general collapse of the First World War, but the actual outbreak of war seemed to demand a straightforward response stressing the independence of men, as if to counterbalance the shock of the cataclysmic events. (230)

Hemingway thought he lost touch with American values while living in Paris, but his biographer Michael Reynolds claims the opposite, seeing evidence of the authors' Midwestern American values in the novel. Hemingway admired hard work. He portrayed the matadors and the prostitutes, who work for a living, in positive manner, but Catherine, who prostitutes herself, is emblematic of the rotten crowd living on inherited money. It is Henry, the ambulance driver of the World War I, who pays the bills again and again in different bars and restaurants.

Due to American culture Post World War I, the characters in *A Farewell to Arms* lived as expatriates in Paris where alcohol was abundant, the value of money was inflated, and they could lead lives of avoidance free of American expectations. During the period, friendship was easy to maintain. Money in Paris was inflated in

both economics and moral value, making their lives materialistic. Use of alcohol has many reasons such as forgetting the World War I situation. Expatriates are connecting to others and can form their own community. This allows them to exist themselves without being forced to belong to anything.

In Paris these expatriates live comfortably having indulged their time in arts and sports. Visiting bar, watching bullfight, getting friendship, isolated from American community thinking that they are already isolated from their experiences of World War I. These people are connected to others for their new way of life to lead further more. They visit bar and restaurant in the evening wearing evening dress. They have new taste of food, love making, looking happy, making fun, drinking with friends and loving partner seem to be forgetting the World War I chaotic environment.

Conclusion

World War I is not as beneficial as America and Britain expected. Many people along with these two countries have been fed up of the war including the soldiers who took part in the war. The novel suggests that war has become a habit, a disgusting habit. At some point, Frederic Henry and Catherine have learnt that this war is futile and not pleasing and romantic. They are disgusted by the war and observe more facets of war. For them, war is ugly and not glamorized. War is presented in a very real and horrifying way to spoil the human kind. Both of the characters present the negative portrayal of the World War I. War is also a disease to them as in the novel one of the characters Rinaldi refers to his own condition of gonorrhoea and thinks that everyone has it. Until and unless there is war, all pleasurable things become tiresome. Technologies like machineguns, tankers, barbed wires, missiles, rockets, and biological weapons etc. are useless. There is no life except chaotic situation. All these function only through money. For example, America spent around thirty billion dollars on the war effort. At war's end, due to disagreements with the allies, the United States refused to ratify the peace treaty, join the League of Nations, or be part of the European recovery. Similarly, British interest rates rose and lured capital away from America's Wall Street. Prices on the New York Stock Exchange plummeted in the late October of 1929. The Great Depression set in and the American economy did not see serious improvement until the beginning of the World War II.

World War I has spent a lot of money in the war. Money and body become the major things for males' pleasure either in the war or with the females. Protagonists Lieutenant Frederic Henry involved with Catherine Barkley, the heroine of the novel. Both protagonists are injured fatally in the war and observe the disgusting situation which never glamorized the human lives. However, these two characters are attracted towards each other for their pleasure. These characters represent the American and British expatriates who are crowding the bars, restaurants, night clubs, bull fight sports or in different places getting fed up of the horrors of World War I and

living comfortably in the foreign country. Emotions, wounds, fears, guilty desires, unresolved conflicts, repressed feelings, diseases, love and hate, conflict, war etc. are all to be considered psychological matters. As expatriates, they want to get rid of the war and weapons so that they can enjoy as outsiders in the foreign countries with the young boys and girls.

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