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FACULTE DES LETTRES ET DES LANGUES

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The Tragic Hero in Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929).

Presented by:

Chahrazad LARBI
Fazia HADJ ALI

Supervised by:

Ms. Fatiha BENSAFI

Board of Examiners:

Chair: Mrs. Naima MAIDI MAA, Department of English UMMTO

Examiner: Mrs. Djedjiga BESSAAD MAB, Department of English, UMMTO

Supervisor: Ms. Fatiha BENSAFI MAA, Department of English, UMMTO

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Laboratoire de domiciliation du Master : Etudes des Langues et Cultures Etrangères.

DEDICATIONS

To my beloved parents

To my beloved only brother and sisters

To my beloved grand-parents

To my closest friends and relatives.

CHAHRAZAD

To my beloved parents

To my beloved only brother and sisters

To my dear husband and family in law

To my closest friends and relatives.

FAZIA

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Abstract

This research paper deals with the study of the Tragic Hero in Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929). Our Major interest in this dissertation is to analyze the novels as modern tragedies. Thus, to achieve our purpose, we have relied on Arthur Miller's theory developed in his essay "*Tragedy and The Common Man*" (1949). This present study aims to reveal Stephen Crane's and Ernest Hemingway's viewpoints about the tragic hero who is represented as a common man that shares the same problems and struggles of his society. In other words, they try to show to which extent their characters uncover the aspects of the modern tragic hero. This dissertation is divided into two main chapters. The first one is concerned with the analysis of the major characters (Frederic Henry, Henry Fleming, Jim Conklin and Catherine Barkley) under the notions of the tragic. The second one deals with the main themes involved within both works such fighting for dignity, war, courage and death.

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General introduction

Our research paper focuses on the comparison of Stephen Crane's literary work entitled *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929). We have made reference to the modern tragic hero in our comparison. The two authors are Americans. Stephen Crane (1871-1900) lived in the late of nineteenth century and after the Civil War. Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961) lived in the late of nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century period. He is a modernist writer who saw the outbreak of the World War One. In fact, the war played a great role to change the consideration of many areas in our life. In literature, many literary works reflected the reality lived in that period. Death and disillusionment are the dominated themes in these writings.

Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) is taken place after the American Civil War (1861-1865). Crane was born after the Civil War; it still serves as one of the milestones in American literary history. The hero of the novel, Henry Fleming, is a young American joined the Union Army with big dream to become a soldier and fighting face to the enemy in the battles. His real dream is to be a hero. But, he flees his first battle in a complete panic.

Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) declared as a modernist work. This novel was written during the period of disillusionment due to the harsh reality of the World War One. Hemingway is known as a journalist in the WWI. So he used his experiences to enhance his writings. The novel deals with the story of a young man that enjoys the WWI. Hemingway's hero in *A Farewell to Arms*, Frederic Henry, is an ambulance driver during the war in Italy. He lived love, death and a great disillusionment in that period.

The tragic hero considered as an apex of human behavior. Regarding to the heroic act is compelling commanding our attention. Thus, the concept of a tragic hero is a way to unify several types of courageous or brave actions in the literature.

Finally, our aim is to show the tragic hero how it is depicted in the two novels. By comparing between Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) we can discover that these writings reflect the human emotions in times of turmoil. They also reflect the harsh realities of the war such as violence and death.

Review of the Literature

Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) and Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) have received much attention and literary criticism from different perspectives.

Crane has been called a realist, a naturalist, an impressionist, and symbolist. He is all of these in *The Red Badge of Courage*. Moreover, he had talked with Veterans and had studied history under a Civil War general. Crane had imagined what it would be if a frightened young man facing violent death amid the confusion, noise and turmoil of a conflict. Indeed, several reviewers concluded that only an experienced soldier could have written the book. Later, Crane had later seen the Greeks and Turks fighting in 1897 since he was a journalist reporting the war. He told Joseph Conrad that 'My picture of the war was all right! I have found it as I imagined it'.

In his writing for *The New Review*, the British critic George Wyndham confirms that this novel contrasts the other war stories or autobiographies. Those stories and autobiographies are limited to things such as the young saw or heard. Crane's story makes the reader feel the same emotions as the hero does. Wyndham referred also to the important role of emotional influence on the reader. These emotions or feelings make the reader in the heart of the battle. According to Wyndham, *The Red Badge of Courage* places the readers in the shoes of Henry Fleming as he fought, ran, and grimaced in horror¹.

Harold Frederic praising for the novel, wrote in *The New York Times* that everybody who desires to be or to seem a connoisseur of modern fiction must read it².

Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* has received a great amount of criticism too. "The Exploration of Female Characters' Freedom and Choice in the Dawn of the 20th Century American Literature" is a work developed by Lindsay Grubin treating this novel in term of feminism. She states that even if women have gained prestige and grown more complex as the

evolution of literature, they have only served as supporting and additional characters³. However, Catherine Barkley, the female character of *A Farewell to Arms* has received a certain level of freedom, strength and maturity.

Jamie Barlowe Kayes is another feministic critic who has interpreted *A Farewell to Arms* as a passiveness of the women's representation since the death of the female character at the end of the novel. In fact, she has disagreed with Hemingway's manipulation of reducing and marginalizing Catherine Barkley and keeping her without any domestic power; as object and plaything only⁴. In his novels, Hemingway portrayed women as a trade good and commodity⁵, especially in his war novel through which he exposed the female character as prostitutes for soldiers' comfort⁶.

In addition, Christopher Martin deduced that Ernest Hemingway's early personal experience in the two World Wars has helped him to write such a great novel⁷. Since, he is reporting his own sufferings and journey through the novel⁸.

Issue and working hypothesis

It is wide apparent from the review of the literature that the two works entitled *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) by Ernest Hemingway and *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) by Stephen Crane have already been approached. However, to our best knowledge, no previous research has attempted to study the two previous novels together as modern tragedies; which is the focus of our present work.

This research intends to compare Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* and Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* by applying Arthur Miller's theory of modern tragedy; developed in his essay '*Tragedy and the Common Man* (1949)'.

Therefore, our main purpose is to analyze both *The Red Badge of Courage* and *A Farewell to Arms* according to the theoretical aspects of Miller and show his redefinition of modern tragic hero.

Methodological outline

At the methodological level, our present research is undertaken using the IMRAD method. This work starts with a general introduction that states our main purpose. It includes a review of the literature dealing with some critics on the selected novels *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) of Ernest Hemingway and *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) of Stephen Crane. It also contains the issue and working hypothesis, which is the task itself. The method section provides the definition of modern tragedy according to Arthur Miller as it is displayed in his essay '*Tragedy and the Common Man* (1949)'. The materials section includes the biographies of the authors Ernest Hemingway and Stephen Crane, and brief summaries of the two novels, then referring to their historical backgrounds and eras. In the results section, we focus on the findings of our research. The discussion section consists of two chapters; the first chapter deals with characterization, in other words, we will analyze the main characters of both works under the

lenses of Miller's theory. Whereas, the second chapter will deal with the thematic study which is the analysis of the main themes in the two novels. Our discussion ends with a general conclusion that sums up the main points dealt with within the whole research.

Endnotes

- ¹ Wyndham, George. *The New Review*. January 1896 .Wordsworth Edition Limited, 1995, 99.
- ² Frederic, Harold. *New York Times*. January 12, 1896.
- ³ Grubin Lindsay, “*The Exploration of Female Characters*” *Freedom and Choice in the Dawn of the 20th Century American Literature*’ (England),42.
- ⁴ Rashid Akm Aminur, “*When Frederic Henry Is Disillusioned About this Identity: Alienation in A Farewell to Arms: A Critical Analysis*”, *Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 16, no.4 (2013): 117, accessed on Mars 01, 2020.
- ⁵Ibid.
- ⁶Ibid.
- ⁷ D.Martin, Christopher. “*Ernest Hemingway: A Psychological Autopsy of a Suicide*”, *Psychiatry* 69, no. 4. (2006):356-359.
- ⁸ Susan F. Beegel, eds, “*Conclusion: The Critical Reputation of Ernest Hemingway*” “New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Methods and materials

I- Method

In order to discuss the issues of heroism and tragedy in Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* and Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*, we will borrow Arthur Miller's theory of modern tragedy developed in his famous essay *The Tragedy and the Common Man* (1949).

Summary of Arthur Miller's Theory

The American essayist Arthur Miller explores and clarifies conception and theory of modern tragic hero in his essay entitled *Tragedy and the Common Man* (1949) that is considered as the preface to his play *Death of a Salesman*. Miller comes out through this essay with this modern and new concept as a reaction to the Aristotelian concept of tragedy. Aristotle advocates that the royal and noble man's rank and status is the only class that can build and represent tragic heroes and heroines. He defines tragedy as representation of a serious action, a serious plot that builds moral values and universal themes. He adds that true tragedy is the one that evokes within the audience very strong emotions like pity, fear and terror. Miller defines the tragic hero as follow:

He is a sort of a man who is no conspicuous for virtue and justice, and falls into misery is not due to vice and depravity, but rather to some error, a man who enjoys prosperity and high reputation like Oedipus and Thyestes and other members of families like theirs¹⁰.

Contrary to Aristotle, Miller defines the tragic hero in his essay as follows:

“The tragic hero can and should include the common man. Hero is one who attempts to gain his rightful position in his society and in doing so, struggles for dignity. Considering the noble's hardships does not seem to excite the modern audience. Perhaps better understanding a true tragic hero would soon make up for the lack of tragedies written in that age¹¹”.

From the above message, it is obvious that Arthur Miller's conception is different from that of Aristotle. He believes that the ordinary man; is just as capable as kings and queens are. He argues that both royals and commoners share the same mental procedures and capacities, thus they are able of experiencing similar dilemmas.

Even though, he maintains that the common man is the ideal character because he understands the elements of fear better and only a person from the lower class has the ability to have the same way of thinking as a common man. The common man who faces struggles and problems in the society, who knows more the meaning of danger, oppression and threat from others, insists Miller¹².

Miller says that the sense of tragedy comes into being when the tragic hero is willing to sacrifice and risk everything to preserve and rescue his personal dignity, to regain his own freedom and contest his deserved place in the community¹³.

In this regard, Miller asserts:

I believe that the common man is as apt a subject for tragedy in its highest sense as kings were. On the face of it, this ought to be obvious in the light of modern psychiatry; which bases its analysis upon classic formulations; such as Oedipus and Orestes complexes, for instance which were enacted by royal being, but which apply to everyone in similar emotional situations¹⁴.

Arthur Miller claims that royalty and high class characters are most commonly used in ancient tragedies for their high status and wealth, and therefore have more to lose , but believes even that the ordinary man has the same struggles and difficulties primarily to prove himself in the society.

II- Materials

a- Biography of Stephen Crane

Stephen Crane was born in November 1, 1871 at Newark, New Jersey United State. He is a novelist, poet and short story writer. Crane was a 19th century American writer. He died just at the age of 28 on June 5, 1900 in Germany.

Stephen Crane is the youngest of fourteen children in his family. His father Jonathan Crane is a Methodist Minister who dies in 1880. His mother is an active member of the Woman's Christian Temperance. After the death of his father, his older sister raised Crane for the first seven years of his life. Crane attended the preparatory school at the Claverack College. Then he studies at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania, and later joined the Syracuse University. However, he left his studies at twenty without completing a degree. He moved to New York City to work as a freelance writer for the New York Tribune. In fact, Crane started to write his short stories at the age of eight. Then, by the age of sixteen, he began publishing articles in the New York Tribune.

In 1893, Crane published his first novella *Maggie: A Girl of the Street*. Later on, he publishes his second novel *The Red Badge of Courage*. It was a powerful and realistic psychological portrait of a young soldier fighting in the American Civil War. It became his most famous novel. Although Crane was born after the war, and had not at the time experienced battle first-hand, the novel is known for its realism and naturalism. Due to Crane's new reputation as a war writer, he sailed to Cuba to report on the insurrection there. The ship on which he was travelling sank; Crane spent more than a day a drift with three other men. This event resulted in one of the world's great sort stories, *The Open Boat* (1871). From his writings *George's Father* (1896), *The Third Violet* (1897), *Active Service* (1899) and *The O'Ruddy* (1903).

b- Biography of Ernest Hemingway

Ernest Miller Hemingway is an American author, novelist, short story writer and journalist. He was born in Oak Illinois on July 21, 1899 in a well-educated and well-respected family. In high school, Hemingway worked for his school newspaper through editing “*The Trapeze and Tabula*” primarily writing about sports.

After graduation, the budding journalist went to work for the Kansas City Star gaining great experience that would later influence his distinctively stripped-down prose style. Ernest Hemingway moved to Paris where he worked as a foreign correspondent and fell under the influence of the modernist writers and artists of the Twenties the Lost Generation. He was one of the great stylists of that period in the American literature. His style is more fun to read because he often uses the same style and themes in much of his works.

Ernest Hemingway published seven novels: *The Torrents of Spring* (1926), *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), *To have and Have Not* (1937), *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), *Across the River and the Trees* (1950) and *The Old Man and The Sea* (1952). He also published six short story collections and two nonfiction works. By the year of 1953, he won the Pulitzer Prize and in 1954, he won the Noble Prize in literature. Ernest Hemingway put an end to his own life by committing suicide in Ketchum, Idaho, US on July2, 1961.

a- Synopsis of *The Red Badge of Courage*

This revolutionary war novella by Stephen Crane (1871-1900) is about the American Civil War. This novel shows the harsh reality of explosions and bullets, and thus is considered as one of the first war novels that removed any romantic tones from the going off to battle. The story of *The Red Badge of Courage* took place during the American Civil War around year 1863. It is divided into twenty-four chapters. It deals with a young man Henry Fleming, who has always dreamed of war. So, he enlists in the Union Army during the Civil War. However, war is nothing like his romantic dreams, he flees from his first battle; thus, he feels himself cowardly.

Crane begins his story with describing nature in a detailed form this landscape, which will become yards battle. The young Henry Fleming enlists himself in the Union Army. When he tells his mother, he expects her to be proud, but instead he sees her tears streaming down her cheeks as he walks away. At the camp, Henry worries that when the fighting starts, he may run. Then he overhears a conversation between Jim Conklin and some of the other soldiers asking him if he is thinking about running. Surprisingly, Jim responds that if others ran, he would probably run too. So, Henry finds that reassuring.

The soldiers are still suffering from sore feet, lack of food and walk without stopping. Sometimes, Henry thinks to flee, but he finds himself trapped inside the regiment of men. He thinks that he had not enlisted of his own free; he blames the government for his situation. Henry's mind wonders as he marched and has absurd thoughts about the enemy lurking in every house. He considered warning the regiment against the dangers that the generals did not see clearly, but he did not continue speaking because he thinks that those men would laugh at him.

A lieutenant approached and hit him with a sword to get him pick up his space. When they stop, each man builds a small wall of stones in front of him. Few minutes later, they would leave their small barricade. Henry did not like the aimlessness because they walk with no purpose.

Henry began to think that death would be a better alternative. Eventually, they heard gunfire; a brigade ahead of them went into action and Henry does not know what to do.

When Henry heard the gunfire, he begins to run toward the battle. He pushes through branches to exit from the fight. Some of them were bleeding or near death. One man, who bled from his head and his arm, speaks to Henry about the battle. He was pleased with the soldiers' performance. Then, he asked Henry where he had been hit; this latter did not know how to respond since he had not fought. As Henry continues to walk among the wounded, he feels shame and envy for those men who are bleeding around him. He wishes to have his own 'red badge of courage'. Henry sees the tall soldier, Jim Conklin, and runs toward him. Jim was bleeding and refused Henry's help. Later, Jim falls dead. Henry pulled back his jacket to see a huge wound in his side, and then he continues walking away from Jim's corpse with another bleeding soldier. Henry worried that he was to witness another death. The soldier inquired about Henry's injuries. So, Henry's shame returned and as he is walking away, the soldier's condition deteriorated. Henry chose to climb a fence and escape the man's ramblings. Then, he wishes being dead. He knows that his crime of fleeing the battle would continue to be discovered by the others, and he did not know what to do about it. Henry continues to wander until he notices that the men have turned and seem to be running toward him. Screams and smoke indicated that war was approaching. Then, a young man hits him on the head with his rifle. After that, Henry runs into Wilson and Simpson who are nurses. They realize that Henry was hit in the head and must get some rest. Wilson treats Henry's wound and gives him something to drink. Finally, he let him sleep in his sleeping bag. Henry wakes up after he felt that it was a long night. When Wilson tried to check his head wound, he yelled at him to leave him alone. In fact, Henry wants to hide his fake bullet wound.

The man laying with Henry was carrying the colors of the enemy's flag in front, then he sees a volley of bullets he sees the man who carries the flag injured. Henry's regiment gathers

the remaining four prisoners, which consists of an injured man; one good-natured, one morose and one silent and ashamed. Henry finds a place in the grass to rest along the fence. Therefore, Wilson joins him. At last, the men rejoin their brigade, and then they make the long march home with other men. Henry reflects on his experiences during the war. He is worried about his mistakes that will outshine his triumphs. Nevertheless, by the end he has found peace and feels victorious in his endeavor.

b- Synopsis of *A Farewell to Arms*

A Farewell to Arms is a novel written by Ernest Hemingway, set during his experience in the Italian campaign of the World War I. It was first published in 1929 and been considered one of the greatest English novels of the twentieth century.

The novel is Hemingway's autobiographical work; the protagonist barely experiences his same experiences. It is about a tragic love affair between the expatriate Frederic Henry; a young American serving in the Italian Army as an ambulance driver; and a young nurse named Catherine Barkley. The novel is divided into five books, each book has eight chapters.

In the first book, Frederic Henry meets an English nurse who recently lost her fiancé in France and arrived to install in the hospital near the front named Catherine Barkley introduced by Henry's friend the surgeon Rinaldi. Hence, Frederic received a Saint Antony medal from Catherine to protect him, he was wounded by an explosion then, he was evacuated to a hospital in Milan where he meets her again and their love develops.

The second book is about the beginning of a beautiful love story and the growing attachment between the lovely couple, during the months spent in the hospital for Frederic's recovery from his knee's injury. After knowing about Catherine's three months pregnancy, the two lovers planed for a vacation but soon that becomes impossible because, the head of the hospital revokes Frederic's leave for his high consumption of alcohol.

In the third book, Frederic Henry rejoins his platoon where things deteriorated. Just after, Frederic returns during the Battle of Caporetto, the Austrians managed to penetrate the Italian line that helps the combatants to retreat. Because of the disorganized retreat, Frederic Henry changes the route taken by his army to avoid being killed by the enemy. However, Henry's ambulance and men are lost and stuck in the mud. Then, the two sergeants refuse to help and push it out, so, Frederic shoots and injures one of them while Bonello; his fellow driver kills the man by a bullet

in the head. Frederic is detained by an Italian Military Police; executing Italian officers for calling the retreat but he finally escapes and jumps to a river managing to reach Milan by train.

The fourth book talks about the reuniting of the lovers and their vacation in Stresa before Frederic knows he is soon to be arrested. Therefore, the couple escapes to Switzerland through a rowboat given by a barkeep, but they are finally allowed to stay in the Swiss territory after their interrogation from the authorities.

In the fifth and final book, Frederic and Catherine live a lovely and quiet life in the mountains until she delivers of a stillborn baby after a hard painful and long birth, which causes a hemorrhage then leads to her death leaving Frederic sad and lonely to return to their hotel under the raining sky.

3- Historical background

a- American Civil War

The American Civil War (1861 – 1865) is a conflict between northern and southern states over slavery, states' rights and westward expansion. It was a result of the interrelated issues of slavery, territorial and partisan political control. Whereas, the Confederacy was made up of eleven southern states versus the North, which was also called the Union to symbolize that, they wanted the United States to remain a single country and union. Abraham Lincoln was the president of the United States during the Civil War. He wanted a stronger federal government and was against slavery. It was his election that triggered the southern states leaving and the Civil War.

b- World War One

The World War I (1914-1919) is called the Great War that included the whole world's countries. In June 1914, the Austrian-Hungarian Frantz Ferdinand is assassinated which is the apparent reason to break out the war. However, there are real and hidden causes more important than this. In fact, there is a sort of aggressive nationalism across all Europe. This leads to the division of the world into two parts: The central powers that pitted Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire against the allied powers that consisted of the Great Britain, France, Russia, Italy and Japan. This war lasted Four years, but ended with the defeat of the central powers with enormous and terrible consequences of nine millions dead soldiers and twenty One millions wounded soldiers.

After dealing with the novel, it is found out that many parts of it are based upon Hemingway's personal life experiences. Ernest Hemingway himself served the Italian Campaigns in WWI just like Frederic Henry, the protagonist of his novel 'A Farewell to Arms'. Frederic Henry is inspired by Catherine Barkley like Ernest Hemingway was by Agnes Von Kurowsky.

Both Ernest Hemingway and Henry Frederic got hit by parts of a mortar shell and got wounded. Then, sent to a hospital where they found a nurse with whom they fell in love. Frederic had a love affair with Catherine Barkley whereas Hemingway had an affair with Agnes Von Kurowsky.

Endnotes

⁹ Aristototale. "Poetic » Classical Literary Criticism Trans. Dorsch, T.s.1956. London: Penguin 2000, 64.

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹EuropeanAccademic-Vol-11,2/May2014,1944.

¹²Miller, Arthur, Tragedy and the Common Man.1949,01.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

Results

In this part of our research paper, we will focus on the major findings reached from our analysis. As it has already been mentioned, our master dissertation is centered on the study of the two American modern works, Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) under some key notions of Arthur Miller's *theory of Modern Tragedy* developed in his famous essay *Tragedy and the Common Man* (1949). Therefore, we have divided our dissertation into two main chapters to answer our issue.

In the first chapter, we have depicted through the analysis and comparison of both *The Red Badge of Courage* and *A Farewell to Arms*' main characters, Henry Fleming, Frederic Henry, Catherine Barkley and Jim Conklin, that both Stephen Crane and Ernest Hemingway used a set of ordinary and common men from the middle class of society.

In the second chapter, we have dealt with the main themes explored within the two American novels. We have deduced that all the characters of the novels fight for their dignity and shape their own path in life, seeking for their dreams and goals in everyday life to survive and prove their position in society. We have also shown that the characters are struggling, suffering from the harsh events and the massive destructions of the war since *The Red Badge of Courage* takes place during the American Civil War, and *A Farewell to Arms* takes place during WWI. We have shown also that the novels are war novels through which they portray their early own experiences and the courage they arise to overcome those situations which classify them too among the tragic heroes. Finally, we conclude that all the negativity, desperation and traumatic effects lead to the tragic end of the hero. It ends up with the death of the tragic hero either as it is the case of Catherine Barkley, or leads to the failure of his dream and objectives, as it is the case of Frederic Henry and Henry Fleming at the end of the novels.

To sum up, we realize that Crane and Hemingway formed their works as modern tragedies since they meet the requirements of modern tragic hero within *The Red Badge of Courage* and *A Farewell to Arms*.

Discussion:

Chapter One: Characterization in *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Red Badge of Courage*

Throughout the two books, Stephen Crane's protagonist Henry Fleming in *The Red Badge of Courage* and Ernest Hemingway's protagonist Frederic Henry in *A Farewell to Arms* undergo many changes regarding the personal and the moral growth. Henry Fleming overcomes his fears and seems to be courageous. Jim Conklin the most courageous soldier in Henry's regiment fights without fear in the war. Jim becomes an example for others. Frederic Henry shows disapproval of war by refusing to be loyal to his army during the World War I. However, he still does his duty. This protagonist turns out to show loyalty to a nurse, Catherine Barkley, who severely rejects him in many regards at the beginning.

a) Henry Fleming and Frederic Henry

Arthur Miller sets the general rules for the one to have a tragic life. Firstly, a hero is the person, who willingly laid down his life for the sake of securing his sense of personal dignity. Secondly, the person who thinks that he is not given a rightful place in the society. So, he struggles to gain a rightful place in his society¹⁵. That rule is shown in the character of Henry Fleming and Frederic Henry.

Henry Fleming is an ordinary youth who enlists in the American Union Army in the period of the Civil War. Henry joins the army, because he dreams of glory and performing heroic deeds in the battles. He wishes to be a brave soldier.

He had burned several times to enlist. Tales of great movements shook the land. They might not be distinctly Homeric, but there seemed to be much glory in them. He had read of marches, sieges, conflicts, and he had longed to see it all. His busy mind had drawn for him large pictures extravagant in color, lurid with breathless deeds¹⁶.

When he joins the Union Army, Henry notices that people treat him differently. As the other men in his regiment, they treat him as a hero soldier. This is what makes Henry believe that, he becomes a hero by merely enlisting:

From his home, he had gone to the seminary to bid adieu to many schoolmates. They had thronged about him with wonder and admiration. He had felt the gulf now between them and had swelled with calm pride. He and some of his fellows who had donned blue were quite overwhelmed with privileges for all of one afternoon, and it had been a very delicious thing. They had strutted¹⁷.

In the beginning of the novel, Henry becomes a hero without any sacrifice or tragedy. The Lieutenant Frederic Henry grows and changes, lives and learns, in order to catch up to the Nurse Catherine Barkley. We can describe him as a character that has a very dynamic role. Frederic came through many hard things as well as he saw lots of blood and death. Frederic commits himself to love Catherine. He should have expressed this loyalty to the army.

Frederic Henry, unlike Henry Fleming, displays courage in the battle without having the sense of glory and heroism. He does not have sense of honor for doing his duties and he does not expect any praise for his service.

Frederic Henry is portrayed as a man of duty. He attaches to this understanding of himself no sense of honor, nor does he expect any praise for his service. Even after he has been severely wounded, he discourages Rinaldi from pursuing medals of distinction for him. Henry distances himself from such abstract notions as faith, honor, and patriotism. Concepts such as these mean nothing to him beside such concrete facts of war as the names of the cities in which he has fought and the numbers of decimated streets.

Because you are gravely wounded. They say if you can prove you did any heroic act you can get the silver. Otherwise it will be the bronze. Tell me exactly what happened. Did you do any heroic act?"
"No," I said. "I was blown up while we were eating

cheese."

"Be serious. You must have done something heroic either before or after. Remember carefully."

"I did not."

"Didn't you carry anybody on your back? Gordini says you carried several people on your back but the

medical major at the first post declares it is impossible. He has to sign the proposition for the citation."

"I didn't carry anybody. I couldn't move." "That doesn't matter," said Rinaldi.

He took off his gloves.

"I think we can get you the silver. Didn't you refuse to be medically aided before the others?"¹⁸

In the first battle which Henry Fleming engages in he feels fear then he flees. His courage leaves him. Then, he wonders if heroism and fear live together. So, Henry doubts in his ability to become a hero. At this point, Henry believes that it is impossible that he should ever become a hero. He is defined by his mistake. In his estimation, a hero is someone who does not make mistakes.

While he had been tossed by many emotions, he had not been aware of ailments. Now the beset him and made clamor. As he was at last compelled to pay attention to them, his capacity for self-hate was multiplied. In despair, he declared that he was not like those others. He now conceded it to be impossible that he should ever become a hero. He was a craven loon. Those pictures of glory were piteous things. He groaned from his heart and went staggering off¹⁹.

This passage illustrates Henry's initial fear about whether he has the courage to face battle. He establishes that his predicament is less a matter of war than of knowing himself and judging his worth. Until this moment, Henry believes that war exists for the purpose of creating heroes. Then, that men when they transform into soldiers, they are guaranteed a kind of honor that grants them prestige in society and history. But, the courage that Henry finally musters depends on his having rewritten his laws of life and come to a new understanding of the world.

When Henry engages in his next battle, he fires repeatedly and he continues to fire until the enemy is dead. Henry focuses on his hatred of the enemy not at his glory. For the other men in his regiment, Henry becomes a hero now.

The friend came staggering to him. There was some fright and dismay in his voice. "Are yeh all right, Fleming? Do yeh feel all right? There ain't nothin' th' matter with yeh, Henry, is there?"

"No," said the youth with difficulty. His throat seemed full of knobs and burrs. These incidents made the youth ponder. It was revealed to him that he had been a barbarian, a beast. He had fought like a pagan who defends his religion. Regarding it, he saw that it was fine, wild, and, in some ways, easy. He had been a tremendous figure, no doubt. By this struggle, he had overcome obstacles which he had admitted to be mountains. They had fallen like paper peaks, and he was now what he called a hero²⁰.

Henry becomes a hero even if his heroic deed is unconscious. After his experience of some tragic events, he realizes that he is not a hero. But, he is just merely an ordinary man who has such feeling of fear, doubt and anxiety.

On the other hand, Frederic Henry in *A Farewell to Arms* loves Catherine and he wants to leave the war with her in order to live together with their baby. When Henry suggests dropping the war Catherine considers this thing hard, because he simply cannot be dropped.

As it is illustrated in the novel:

"The Italians didn't want women so near the front.
So we're all on very special behavior. We don't go out." "I can come here though."
"Oh, yes. We're not cloistered." "Let's drop the war."
"It's very hard. There's no place to drop it." "Let's drop it anyway."
"All right"²¹.

Frederic Henry's decision to flee and quit the army marks his farewell to arms and his commitment to Catherine. Frederic looks for his personal comfort as any other ordinary man. His love and his baby present peace and happiness without suffering in war.

Finally, both Henry Fleming from *A Red Badge of Courage* and Frederic Henry from *A Farewell to Arms* are tragic heroes because they are ordinary men suffering of war and they search of glory and dignity.

b) Jim Conklin and Catherine Barkley

These two characters are other main characters in the novels. They have impact on the two protagonists referred to previously. Jim Conklin is one of the most controversial figures in the novel. His death simply provides Crane with a new occasion to expose the savagery of war and furnishes a dramatic counterpoint to Henry's absorption in his own personal problems. Conklin has impact on Henry's behavior. When Henry asks Jim if he would flee from battle, Jim answers that he would run if other soldiers ran. Then, he would fight if they fought.

The youth at last interrupted them. "Did you ever think you might run yourself, Jim?" he asked. On concluding the sentence he laughed as if he had meant to aim a joke. The loud soldier also giggled. The tall private waved his hand. "Well," said he profoundly, "I've thought it might get too hot for Jim Conklin in some of them scrimmages, and if a whole lot of boys started and run, why, I s'pose I'd start and run. And if I once started to run, I'd run like the devil, and no mistake. But if everybody was a-standing and a-fighting, why, I'd stand and fight. Be jiminy, I would. I'll bet on it"²².

According to Miller, tragedy is motivated via man's total compulsion to evaluate himself justly. In the course of attaining his rightful place in society and attaining his dignity, a hero sometimes loses his life. But for Miller, there is a window of opportunity in this. By such an act, the spectators will get obsessed with the inexactness of the society that might abolish the man unreasonably and will evaluate the cause. Hence, an ordinary man will be in a better position to understand the unfairness of society, and will try to develop the social order. Thus, the death of a hero bids optimism. For Miller, tragedy is intrinsically optimistic²³.

Jim Conklin is strong and self-reliant. He does not romanticize war or its supposed glories in the manner that Henry does. Jim dies quietly. He does not fate or philosophizes about the injustices of war. In death as in life, Jim is a self-assured man who knows and fulfills his responsibilities. The death of Jim Conklin shows that he is a hero. He loses his life in the war to give peace to others.

Catherine is, as Jim Conklin, strong and courageous. She joined the war for being next to her fiancée. Catherine is a nurse from the second degree. Catherine plays a role of woman who is courage, sincere and struggles for her love. Hemingway starts to deal with Katherine's sorrow about her fiancée, who died in the war. After, when Catherine meets Frederic Henry in hospital she loved him a lot. This love made Catherine more submissive and excited to please Henry to not leave her. Catherine Barkley is totally submissive in this book. That what makes the reader feels pity and appreciation for Catherine, mainly at the end of the story. Catherine and her baby die and Henry becomes single.

According to Miller, the quality in tragic plays that jiggles the spectators lies in the fear of being displaced and to be dragged away from our chosen image in the world. The common man in the modern world is most than ever scared to lose his rightful place in the society. The tragedy is not all about the person to evaluate himself justly. Similarly, the detection of some moral law is not the detection of some philosophical or abstract quantity. But the tragic mode of life requires a condition with which a person recognizes himself and is able to develop his insight. And this insight further enlightens, and this enlightenment further helps him to finger out his enemy, the evils in the society²⁴. Thus, Catherine Barkley challenges society and she was devoted to her love. That is a heroic act while not all women can do it; she is a loving, dedicated woman who is a victim.

Finally, the characters in the two novels are ordinary peoples. They show courage in the war. They are considered heroes even if this tragedy differs of the classical or Aristotle on tragedy. Arthur Miller in his *Tragedy and the Common Man*, analyses the scarcity of heroes among

modern society. According to Miller, the tragedy that is written on an account heroic life have criteria or some merits while the modern man seems to be below that criteria or vice versa. Also, he claims that the tragic or heroic mode of life is archaic. As this is a modern world of the 20th Century and the modern man no more believes in heroism. Thus, the tragic and heroic mode is only suitable and applicable for the kings or people in high class. Rather, the ordinary people should cherish the tragedy from any other class.

According to Miller, the quality in tragic plays that jiggles the spectators lies in the fear of being displaced and to be dragged away from our chosen image in the world. The common man in the modern world is most than ever scared to lose his rightful place in the society.

To sum up, the hero is not someone who is perfect, superpower man with a strong body, and always wins fighting against the bad one, but a hero is someone like anybody else. He can feel pain, fear, happiness, and doubt. He does something heroic and he is known for his achievement, like Henry Fleming who finally realizes that he is only a man not a hero. In addition, Frederic Henry is occasionally a liar. He tells Catherine that he loves her before he really does. He tells the doctor he has killed enemies in battle when he has not. Then, he consumes alcohol constantly. Before Catherine, he slept with other girls. He kills the Italian sergeant while he is supposed to be caring for the wounded soldiers not doing the wounding. He also flees from the war.

The characters meet the notions of the tragic hero according to Miller's theory.

Endnotes

¹⁵Miller, Arthur. *Tragedy and the Common Man*.1949, 01.

¹⁶Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage*.1895, 47.

¹⁷Ibid., 49.

¹⁸Hemingway, Ernest. *A Farewell to Arms*. 1929, 88.

¹⁹Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage*.1895, 87.

²⁰Ibid., 105.

²¹Hemingway, Ernest. *A Farewell to Arms*. 1929, 29.

²²Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage*.1895, 51.

²³<https://litpriest.com/essays/tragedy-and-the-common-man-summary-analysis/?fbclid=IwAR0uQpPHVdvqsiH-SNFCltYR8wVoPgyndACXng7EXCGBK3naRMg7gZUxZ58>

²⁴ Ibid

Chapter Two: The Thematic Study in *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Red Badge of Courage*

In the following chapter of our dissertation, we intend to study and analyze the major themes in Stephen Crane's novel *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929). We have selected or chosen important themes, which are considered the roots of the tragic conflict in the previous cited works. The first theme is fighting and struggling for dignity, the second one is war, courage and death, in both novels. After our reading, we have noticed that the two writers give much importance and attention to the themes of the novels rather than its plot in modern tragedy, because they are the reflection of the ordinary people's struggles and difficulties in the real life.

a- Fighting for Dignity in *The Red Badge of Courage* and *A Farewell to Arms*

Fighting for dignity is a wide dominant point in Stephen Crane's novel entitled *The Red Badge of Courage* and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*. This matter is explained through the characters all along the stories. We understand that most of the characters are experiencing a lot of difficulties and struggles during their lives. Basically, they fight to preserve their tight dignity, which is also called in other words personal dignity, to accomplish their goals and draw their own path in life.

In his essay *Tragedy and the Common Man*, Miller defines the Common Man as a tragic hero who struggles for dignity²⁵. He stands with the common man within the society in his definition of the tragic hero "The tragic hero is one who attempts to gain his rightful position in his society and in doing so, struggles for his dignity"²⁶. Therefore, the point of dignity is well displayed throughout both Stephen Crane's and Ernest Hemingway's characters. They reflect the struggle of the Americans for a common aim, which is preserving their freedom and self-esteem though in two different wars. The characters of Crane struggle during the American Civil War

around 1863, whereas the characters of Hemingway struggle during the World War One around 1917 in Italy and Switzerland.

To begin with *The Red Badge of Courage*, the protagonist Henry Fleming, an eighteenth-year-old American youth who lives with his mother in the town. He works and spends his early life at his mother's farm since he has never left it, and has never been away. Like every young person of his age, Henry is motivated by dreams of glory, heroism and deeds of bravery. He wants a chance to show off and prove himself as brave and daring man. Therefore, he enlists himself at the Union forces and joins the army as a private to accomplish his duty of a soldier who is eager to fight the enemy, to wear a uniform and carry a gun in order to become a hero and bring victory despite the will and protests of his mother to give up his decision.

She could calmly seat herself and with no apparent difficulty give him many hundreds of reasons why he was of vastly more importance on the farm than the field of battle. She had certain ways of expression that told him that her statements on the subject came from a deep conviction.²⁷

She adds: Henry, don't you be a fool.²⁸

From the above passages, we understand that Henry's mother is absolutely against being enlisted in the army. She tries to convince him to reject his idea by telling him about the great damages of fighting at war; especially that he is a very young man who has never been face to war and battle before. Henry is determined to leave for war, he needs to find out about himself far from his rural life and his mother too. He should learn to overcome his hidden fears. He rebels and joins his comrades at the regiment for battle with an indescribable feeling and excitement.

He had, of course, been impatient under the ordeal of this speech. It had not been quite what he expected, and he had borne it with an air of irritation. He departed feeling vague relief²⁹

Joining the regiment, Henry soon changes his vision of himself and his dream is unfortunately shattered little by little, as he understands and faces the reality of war.

Once Henry faces the ultimate enemy, he sees the cruelty of war and finds himself face to death. Hence, the feeling of fear overwhelms him then, he starts to doubt his own-confidence, he

wonders whether to stay and fight or to flee from the battlefield and abandon his fellows, but he is worried about what they will think of him later. In other words, Fleming finds himself in a foreign environment. He comes to experience new challenges that he cannot afford. Yet, he compares his behavior to his comrades' one and finds out that he is less apt and brave than them. He is described as follows:

The youth would have liked to have discovered another who suspected himself. A sympathetic comparison of mental notes would have been a joy to him [...] All attempts failed to bring forth any statement which looked in any way like a confession to those doubts which he privately acknowledged in himself.³⁰

Since Henry Fleming deserts and runs like a rabbit from the battle, Crane refers to him as an animal to denounce his weakness and fear. Sooner, he feels guilty and recognizes his cowardice. When he wanders at the forest in his way back to his companions, he is injured on the head by a rifle of a man in panic. The fact that Henry lies about his wound's source, makes him awarded of the red badge of courage, which is actually for him a badge of shame that he is not proud of. He considers himself sinful. It teaches him how much someone's pride and dignity is important.

As a form of expiation of his sin, he assumes to catch up through action and fighting rather than through public confession especially that no one notices his lie. So, he keeps it for himself. Crane describes him as follows: "He had performed his mistakes in the dark, so he was still a man."³¹

Henry returns to the regiment with own conscious will and determination. He fights as a daredevil at the head of the unit during the charge. He acts as a flag-bearer in the battlefield after the color sergeant fell. He remains courageous in his pose, under the fire charge until the end and wins the battle. He proves that he can be a capable and strong soldier. Towards the end of the novel, Henry Fleming witnesses a great change in his life, his thoughts and beliefs from a youth to a man, from a selfish and coward boy to a brave and mature man. It is important to remind that, Stephen Crane never faces neither a battle nor a war in his life. However, he reports

Henry's journey in a very realistic way, because of his biggest will to face and live such situation. Unfortunately, the chance never comes to him. Crane is a great soldier through his writings only, he has no military experience.

Similarly, the protagonist of *A Farewell to Arms* Frederic Henry is also an American young boy who is refused in the American Army because of his poor eyesight. As his American Dream of joining the war falls apart, he moves from the United States to settle in Italy. Frederic Henry does not renounce to his willing. So, he enlists as an ambulance driver in the Red Cross of the Italian Front during WWI. In fact, his aim is not really to serve and fight for neither Italy nor the Italian Army especially that he is not one of theirs. He seeks for adventure, glory and victory since he has never got a wartime before.

Sooner, Frederic learns about the horrors and damages of war. He understands now how bad the battle can affect a soldier while fighting against the enemy. At that moment, he realizes that his engagement in the Italian unity is a very bad choice and then, changes his vision towards the war. This idea is apparent in his interaction with his friend Rinaldi, when he says:

What an odd to be in the Italian army.
It's not really the army. It's only the ambulance.
It's very odd though. Why did you do it?
I don't know, I said. There isn't always an explanation for everything.³²

Indeed, Frederic's hatred towards the war grows more and more mostly after his knee's injury due to a bombardment, as he says "Oh, God, I said, get me out of here."³³

Once at the hospital, he is nursed by Catherine Barkley. Another main character is the heroine of Hemingway. She is an English nurse who serves too in the Red Cross of the Italian Front; she enlists to be with her fiancé who unfortunately falls in the battlefield in France. Frederic discovers the importance of Catherine's presence in his life and declares his big love for her. He states,

She went out. God knows I had not wanted to fall in love with her I had not wanted to fall in love with any one. But God knows I had and I lay on the bed in the room of the hospital in Milan and all sorts of things went through my head but I felt wonderful.³⁴

Their relationship begins as a sort of game and distraction in order to forget about their personal troubles. Frederic flirts with her to distance himself from the war for a while; Catherine looks for consolation after the death of her fiancé. Their love develops throughout time and they intend to marry sooner especially, after she announces to him that, she is pregnant waiting for a baby. She contributes in changing Frederic's thoughts of life. Due to the massive consequences, destructions and hostilities of the war the couple witnesses, both of them decide to escape from the war, follow their dream and choose to build a serene family and lead a peaceful and quiet life with their coming baby. Frederic finally succeeds to desert the army and his comrades. He explains in this passage:

I wished them all the luck. There were the good ones, and the brave ones and the calm ones and the sensible ones, and they deserved it. But it was not my show any more and I wished this bloody train would get to Mestre and I would eat and stop thinking.³⁵

He is finally reunited with his lover; they live prosperous moments together in Switzerland but few months later, Catherine dies at labor with her stillborn baby. Once again, Frederic is traumatized by the great loss of all his beloved ones and leaves alone under the rain. He says:

I went out the door and suddenly, I felt lonely and empty. I had treated seeing Catherine very lightly. I had forgotten to come but when I could not see her there I was feeling lonely and hallow.³⁶

By the tragic end of the novel, we deduce that Frederic Henry becomes a lost and suffering person than the beginning. He finally realizes that he is doomed to be lonely, his happiness is only temporary.

We should refer that the novel, *A Farewell to Arms*; is an autobiographical version of Ernest Hemingway's early experience during World War Two. This is why he reported Frederic Henry's journey through the war in such a realistic and idealistic way.

b- War, Courage and Death

War is the major theme over which the two modern writers Stephen Crane and Ernest Hemingway develop their works since they are war novels. The events take place in two different periods. Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* is set during the American Civil War around year 1863 while *A Farewell to Arms* is set during the American World War Two in Italy and Switzerland around the year 1917. They describe the brutality and the bitterness of fighting among the soldiers and report the massive horrors of war on the country too. It is quite evident that war brings struggle, disillusionment, suffering and fear; we cannot approach one without the other.

In fact, Stephen Crane does not experience warfare in his life, he has interviewed a great number of veterans for his research and makes a deep realistic portrayal of the Civil War to achieve such strong modern work whereas Ernest Hemingway faces World War Two I, he is portraying his own autobiographical experience during this great war. Therefore, both of them share the same point or idea about the influence of war on people's lives.

Arthur Miller insists in his essay "*Tragedy and the Common Man*" that "the common man knows fear best"³⁷. He shows that the common man knows the meaning of danger, threat and suffering and understands the elements of fear better because he is facing all sort of problems and struggles in his everyday life and the society³⁸. According to this, Stephen Crane shows in *The Red Badge of Courage* that Henry Fleming, the main character of the story; is an ordinary man from a mediocre class of the society. He volunteers to fight during the Civil War dreaming of victorious events and a glorious end. Once he faces the battle, his perspective on war and heroism soon changes. He finds himself in the middle of chaotic and traumatic facts he has never known before. He encounters series of injured, tattered and dead men. It breaks down his image of war and reveals to him its unpleasant reality. Besides, Henry witnesses violence, confusion, risks, danger and fear. He then describes war as a horrible thing, which pushes him

to see the regiment and the army in the whole as monsters and reptiles. This appears when he says; “One of those moving monsters wending with many feet...”³⁹ Henry understands how badly and negatively the war can affect people’s existence.

On the other hand, Ernest Hemingway shows also the main character of *A Farewell to Arms*; Frederic Henry as a common or ordinary man who engages to serve in the Italian Union during the American World War One. Frederic Henry goes inspired by what is called democracy, glory and sacrifice. At the battle, he witnesses thousands of soldiers’ death, great damages and more cruel the army’s violence and punishment of those who refuse fighting. These conditions change his viewpoint towards war. It is well explained in this passage,

I had seen nothing sacred and the things that were glorious had no glory, and the sacrifices were like the stockyard at Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it⁴⁰

As things progress, Frederic is convinced of the unfairness and the atrocity of war. It enhances at him fear and pessimism especially after he is injured. He sees it now as evil and says, “There is nothing as bad as war...”⁴¹

In order to forget about war, Frederic resorts sometimes to alcohol and love with Catherine; a woman he falls in love with during this entire massacre. As it is already mentioned, she is an English nurse from middle class who enlists in the Italian Red Cross. As a result of their own experiences, they come to be against the war and realize how grimy and senseless the war is.

Additionally, courage is also an important and apparent theme within *The Red Badge of Courage* and *A Farewell to Arms*. As far as courage is concerned, it is a characteristic or a quality that everyone wants to have⁴². It is the ability to confront things that frighten⁴³ and the strength to face danger or disapproval in general. Courage is foremost necessary in war; a good soldier has to be courageous and brave since he is going to fight in front of the enemy. The theme of courage is very relevant in Stephen Crane’s *The Red Badge of Courage* as it is mentioned in the

title. For Henry Fleming, courage is a real matter of great interest from the beginning of the novel. As he daydreams of becoming a hero, he seeks for the meaning and understanding of courage, to recognize the valuable principles relying between courage and heroism and to discover the different notions of courage too. At the beginning, Henry draws idealistic ideas and images about courage that he deduces from writings and media. He is especially influenced by the ancient Greek epic poem by Homer called *The Iliad* which is concerned with warriors' glorious fight and death that leads them to an eternal fame⁴⁴. The latter what pushes Henry to show his first courageous act by enlisting in the Union Army, despite his mother's disapproval. This point is expressed in this passage:

He had wanted several times to join the army. Tales of great movements shook the land. There seemed to be much glory in them. He had read of marches, advances, battles, and he had wanted to see it all. His busy mind had drawn for him large pictures filled with breathless deeds⁴⁵.

At the midst of the battle, Henry comes to face the enemy. He witnesses danger, fire and violence that provide in him the feelings of fear, doubt and powerlessness, he then runs from the battle. His classical thoughts about courage and war take another different shape, he realizes that he is not courageous enough to fight in war and recognizes his unfortunate cowardice.

As the events progress, Henry is given a sort of second chance to fight in another battle. Meantime, he boasts himself through concealing his internal fears and selfishness to regain his self-pride and worth. Henry fights bravely in the battle by shooting hard at the enemy until they retreat. He also leads the regiment in front line then, bears the flag heroically after the death of the color sergeant. Therefore, this is considered Henry's great doze of courage by which he is praised from all the regiment, his lieutenant and comrades. He reaches his feeling of heroism and bravery; he achieves his dream of becoming a great fighter as it is shown below:

By this struggle, he had mastered fears, which seemed to him like mountains. They had fallen like paper, and he was now what he called a hero. He had not been aware of the process. It was as if he had slept and, awakening, found he was a nobleman⁴⁶.

Likewise, Ernest Hemingway refers to courage and bravery in his novel *A Farewell to Arms*. He defines it as the determination to overcome one's fears. He shows this quality throughout both the tragic heroes and protagonists of the novel, Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley. The main character of the story; Frederic Henry shows courage in many forms within it. As it is shown at the beginning of the novel, he first leaves the United States, his own country to live and settle down in Italy. Then, he engages by free and own conviction as an ambulance driver in the Red Cross of the Italian Army, in the midst of war between the Austrians and Italy. His decision to risk his life for a foreign country than his, mostly in the midst of a dangerous epidemic like cholera; proves his great courage and daring. This idea is well reinforced through the passage above,

He lived in Udine and came out in this way nearly every day to see how things were going, and things went very badly. At the start of the winter came the permanent rain and with the rain came the cholera. But it was checked and in the end only seven thousand died of it in the army⁴⁷.

Just afterward, Frederic shows another brave act among his comrades of the regiment, he risks his life by bringing some macaroni and cheese for his hungry men. Then, he is badly injured and wounded at the leg after the enemy has bombarded them. This point is clear in his conversation with Rinaldi:

Tell me exactly what happened. Did you do any heroic act? "No, I said. I was blown up while we were eating cheese.
"Be serious. You must have done something heroic either before or after..."⁴⁸

By the end of the battle, Frederic shoots an Italian sergeant because of his disobedience. He then flees and swims by the river escaping the police's shots behind him. He risks his life to save and secure his own freedom as it is described in the following passage:

I ducked down, pushed between two men, and ran for the river, my head down. I tripped at the edge and went in with a splash. The water was very cold and I stayed under as long as I could. I could feel the current swirl me and I stayed under until I thought I could never come up. The minute I came up, I took a breath and went down again. It was easy to stay under with so much clothing and my boots⁴⁹.

In addition, Catherine Barkley the heroine of the novel shows some courageous acts like Frederic Henry. As an English nurse, she freely volunteers in the Italian Red Cross too, hoping her fiancé back. Catherine falls in love with Frederic, and her beliefs and goals changes. Catherine's devotion to Henry's love and life pushes her to escape and live peacefully far from the horrors of war. She becomes a brave and determined character throughout the novel.

As a result and ultimate consequence of war, death is a major and obvious theme within *The Red Badge of Courage* and *A Farewell to Arms*.

Arthur Miller claims that: Tragedy is a consequence of man's total compulsion to evaluate himself justly in the pursuit of which he or she is destroyed.⁵⁰ He adds that the past fault made by the tragic hero leads to his decline then to his death.⁵¹

In other words, Miller wants to evoke that the tragic hero is the only and major responsible of his defeat; his choices, actions and decisions cause him inevitable suffering, pain and sometimes a tragic ending and death⁵².

According to this, Stephen Crane shapes his tragedy in *The Red Badge of Courage* through the main figure Henry Fleming. Henry enlists in the 304 regiment during the great Civil War dreaming of heroism and glory. However, he regrets his choice as soon as he faces the damages of the first battle and the hostilities of fighting; he was scared and escapes from the battlefield like a coward. After that, he recognizes the absence of heroes at war. Henry admits that

his cowardice and fear lead to the decline and failure of his dream to be a hero.

Similarly, Ernest Hemingway shapes also his tragedy in *A Farewell to Arms* through the main characters of the novel. The tragic character Frederic Henry joins the Italian Front as an ambulance driver during World War One. But, he soon rejects the idea of fighting because he endures the dangerous and massive consequences of war. He ends up by running away with the woman he loves and the mother of his coming baby who is Catherine Barkley. Catherine is another main tragic character within the novel. An English nurse who volunteers in the Red Cross during WW I. After the loss of her fiancé in the battlefield, she falls in love with Frederic, she remains faithful to him, she chooses to devote herself for their love and live a quiet life as a family with their baby far from the grimy war.

Unfortunately, Catherine has a tough and difficult delivery of a stillborn baby then dies later on. In the context of modern tragedy, both Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley share the same point that their service and enlistment at war and devotion to love each other, lead to the failure of their dream to have a peaceful life as a family. Catherine Barkley knows a tragic death in *A Farewell to Arms*. Otherwise, Frederic Henry suffers from loneliness and loss of his both his lover and baby at once.

The theme of death is recurrently symbolized by water and rain in Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* by water and rain⁵³. Each time it rains, something bad happens. To reinforce this idea, Catherine is afraid and predicts her death through rain in the following conversation with Frederic:

It's raining hard.

"And you'll always love me, won't you?"

"Yes,"

"And the rain won't make any difference?"

"No."

"That's good. Because I'm afraid of the rain."

"Why? I was sleepy. Outside the rain was falling steadily⁵⁴."

To conclude with our thematic study, we deduce that both the modern writers, Stephen Crane and Ernest Hemingway share similar themes and shape their modern works *The Red Badge of Courage* and *A Farewell to Arms* as modern tragedies.

Endnotes

²⁵Miller, Arthur. *Tragedy and The common Man*.1949.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 201.

²⁷Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage*. 1895, 12.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹*Ibid.*, 14.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 21.

³¹*Ibid.*, 105.

³²Hemingway, Ernest. *A Farewell to Arms*. 1929, 18.

³³*Ibid.*, 48

³⁴*Ibid.*, 123.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 317.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 36.

³⁷Miller, Arthur. *Tragedy and the Common Man*.1949,01

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage*.1895,

⁴⁰Hemingway, Ernest. *A farewell to Arms*.1929, 245.

⁴¹Ibid., 64.

⁴²Oxford Lexico. Com

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Fyfe, Paul. "*The Red Badge of Courage Themes: Courage.*" *LitCharts*. LitCharts LLC, 22 Jul 2013. Web. 1 Dec 2020.

⁴⁵Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage*.1895, 47.

⁴⁶Ibid., 105.

⁴⁷Hemingway, Ernest. *A Farewell to Arms*.1929, 02.

⁴⁸Ibid., 88.

⁴⁹Ibid., 309.

⁵⁰Susan C.W. Abboston' *Critical Companions to Arthur Miller A Literary Reference to His Life and Work* (New York; Facts on Files, INC, 2007), 265.

⁵¹Miller, Arthur. *Tragedy and the Common Man*.1949.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Grades Fixer.com/ *Stephen Crane The Red Badge of Courage vs. Ernest Hemingway A Farewell to Arms*.

⁵⁴Hemingway, Ernest. *A Farewell to Arms*. 1929,100.

General conclusion

Throughout this piece of research, we have had the opportunity to analyze the works of the American writers Stephen Crane's novel entitled *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to arms* (1929) as modern tragedies. We have made a comparative study between the two works under Arthur Miller's theory of *Tragedy and the Common Man* (1949) which deals with the moral contradictions and social issues that lead to his tragic ending. We have tried to explore the issue of the common man and investigate to which extent he can be represented as a tragic hero.

As long as literature is meant to mirror the real world in which the writers live, Stephen Crane portrays through *The Red Badge of Courage* a soldier's experience during The American Civil War (1861-1865) that fascinates him even if he was born three years later. Ernest Hemingway reports his own early experience during the First World War (1914-1918) as an ambulance driver. Both writers depict the impact of war, express their disappointment about the war, describe their struggling, and suffering through fighting.

Our dissertation is divided into two chapters. In the first chapter, we have analyzed the main characters of the two novels according to Arthur Miller's theory; we have come to deduce that they both used ordinary men from middle class of society. In the second chapter, we have discussed the main themes; we have shown that the characters fight for their dignity and struggle to reach their dreams. We have depicted the major issues and difficulties such war, courage and death. We have also come to conclude that they fail to become heroes because of their fear and run away from the heart of war despite their brave acts and sacrifices.

The scope of our master dissertation has not allowed us to cover all the different issues that are related to neither Stephen Crane's novel nor to Ernest Hemingway's one. We have limited ourselves to heroism and tragedy within *the Red Badge of Courage* and *A Farewell to Arms*. Therefore, we invite other students to examine these American works from other perspectives such as religion and politics.

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