

## **Ernest Hemingway's Paralleling Style: Frederic and Catherine as Two Sides of the Same Coin in *A Farewell to Arms***

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### **Abstract**

This article examines the American novelist Ernest Hemingway's attempt to disrupt the dichotomy between men and women in his war novel *A Farewell to Arms* (1929). The article explains that Hemingway creates parallelism (similarities) between the narrator Fredric Henry and his partner Catherine Barkley. Hemingway manages to show this parallelism through revealing his major male and female characters within the context of World War I (WWI). The article focuses on the psychological as well as the physical impact of war on non-combatant civilians (the ambulance driver Fredric and the nurse Catherine). It also places *A Farewell to Arms* within its historical context (the Great War and its trauma), and its modernist period. It argues that Hemingway's novel presents in a simple style some realities about WWI by which men and women appear to be similarly victimised by the war. Although accounts of the novel often highlight the centrality of problematic femininity and masculinity in the novel, critics have not fully investigated the fact that the novel creates correspondence between a man and a woman. Throughout analysing the similarities between the two characters, the paper concludes that Hemingway, a modernist who is neither a misogynist nor a feminist, attempts to release male and female characters from gendered restrictions by rejecting the stereotypical image about the dichotomy between men and women.

**Key words:** Parallelism, Masculinity, Femininity, Male/ Female dichotomy, Trauma.

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أسلوب التوازي للروائي إرنست همنغواي: الشخصيات فريدريك وكاترين كوجهان لعملة واحدة في  
رواية "وداعاً للسلاح"

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ملخص

تتاول هذا المقال محاولة الروائي الأمريكي إرنست همنغواي زعزعة فكرة الانقسام بين الرجال والنساء في روايته الحربية "وداعاً للسلاح" (1929). يوضح المقال أن همنغواي يخلق توازياً (أوجه تشابه) بين الراوي فريدريك هنري وشريكته كاترين باركلي. تمكن همنغواي من إظهار هذا التوازي من خلال الكشف عن شخصياته الرئيسية الذكر والأنثى في سياق الحرب العالمية الأولى. يركز المقال على الأثر النفسي والجسدي للحرب على المدنيين غير المقاتلين (سائق سيارة الإسعاف فريدريك والمرمضة كاترين). كما أنها تضع "وداعاً للسلاح" ضمن سياقها التاريخي (الحرب العظمى وصدماتها) وفترة الحداثة. ويناقش المقال بأن رواية همنغواي تقدم بأسلوب بسيط بعض الحقائق حول الحرب العالمية الأولى والتي يظهر من خلالها أن الرجال والنساء ضحايا الحرب بطريقة مماثلة. على الرغم من أن قراءات نقدية للرواية غالباً ما تسلط الضوء على إشكالية الأنوثة والذكورة في الرواية، إلا أن النقاد لم يوضحوا حقيقة أن الرواية تخلق تطابقاً بين الرجل والمرأة. من خلال تحليل أوجه التشابه بين الشخصيتين، يستنتج البحث أن همنغواي، الحداثي الذي ليس كارهاً للمرأة ولا نسوياً، يحاول تحرير شخصيات الذكور والإناث من القيود الجندرية من خلال رفض الصورة النمطية عن الانقسام بين الرجل والمرأة.

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## **Introduction:**

Within the modernist era (1910-1940) and WWI (1914-1918), numerous social and political changes took place, and writers such as Hemingway chose to write about these issues in a modernist experimental way. Hemingway follows ‘the iceberg theory’ or what is called as theory of omission. This theory is coined by him which obviously means the use of simple style to hide certain complex messages. Hemingway’s narratives show a small part of what is actually meant by. He uses simple sentences and structures and this acts as “a reaction against the somewhat flowery decorative complex literary language which had been fashionable, and which did not suit the prose needed to describe the facts of scientific experiment” (York Classics, 1988: XIV). Hemingway also relies on the use of short words and simple conjunctions to link sentences. “He tended to describe events in simple consequences, in a chronological order. There is no authorial comment; nothing gets between the reader and the character or the scene” (P. XV). Apparently, Hemingway’s unique writing style had a strong influence on 20th century fiction and culture. Gustav Regler (1940), in the preface to *The Great Crusade*, states that Hemingway’s style has some similarities to other modernists’ style of writing: “It was a reaction action the more elaborate, turgid style of the nineteenth century. It was direct, minimalist often leaving things unstated, but at the same time profoundly moving for bringing the reader into the heart of the story and experience” (P. 2).

*A Farewell to Arms* is stylistically simple, yet thematically complex. It is a war novel which is told by the retrospective narrator Fredric Henry. Frederic, the American ambulance driver, introduces us to memories from the war, and he describes in detail the war’s effects on him and his partner Catherine. Hemingway uses parallelism technique in order to minimise differences between the two protagonists within the war’s context. This parallelism is not between people from the same sex. Instead, it exceeds the polar opposite between men and women. Both Frederic and Catherine mirror each other, and this similarity refutes the stereotypical image about the dichotomy between men and women. Although Hemingway features a minimalist and simple style in *A Farewell to Arms*, he, thematically, delivers complex messages such as the position of men and women within the war context. According to Peter Schwenger (1984), “Hemingway’s style [of narration] is in one sense an extension of the masculine values he depicts: the restraint of emotion, the stiff upper lip, the macho hermeticism” (P. 50). Indeed, Hemingway’s narrator refers to masculine norms, but

Hemingway also depicts the war's impact on men's masculinity and women's femininity. Sandra Gilbert (1983) has described WWI as "the apocalypse of masculinism"; "paradoxically [...] the war to which so many men had gone in hope of becoming heroes ended up emasculating them [...] confining them as closely as any Victorian woman had been confined" (Pp.447-448). Hemingway represents this paradox and the trauma from which Fredric and Catherine suffer.

This paper sheds the light on Hemingway's drawing upon the impact of the war and its trauma through focusing on the suffering of the male as well as the female protagonists due to their equal participation in the war. According to Kai T. Erikson (1995), the term trauma is taken to mean a "stress or blow that may produce disordered feelings or behavior" or a "state or condition produced by such a stress or blow" (P. 184). Trauma is also described by Negin Heidarizadeh (2015) as "a state of mind which results from an injury . . . it is a devastating and damaging experience" (P. 789). Dominick LaCapra (2001), a trauma theorist, also notes:

Certain wounds, both personal and historical, cannot simply heal without leaving scars or residues in the present; there may even be a sense in which they have to remain as open wounds even if one strives to counteract their tendency to swallow all of existence and incapacitate one as an agent in the present. (P. 144)

*A Farewell to Arms* portrays Fredric and Catherine as characters who suffer from this emotional condition. This portrayal emphasises the parallelism Hemingway indicated between a man and a woman to break gendered restrictions within WWI's context.

Literary critics often highlight the centrality of problematic femininity and masculinity in the novel. Thomas Strychacz (2004) argues that Hemingway's novels "represent masculinity as temporary and subject to abrupt change rather than stable and permanent; as relational and contingent rather than self-determined [...] as negotiated and constructed rather than constitutive of an essential identity" (P. 8). Strychacz suggests that the dense metaphors, "linguistic oddities, and rhetorical games" in Hemingway's narratives help readers get Hemingway's theatrical articulation of "manhood" (P. 8). Strychacz also notes that in *A Farewell to Arms* "Fredric Henry's many masquerades put into question precisely the truth, naturalness, and permanence of masculine identity" (P. 11). Diane Price

Herndl (2001) also investigates Fredric's problematic masculinity. According to him, Hemingway represents Fredric as a wounded soldier, "a suspect malingerer and a deserter" (P. 38). Herndl also suggests that "in employing a 'masculine' style that resists the sentimentalism of a feminine style (one that would presumably focus on emotion) Frederic Henry may succumb to a different 'female' problem—silence" (P. 40). Although these critics highlight the problematised gendered attributes in the novel, they have not investigated the fact that the novel creates correspondence between a man and a woman, mainly Fredric and Catherine.

The current paper disagrees with the general assumption made about Hemingway's misogyny, like that of Jamie Barlowe-Kayes (1993) who argues that Hemingway objectifies his female characters. Barlowe-Kayes writes: "they [women] serve as nurturers, solvers of domestic problems, and creators of conditions which allow men to go on accomplishing — and making decisions" (P. 27). Indeed, Hemingway represents women in a submissive role in his early literary pieces such as the short story "Cat in the Rain" (1925), but this is not the case in *A Farewell to Arms* wherein Hemingway depicts romantic union between Catherine and Fredric. David Wyatt (2015), in *Hemingway, Style, and the Art of Emotion*, maintains:

Romance is that mode in which a writer's imagination converts the world into an object of fulfilled desire, and to call these desires infantile or regressive is to miss the point, to refuse to entertain the offered fallacy. Romance expresses the longing for union and return and represents these longings as given to both genders (P. 68).

The novel can be treated as a modernist realistic and romantic text that introduces similarities and stylistic parallelism between a man and a woman instead of emphasizing the difference between the two sexes.

Thus, the paper builds on some other critics' view that Hemingway is not a misogynist. For instance, Daniel S. Traber (2005) points out that Hemingway problematises Catherine's femininity. Catherine releases herself from Fredric's masculine behaviours, and in this sense, she is neither stereotyped nor reduced into a nurturing figure. Anna Hage (2019) reads Hemingway's nuanced representation of the gender role in *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Sun Also Rises*. Hage places the two novels within context of feminist literary criticism, and argues that in the two novels Hemingway depicts protagonists who "confirm and disconfirm to established gendered norms"(P. 2). This paper places *A Farewell to Arms* within its historical context (WWI and its trauma), and its modernist period. It analyses the

similarities Hemingway creates between Fredric and Catherine, and argues that *A Farewell to Arms* is built on paralleled events and circumstances that revolve around both characters.

### **Analysis:**

At the beginning of joining the Italian army, Frederic regarded victory in war as desirable, possible, and honorable. While having such thoughts, though, he isolates himself from the war's surroundings by drinking and falling in love with Catherine. Frederic admits that he "had gotten somewhat drunk" (1957: 41) several times. Randall Wilhelm (2006) claims that Frederic's obsession with extravagant drinking by his continuous reference to empty and filled bottles reflects "his need to distance himself from life's realities" (P. 70). Frederic's interest in forming an affair with Catherine is another way to detach himself from the war and its gloomy atmosphere. Marc Hewson (2003) notices that playing sex becomes one of Frederic's interests to have "some fun in the midst of war" (P. 54). In addition, Frederic intentionally uses the psychological defenses of 'denial' and 'avoidance'. Such psychological defenses are means by which the individual ignores certain hidden problems (Tyson, 1999: 18). In an attempt to neglect the war, Frederic uses these two ways of defense to repress his hatred of the war and of being involved in it.

Fredric's hatred of the war by the end of the novel proves that he becomes traumatic as a result of the war. Trevor Dodman (2006) considers the novel in terms of "traumatic after effects" (P. 251). Dodman argues that the trauma Fredric recounts in the narrative repeats itself through Fredric's recalling of Catherine's experience of trauma in the war's context (P. 264). LaCapra (2001) describes trauma as a "disruptive experience that disarticulates the self and creates holes in existence; it has belated effects that are controlled only with difficulty and perhaps never fully mastered" (P. 41). Since part of Fredric's character is traumatic (Wilhelm, 2006: 70), Frederic uses drinking and making love to Catherine as a means to control the trauma he suffers from and to neglect the war's absurdity. Frederic tries to accommodate himself with his new life as an officer while having fun with Catherine.

In fact, Fredric's attempt to ignore the war's context is not different from Catherine's experience. Dodman, in analysing the trauma in the novel, emphasises that: "Catherine's loss, her echoing voice and broken body, takes shape as a trauma narrative relentlessly imposing itself on Frederic's

ordinary narrative progression of events” (2006: 263). Even before her death, Catherine suffers from trauma due to the nature of her work on the battleground. As a nurse, Catherine sees several soldiers dying when she tries to help them. Her experience in this context and the fact that she is not Italian is similar to Frederic’s position as an American officer who attempts to create his own world of ‘denial’ and ‘avoidance’ while working as an ambulance driver with the Italian army. Further, in addition to Frederic’s interest in forgetting the reality of the war by busying himself with drinking and having an affair with Catherine, Catherine herself wants to forget the experience of losing her previous fiancé by settling a new affair with Frederic. Catherine wants to repress a previous “psychological turmoil” she has encountered even before meeting Frederic (Traber, 2005: 30).

In order to create parallelism between his two protagonists, Hemingway intends to employ a very simple style revealed through these characters. Fredric, after Catherine had told him about her fiancé’s death on the battleground, said in simple words: “We sat down on a bench and I looked at her” (1957: 18). While Fredric attempts to isolate himself from the war by falling in love, Catherine also recalls a difficult experience that echoes Frederic’s one through using simple sentences linked by the conjunction ‘and’. For example, she confesses to Frederic that “He [her fiancé] was to marry me and he was killed in the Somme” (18). Like Frederic, Catherine experiences the absurdity and futility of life when her fiancé dies. She uses the psychological defenses of ‘denial’ and ‘avoidance’ in order to live a normal life while repressing the past experience of the death of her previous love. As Katie Owens-Murphy (2009) notes, Fredric’s and Catherine’s love relationship was to them a kind of happiness that “palliates their trauma” (P. 98). The two of them use love as a means to repress hidden traumas that are not easy to repress without replacing them with romantic memories.

Another parallelism between Fredric and Catherine is made to reject the dichotomy between genders. Although they find romance as a way to neglect their hidden traumas, both Frederic and Catherine at the beginning of knowing each other seem to fear encountering disillusionment in love. This behaviour gives Catherine a kind of control and agency over her emotions. She tells Frederic that she was going to cut her hair when her previous fiancé died (1957:19). Here, Catherine shows Frederic that she no longer cares about being attractive. Hage (2019), in her feminist analysis of the gender roles depicted in the novel, maintains that Fredric carries out ‘masculine traits’ but also shows love emotions (P. 2). Catherine also reflects feminine and masculine traits. In order to make a partial temporary

distance with Frederic, Catherine states that she “wanted to do something” for her dead fiancé (P. 19). At the beginning of their relationship, Catherine slapped him on the face when he attempts to kiss her, as if still thinking of her previous love and to show him, even temporally, the ‘typical and sordid’ nature of his sexual masculinity (Hewson, 55). However, when she seems to challenge the defense which is ‘fear of intimacy’ (Tyson, 18), Catherine accepts Frederic to kiss and tight her hard. Catherine’s fear of having any good relationship with anyone because it might hurt at the end is what she seems to be worried about at the beginning of knowing Frederic. Apparently, Catherine tries to make a shift in her stereotypical position as a loving woman. As Traber (2005) describes it, “she is proposing to rewrite her identity by integrating a subjectivity that would locate her beyond ‘normal’ gender patterns” (P. 35).

In parallel to Catherine’s ‘fear of intimacy’ and then her control over this fear, Frederic, at the beginning, loves Catherine as if playing a ‘game’. Frederic says that he ‘lied’ when he says ‘I love you’ to Catherine (P. 30). Further, he thinks that Catherine’s behaviours give him a hint that she is ‘a little crazy’ (P. 30). Without repressing his impression about her, Frederic continues, “I knew I did not love Catherine Barkly nor had an idea of loving her. This was a game, like bridge, in which you said things instead of playing cards” (P. 30). However, similar to what Catherine does when loving him, Frederic himself begins to be attracted to Catherine’s beauty. Before leaving up to the river where an attack occurs, Frederic goes to see Catherine; with hurry, he goes to the British hospital asking for ‘Miss Barkly’ (P. 42). So then, at the beginning of their acquaintance, both Frederic and Catherine distrust their sincere love for each other; they assert that such love is a ‘game’. Yet later on, they repress their ‘fear of intimacy.’

The parallelism continues between the two protagonists to the degree that a kind of spiritual and intellectual relation is created between both of them, they even could understand each other’s ideas and thoughts. For instance; Catherine’s initial confession that she and Fredric are players in “a rotten game” of love makes Fredric astonished to ask “Do you always know what people think?” (P. 92). The question implies that Frederic and Catherine know each other’s ways of thinking. Catherine is suspicious of Frederic’s love to her. She asks him continuously “You really love me?”(P. 92). Frederic concludes that Catherine can infer his thoughts correctly. Thus, in the two cases, Catherine’s own prediction that Frederic regards loving her as a ‘game’ proves that it is her own thought; otherwise, she will



never deduce this conclusion. Catherine also seems to regard falling in love with Frederic as her own game. Simultaneously, Frederic's inference of Catherine's ability to conclude his thoughts shows that he himself can easily comprehend Catherine's own hidden perspectives. He was suspicious at one moment that Catherine might pretend that he is her own dead fiance (P. 37). Hence, Frederic's and Catherine's abilities to infer each other's thoughts reflect that they are exceeding and repressing a psychological trauma associated with 'fear of intimacy' in a similar way.

The similarity of their psychological and intellectual status is also apparent in their religious view about the effectiveness of having the medal of Saint Anthony (P. 43). Catherine puts the medal as a necklace around her neck, because she believes that wearing this object might bring luck. she herself says to Frederic that keeping it "was for luck" (P. 116). Even Frederic takes the medal to keep it in 'capsule' until the driver tells him to wear it (P. 43). Frederic seems to be less interested in what Catherine gives him; he lost the medal when he was wounded (P. 44). In this case, declaring indirectly that he was wounded while wearing it, means that Frederic distrusts the power of having the medal of 'Saint Anthony' in his possession. Frederic's disillusionment of the religious emblem parallels Catherine's disbelief in the religious influence of Saint Anthony. As much as Catherine is not worried about not having the medal of Saint Anthony around her neck, Frederic is not serious in keeping it. Their disbelief in the power of the medal makes them more similar to each other. In Frederic's own words, the two of them "were thinking the same thing anyway" even in different locations (P. 114). This intellectual similarity makes Catherine and Frederic, as Catherine's friend, the nurse Helen Ferguson puts it, "two of the same thing" (P. 247).

Frederic's and Catherine's experience of pain and the ways they use for physical defense are also similar. On the battleground, Frederic faces moments that echo Catherine's experience in the delivery room. Both the battleground and the delivery room are places that suggest suffering and torment. While in Gorizia, Frederic talks about the 'steel helmets' that soldiers are supposed to wear and the 'gas mask' that he was carrying when going to 'the posts' (P. 29). Frederic also refers to the 'automatic pistol' that soldiers need to wear. After introducing such military concepts, Frederic continues "I saw Catherine Barkley coming down the hall . . . she looked very lovely" (P. 29). His reference to Catherine here foreshadows that terms as 'gas' and 'mask' are what Catherine herself will use and see in the delivery room. For instance, while encountering the pains of delivery,

Catherine asks the doctor if Frederic can give her 'the gas' (P. 317). Although Frederic gives her the gas, Catherine shows her agency when she "held the mask tight to her face" (P. 317). Not unlike Frederic on battleground, Catherine wants to survive when holding the mask tightly to her face so she and her infant receive gas as much as they need.

Another similarity is indicated between the couple when Catherine gives Frederic a chance to help her when she was giving birth of the dead child. As if Frederic is her doctor, Catherine says "I try as hard as I can. I push down but it [the mask] goes away. There it comes. Give it to me" (P. 318). Catherine's need for the gas which is controlled by Frederic here is similar to Frederic's need to breathe on an explosion. Frederic clarifies that he "tried to breathe" but, as he continues, "my breath would not come and I felt myself rush bodily out of myself and out and out and all the time bodily in the wind" (P. 54) and that he was afraid when looking at his wounded leg (P. 56). His description of being close to death here echoes Catherine's words "I try as hard as I can" (P. 318). Catherine declares "I am not brave anymore, darling, I'm all broken. They've broken me. I know it now" (P. 323). Her disillusionment when failing in the process of giving birth parallels Frederic's disappointment from being wounded. He asks the porter to take him to any room, since "the pain had gone on and on" (P. 83). The room he wants to be in is similar to the delivery room to which Catherine is taken by the end of the novel. Frederic's emphasis on being 'laid down on the bed' when wounded is similar to the delivery's bed that Catherine is laid on when she delivers the dead baby.

The traumatic experience of Frederic and Catherine maintains throughout the whole novel; the wound in Frederic's knee and the pain he encounters echoes what happens with Catherine in the delivery room. When seeing the wound in Frederic's knee, the sergeant argues, as Frederic paraphrases it, that "there was so much dirt blown into the wound that there had not been much hemorrhage" (P. 57). The reference to 'hemorrhage' here resonates with the nurse's announcement that "Mrs. Frederic has a hemorrhage" (P. 330). What Frederic faces after that explosion foreshadows Catherine's dying in the delivery room as a consequence of 'hemorrhage.' The Caesarean that doctors perform in order to help Catherine deliver the baby (P. 324) is similar to the operation that Frederic received to cure his wounded leg. Before the operation, "they took off Frederic's trousers" (P. 59) and this parallels the fact that Catherine was asked to 'undress' when she was taken to the delivery's bed (P. 313). Charles Hatten (1993) remarks

that Catherine and Fredric are situated in a comparable position in Catherine's dying scene: "dying stoically, she defeats Henry in the competition for status [...] she achieves exactly the sort of heroic stature that persistently eludes Henry [...]. Barkley achieves her powerful subversion of Henry's masculinity precisely by imitating masculinity" (P. 96). Another analogy is also made by Aimee Pozorski (2004) who refers to the point that the effects of the Caesarean is only a 'scar' on Catherine's body and that the memories Frederic has in mind about war's atmosphere are a psychological 'scar' (Pozorski, 78). Frederic and Catherine face medical treatments, operations, and war's influences, suggesting that they become involved in a very similar experience.

Furthermore, Frederic sees death as determined and inescapable for everyone (including Catherine and their infant) on the battleground. In fact, Catherine's experience of stillbirth echoes what soldiers encounter in the war. Frederic realises by the end of the novel that death is a natural fact surrounding mothers in delivery rooms and soldiers on the battleground. When the nurse comes to tell him that his baby "wasn't alive" (P. 327), Frederic recalls the death of his friends Aymo and Rinaldi. Realising the formula of life, Frederic puts it this way, as if addressing his dead baby and Catherine at the same time: "They threw you in and told you the rules and the first time they caught you off base they killed you" (P. 327). Catherine stored that infant in her womb and that infant's death foreshadows her death. Catherine and her dead infant also resonate with the dead Rinaldi and Aymo respectively. The reason behind Rinaldi's death is, as Frederic expects, 'syphilis' (P. 327). Similarly, Frederic was told that the medical natural reason for Catherine's death is that "she had a hemorrhage" (P. 330). Although Frederic considers Catherine's and Rinaldi's death as determined, his baby's death seems to be as ambiguous as the death of Aymo. Aymo was "killed gratuitously" (P. 327). The atmosphere of that war is full of catastrophic death. Frederic comes to conclude this point after his infant's death: "Now Catherine would die" (P. 327). Soldiers also expect death on the battleground. The nurse Helen generalises this assumption about soldiers including Frederic himself that "'You'll never get married" . . . and that "You'll die then. Fight or die"' (P. 108). This prediction becomes true with Rinaldi and Aymo. Although Frederic does not die physically, he experiences the moment of dying psychologically due to encountering the death of his love and his stillborn baby while recalling harsh moments from that war.

More similarities between Frederic and Catherine become apparent even before the death of their child. Both of them are involved in talking, as if busying themselves with somehow superficial details, about cutting and growing their hairs. When she declares her wish to have her hair cut at the beginning of acquainting Frederic (P. 19), Catherine seems to be interested in forgetting some part of her femininity as a consequence of loving her previous fiancé and she does not want to be attractive any longer. Correspondingly, Frederic begins growing his beard after Catherine asks him to do so (P. 304). Then after she loves his beard, Catherine makes a new decision that she will grow her hair until she gives birth to little Catherine, then she is "going to cut it again"(P. 304). Catherine asserts that she will let her hair grow and that she likes Frederic's beard. Frederic himself confesses that Catherine "had wonderfully beautiful hair" (P. 114). The two of them want to see masculine and feminine signs in each other's physical appearance. Catherine shows Fredric that she is feminine who can be physically similar to men by making her hair shorter. At the same time, Frederic proves by loving her that he can be emotional even when growing his beard which is often signified with masculinity (Hewson, 59). Ira Elliott (1993) argues that Fredric behaves as if one of the "feminised men" or "sissies" when treating the priest and Rinaldi (P. 297). Fredric, similar to Catherine, reflects feminine and masculine traits.

To further fulfill the desire of seeing Fredric in an image similar to her, Catherine suggests that Frederic should grow his hair a little longer when saying "let it grow longer and I could cut mine and we'd be just alike" (P. 299). Her comment reflects her interest in seeing more similarities between her and Frederic. She continues that "I want to be you too" (P. 299). Frederic himself reacts that "you are, we're the same" (P. 299). The similarity that Catherine wants to achieve is the reflection of both femininity and masculinity in one body. Catherine aims at establishing a masculine femininity for herself and a feminine masculinity for Fredric. Thus clearly, Hemingway introduces the feminine masculinity of Fredric and the masculine femininity of Catherine, and he portrays them as if they are the same.

In order to break that stereotypical dichotomy between the two genders, when leaving to Switzerland, Frederic and Catherine become more similar to each other. The two of them deny certain societal rules and customs. Frederic becomes the lover instead of the officer pretending to play the game of love, and Catherine breaks the custom of being passive to the rules

of the nursing system. As Hewson (2003) explains, when leaving Italy, Catherine and Frederic gradually realise that what they need is not a selfish sexual love, since such a kind of love has negative influences on their sincerity (Hewson, 57) if not on their own humane identity. The similarities between Catherine and Frederic cause them to work collaboratively even when rowing the barman's boat until they reach Switzerland. Frederic showed Catherine the way to "hold the roar" (P. 272), believing in her energetic ability in helping him, though she is pregnant. This belief results in Frederic's confidence in Catherine as he gives her a chance to row the boat 'moderately' (P. 275). His trust of her power causes him to take several drinks while she is proving her masculine ability when rowing the boat. Their collaboration leads Catherine to assert that she "had a lovely time" (P. 284). This scene in Switzerland, Stacey Guill (2019) argues, detaches Catherine and Frederic "physically and emotionally" from the war (P. 104). Their interest in being active while seeking their escape from the war's constraints makes them very similar to each other.

These similarities between Catherine and Frederic maintain that Hemingway avoids reinforcing gendered, stereotypical, and sexist representations. The author tries to represent a non-traditional message within the war's context, mainly the established image about highlighting the differences between genders. Instead, Hemingway represents a different and a new image about collaboration and even unity between men and women as shown in his novel.

### **Conclusion:**

The similarities between Frederic's and Catherine's experience in love, war, and even struggle for survival minimise the differences between them. The parallelism Hemingway creates between a man and a woman makes his style distinctive and unique. By breaking the dichotomy between men and women through presenting Frederic and Catherine as two faces of the same coin, *A Farewell to Arms* introduces the point that although WWI has a catastrophic influence, it still bears on its margins some kind of understanding between men and women. WWI leads Frederic to pass through an experience similar to that of a woman in a delivery room. For instance, like soldiers on battlegrounds, pregnant women want to see their 'victory' by delivering their babies, though they might encounter death by themselves. In *A Farewell to Arms*, the difference between men and women is almost vanished by repeating and echoing similar experiences of a man and his female partner. Catherine and Frederic encounter the same

determinism. This unique depiction deviates from the typical representation to the dichotomy between men and women.

This conclusion refutes views regarding *A Farewell to Arms* as misogynistic or even feminist in its message. Frederic's words that "It [the world] kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry" (P. 249) lead us to deduce that Frederic indirectly acknowledges Catherine's gentility and bravery; the world kills her after all. This determinism is similar to Frederic's one. As shown throughout his recalling of such memories, Frederic is dying psychologically until the world kills him like what it did with the "very gentle and very brave" Catherine (P. 249). The depiction of similarities between a man and a woman that Hemingway presents in this novel contradicts with the critics' assumption about Hemingway's misogyny.

In fact, Hemingway has been the target of many feminist critics, like Judith Fetterley (1978) who argues that Hemingway in his novel tries to focus on the tragedy of the man more than the woman. Fetterley claims that most of the love stories raise the question of "Why [their] the emotional charge so often depends on the death of the woman and so rarely on the death of the man?" (P. 48). This crucial question asserts the fact that at the end of the novel, it is Frederic's life and not Catherine's death that matters. Other critics made an issue of masculinity in Hemingway's writings, like Jamie Barlowe-Kayes (1993) and Peter Schwenger (1984) who argue that Hemingway portrays women as submissive figures, or that he adopts a masculine style in his narratives. According to Sara Assadnassab (2005), "By the early 1930s, Hemingway was working deliberately to develop and embellish a masculine public image of himself" (P. 6). However, the current paper sheds light on Hemingway's depiction of men and women as a united couple who passes through a similar if not the same experience within WWI's context. Based on this analysis, the paper concludes that *A Farewell to Arms*, a war romantic novel which uses a minimalist simple style, indicates that Hemingway is neither a feminist nor a misogynist especially in the way that he puts his male and female protagonists in the same mold and circumstances that made the readers sympathise with both of them in the same degree.

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